

PENN STATE ROMANCE STUDIES

*Manekine,  
John and Blonde,*  
AND  
“FOOLISH GENEROSITY”

PHILIPPE DE REMI

*Translated by*

BARBARA N. SARGENT-BAUR

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THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
UNIVERSITY PARK, PENNSYLVANIA

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

- Beaumanoir, Philippe de Remi, sire de, ca. 1210–ca. 1265.  
[Selections. English. 2010]  
Manekine; John and Blonde; and, Foolish generosity/Philippe de  
Remi; translated by Barbara N. Sargent-Baur.  
p. cm.—(Penn State Romance studies)  
Includes bibliographical references and index.  
Summary: “An English translation of three major works by 13th-  
century French author and poet Philippe de Remi: his two-verse  
romances, Manekine and John and Blonde, as well as his single  
short verse tale, Foolish Generosity”—Provided by publisher.  
ISBN 978-0-271-03576-5 (cloth : alk. paper)  
ISBN 978-0-271-03577-2 (pbk. : alk. paper)  
1. Romances—Translations into English.  
2. Tales, Medieval—Translations into English.  
3. Beaumanoir, Philippe de Remi, sire de, ca. 1210–ca. 1265—  
Translations into English.  
I. Sargent-Baur, Barbara Nelson.  
II. Beaumanoir, Philippe de Remi, sire de, ca. 1210–ca. 1265.  
Roman de la Manekine. English.  
III. Beaumanoir, Philippe de Remi, sire de, ca. 1210–ca. 1265.  
Jehan et Blonde. English.  
IV. Beaumanoir, Philippe de Remi, sire de, ca. 1210–ca. 1265.  
Conte de fole larguesce. English.  
V. Title.  
VI. Title: John and Blonde.  
VII. Title: Foolish generosity.

PQ1501.P42A28 2010  
841'.1—dc22  
2009025006

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The Pennsylvania State University  
All rights reserved  
Printed in the United States of America  
Published by The Pennsylvania State University Press,  
University Park, PA 16802-1003

The Pennsylvania State University Press  
is a member of the  
Association of American University Presses.

It is the policy of The Pennsylvania State University Press  
to use acid-free paper. Publications on uncoated stock satisfy the  
minimum requirements of American National Standard for  
Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library  
Material, ANSI Z39.48–1992.

This book can be viewed at:  
<http://publications.libraries.psu.edu/eresources/978-0-271-03576-5>

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## PREFACE



FOR A LANDHOLDER, FAMILY MAN, and professional administrator, Philippe de Remi (ca. 1205/1210–65) had an unusual hobby: he wrote poems, songs, and long verse narratives. Not merely lettered, but literate in the genres in vogue, he paid to well-known authors (especially Chrétien de Troyes) the compliment of both reading them and borrowing from them. Yet he had an independent streak, which his amateur status permitted him to indulge: to improbable acts and mysterious otherworldly settings he preferred the quotidian and the psychologically “true.” Courtly conventions are now respected, now revised, and sometimes flatly refuted as Philippe opens his horizon to all strata of society, from kings and princesses to sailors and fishermen. His broad sympathies are linked to a firm sense of common humanity and that, in turn, to a moral system endorsed by most characters in the stories and by the author himself in his prologues and epilogues.

Philippe’s initial foray into literary composition was *Le Roman de la Manekine*, in 8,590 verses. It interweaves several widely known themes: the sovereign in need of a male heir, the father bent on wedding his own daughter, the girl’s self-mutilation to escape a forced marriage, the beautiful fugitive found and wedded by a king, the jealous and murderous mother-in-law, the substitution of letters announcing the birth of a child and then giving the father’s reply, the resultant separation of the spouses, the husband’s search for his lost wife, the reunion of the couple through divine intervention and the identification of a ring, the repentance of the father and his rediscovery of his daughter, the restoration of the severed hand as a sign of healing and reconciliation. Joy is the name of the princess; she loses it to be nicknamed “the Maimed One” and in the end, no longer maimed, becomes Joy again. This adventure romance with hagiographical overtones centers on a young heroine of strong will, firm principles, and great charity and integrity.

*Jehan et Blonde*, true to its title, is the story in 6,262 lines of two young people who fall in love; they eventually marry in spite of everything. “Everything” includes, as initial obstacle, a considerable difference in rank,

and origin as well, for he is the eldest son of an impoverished French knight while she is the heiress of the Earl of Oxford. John, restive at home and seeking employment in England, becomes Blonde's squire and French tutor, and later her lovesick admirer, so sick that he all but literalizes the courtly topos of dying for love before Blonde relents, tardily appreciates his innate qualities, casts aside her notions about rank and wealth, and returns his affection. Thereafter they are inhibited by fear of Blonde's parents and of a possible pregnancy. John must return home on family business, but reappears on the day set, and the lovers elope. By now Blonde has been promised to the ridiculous Earl of Gloucester, who hotly pursues the fleeing pair. His retainers detect them in Dover; an unequal battle ensues, during which John, aided by his faithful valet and a friendly sea captain and his crew, fight off the Earl's men and narrowly escape. Arriving at John's home, the lovers marry immediately. The King of France approves of the match and of John's heroics, makes him a count, and reconciles him and his bride with the latter's father. All converge on Dammartin for the splendid knighting ceremony of John and his three brothers. The new count and countess do much good in their region and are greatly beloved.

In a very different social register, "The Tale of Foolish Generosity" echoes the moral of *Jehan et Blonde*: work diligently, be prudent, help those in real need. A goodman makes his living by going to the sea and fetching salt to sell. He marries; his idle bride ingratiates herself with her crafty neighbors by giving away the merchandise; she also blames her husband for bringing back small loads. The salter, realizing what is going on, invites her to accompany him on his next trip: it will be a pleasant change of scene for her, and for him a little help with his burden. The trip out is agreeable, but the return is another story, and by the time they get home at midnight the young woman's ideas about her man's occupation have changed drastically. She at last appreciates the realities of his hard labor. Declining his invitation to go again for salt, she undertakes to present a different attitude to her neighbors: no money, no salt. The money is forthcoming, and the salter and his wife soon buy two horses and a cart and expand their clientele, all the while enjoying their neighbors' respect. In the epilogue the author cautions against idleness and imprudence and promotes a fitting use of one's worldly goods.

These three verse narratives all bear the imprint of a single consciousness. Philippe was much interested in people, throughout the social spectrum, interested in their motivation and their inner life even more than in their actions. In both his romances he attributes interior monologues to his characters. Granted, this was a resource of much medieval narrative and the

conflicts between, for example, Love and Reason in *Manekine* and Love and attendant powers allied against their opposites—a whole *psychomachia*—in *Jehan et Blonde* have a long prehistory. Still, Philippe can go well beyond convention. The uncertainties, the vacillations between hope and despair, trust and doubt, that plague both John and Blonde during their yearlong separation, have a ring of truth, especially when the appointed day and very hour are at hand and all is to be won or lost forever. Philippe's sympathies are clearly with young lovers and those who aid them; but even the incestuous father in the first romance repents, begs his injured daughter's pardon, and is reconciled with her; the matchmaking father in the second romance is quite ignorant that his daughter's heart belongs to her squire, but at last guessing the truth, refuses to join the spurned noble fiancé in pursuing her. Even the fiancé is, if dangerous, in the end ineffectual and rendered harmless. The salter's wife is not wicked, only young and heedless—and teachable. In fact, in all this narrative corpus there is only one thoroughly evil person, Joy's mother-in-law, who dies in her prison.

The aim of the English prose translation here offered is to make this attractive body of work accessible to readers interested in medieval romance and tale but not familiar with Old French.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



I AM GLAD TO EXPRESS once again my appreciation for the valuable help of my colleague Clare Godt, who brought to the task of touching up my Englishing of Philippe's second romance a fresh eye and a predilection for clarity of expression. Some of the French poet's prolixities and redundancies (many of them resulting from the exigencies of meter and rhyme) have been removed, by the two of us, with no loss to the narratives.

Gratitude is also due to the readers enlisted by the Pennsylvania State University Press and especially to Reader 3, who went through the entire text twice with impressive care and to good effect.

The publication of this book has been aided by a subvention from the Richard D. and Mary Jane Edwards Endowed Publication Fund at the University of Pittsburgh. It is highly gratifying that the university where I spent the whole of my academic career continues to support a professor emerita both morally and financially. To it generally, and to the School of Arts and Sciences and the administrators of the Edwards Fund in particular, my cordial thanks.





## INTRODUCTION

### The Author

ONE OF THE MOST ATTRACTIVE practitioners of verse romance, tale, and lyric in Old French was also in his personal life among the most unusual. Philippe de Remi (ca. 1205/1210–65), unlike the majority of writers who were his contemporaries, was not a churchman, nor was he a layman who versified for a living. A good many short secular pieces, poems, and songs were of course produced in the Middle Ages by amateurs, particularly members of the nobility; but in the case of Philippe we encounter a very substantial body of work: the full-length romances *Le Roman de la Manekine* and *Jehan et Blonde*, eight (and perhaps nine) long poems on a variety of topics, and ten songs with their music. It is clear from his abundant exploitation of themes, situations, narrative formulas, motifs, and rhetorical devices, and his use of frequent close, even verbatim, quotation, that he had a keen interest in the work of earlier writers and especially Chrétien de Troyes. Yet he took the further and uncommon step of trying his own hand at composition, perhaps reading the results aloud to his family and friends, possibly engaging in it simply for the sheer joy of making, or for recreation from his practical tasks.

He was in fact a busy man, functioning in the world of smallholders in the Clermont area, north of Paris. His father, Pierre, had acted as leader of the Compiègne militia at the critical Battle of Bouvines, Flanders (1214), and no doubt earned the favor of King Philip II Augustus by so doing; the land he held in fief near the village of Remi(n), now Rémy, passed to his son and so also did some continuation of royal benevolence, for by the time his father died in 1239 and perhaps beginning two years earlier, Philippe held the important office of bailiff (chief administrative and judiciary officer) for the large region of the Gâtinais, south of Paris. In this post he served Count Robert of Artois, a brother of King Louis IX, until the Count's death in 1250; subsequently he functioned from time to time as legal advisor to the widowed Countess Mahaut. And he had other preoccupations: his own

lands (held of the Abbey of St. Denis) to see to, and if possible increase; his marriage and remarriage; his son and daughter by his first wife; and, by his second wife, another son, also named Philippe, known as Philippe de Beaumanoir, the jurist.

One can only conjecture whether Philippe the romancer and poet continued to write during intervals of his official and feudal duties or whether he largely put such activity behind him. By 1255 he was designated *chevaliers* and *sires de Biaumanoir* (*miles* and *dominus* in the Latin charters). He continued to rise in the world, and his social and legal being is well documented; his literary self can only be conjectured aside from his assertion at the beginning of *Manekine* that this was his first venture in verse composition.

Someone, presumably a family member, thought well enough of Philippe's authorial efforts to put the two romances and eight long miscellaneous poems together into what amounts to an anthology (Paris, BNF fr. 1588) copied in Arras in around 1300 and embellished with many miniatures; the manuscript also includes the *Roman du Hem* of Sarrasin, internally dated to 1278. Philippe's songs are preserved in a set of eleven (one by another lyricist), grouped together in a *chansonniere* (BNF fr. 24406) of the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. One more work perhaps by him, a nonsense poem of one hundred verses titled “Les Resveries,” is in BNF fr. 837, a miscellany copied in the thirteenth century.

### The Afterlife of the Narratives

The existence of only one copy might imply a narrow readership. Belying this is the fact that Philippe's romance *Manekine* may have been drawn on by Jehan Maillart in his *Roman du Comte d'Anjou* (1316) and most probably by the unknown authors of two fourteenth-century epics: *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople* and *Lion de Bourges*. It certainly furnished the plot of a Parisian miracle play of around 1371, *La Fille du roy de Hongrie*, and was put into French prose by Jehan Wauquelin in the mid-fifteenth century. (Wauquelin also prepared a *mise en prose* of *La Belle Hélène*.) If, as appears possible, *Manekine* was known to Nicholas Trevet and used by him in his Anglo-Norman prose tale of Constance (after 1334), then it is linked through him to Gower and to Chaucer. As for *Jehan et Blonde*, it may have contributed to one tale (number 193) in the Latin compilation *Gesta Romanorum* (late thirteenth or early fourteenth century); there are many close resemblances, but

then both works make use of widespread motifs. Philippe's romance may have provided material for two French prose compositions of the late fifteenth century. One is a tale included in the *Nouvelles de Sens*, where we meet the same story line of lowly squire and highborn damsel who fall in love; there is a separation (the boy promising to come back and the girl swearing to wed no one else), the prospect of her being married to another, the incognito hero's return in the company of the noble fiancé, a series of riddles explicated by the young lady's father, and at last the triumph of love. The second work is *Le Roman de Jehan de Paris*; here the rivals are the King of England (the official suitor) and the King of France (disguised as a rich merchant); the prize is the King of Spain's daughter, and some of the same riddles are brought out; but what tips the scales toward France is the stunning display of wealth by the putative Parisian bourgeois Jehan coupled with the Spanish princess's strong predilection for him.

If this short romance is indeed a partial retelling of *Jehan et Blonde*, it attests to its long afterlife: *Jehan de Paris* is preserved in two manuscript copies of the sixteenth century and also a printed text of around 1533, followed by five more editions by the end of that century. It was translated into Flemish in the seventeenth century and dramatized in Paris in the nineteenth; in this new guise it soon appeared in English translation.

### The Narrative Works

The *Roman de la Manekine* (8,590 lines) draws on themes and situations common to several medieval genres and also found in history, legend, and folklore. Its point of departure is the obligation of a widowed king of Hungary, childless but for a daughter, to remarry in order to ensure a succession in the male line. Having gratified through a rash promise his dying wife's request not to remarry or, if forced for political reasons to do so, to wed only someone much like herself, he commands a worldwide search that ends in failure. Urged to wed his own daughter Joy (Joïe), and at last inclined to do so, he commands her obedience. Horrified, the pious girl mutilates herself so as to be disqualified for queenship. Her furious father condemns her to be burned for disobedience; but she is instead put to sea alone, in a sailless and rudderless boat, by the kindly seneschal and the jailer, who then stage a mock execution. Joy's voyage, spent in prayer, soon brings her to Scotland; here her beauty dazzles the young King and induces him to marry her, although she refuses to give her name or origin and so is nicknamed "Manekine" (the

maimed woman; see *Manekine*, n. 30). The young couple is happy together; but once his wife is pregnant the King opts to go tourneying in France, where he still is when his wife is delivered. The good news dispatched to him is altered by the spiteful Queen Mother and becomes an announcement of the birth of a monster; the King's reply, with its order to guard mother and child until his return, is in turn changed to a command to burn them forthwith. Again, compassionate hands put Joy and her baby into the same boat that had brought her to Scotland; again, a charade of burning is put on, and Joy, appealing to the Virgin, voyages in prayer and without harm. This second journey brings Joy to Rome, where she is met by well-meaning fishermen and then taken in by the wealthy and God-fearing Senator. She lives in his house for seven years while her husband, having learned the truth, frantically searches for her throughout the known world. At last, praying fervently, he is guided to Rome and to the Senator's house; here the spouses are reunited and the King rejoices in his long-lost son. Meanwhile, Joy's father, tardily repenting the supposed death of his daughter, also travels to Rome, to seek papal absolution. His public confession on Holy Thursday reunites the family; and the King of Scotland at last learns his wife's identity. After Joy's severed hand is discovered in a nearby fountain and brought into the church it is reattached by the Pope. The physical joining of hand to arm corresponds to the healing of the broken relationship of father and daughter. A heavenly voice directs all the principals to go to the fountain, to see, catch, and open a great fish that had swallowed the hand. This being done, they find in the fish a reliquary in which the hand had long been preserved. Joy, the person and the emotion, are restored to society. The heroine is declared to be heiress to two kingdoms; her father abdicates in favor of his son-in-law, and the three generations live out their lives in harmony and good works.

As for Philippe's second long narrative, *Jehan et Blonde* (6,262 lines), it belongs to another tradition and manner: that of the idyllic romance with a “realistic” tonality. It is a tale of young love and the overcoming of obstacles: the social disparity of the lovers; the haughtiness of the class-conscious but at last tenderhearted heroine; the challenges of absence; the appearance of a ridiculous but powerful rival for the damsel's hand; a nocturnal elopement and flight toward the sea; then a battle with the rival and his many supporters to escape capture, separation, and misery. But aided by a few loyal supporters (commoners all), John triumphs in the fight and escapes, wounded but not mortally so, as do his friends. The social and moral virtues of the hero, recognized by his beloved, are eventually acknowledged by her noble father, and spectacularly by the King of France; the runaway lovers are able

to marry, the hero is ennobled and knighted, and all is well in the end. The tale is spun out with elements that give a coloring of actuality. The hero comes from a knightly but numerous and indebted family and must make his way in the world, going off from France to England to seek a master. Employed by the Earl of Oxford, he exerts himself to behave acceptably through table service and French lessons for the Earl's beautiful daughter, Blonde, as well as through affability and general usefulness. Smitten by love, he becomes distracted thereby, to the point of cutting his own fingers while carving Blonde's meat; this affliction is doubled by unrequited love, which twice brings him near death before Blonde relents and comes to share his affection. She, however, well knows what her parents would make of such a *mésalliance* and grasps the risk of pregnancy, which would spoil everything; the lovers' consensual chastity, which prolongs their secret idyll for two years, contrasts with the carnal yet sterile passion of many medieval literary lovers. John leaves his beloved not for war, crusade, or tournament but on family business. Blonde, having made John promise to return and take her away in exactly a year, must outmaneuver her father, who plans to marry her off before the date the young people have set. Blonde's official suitor is oafish and slow-witted, no match for the returning John, who catches up with him incognito, teases him with riddles, and has to endure his rival's excruciating attempts at speaking French. The frequent humorous touches that are intermingled with courtly sentiments and decorum, the geographical accuracy of the several trips between Dammartin and Oxford, the long passages in Franglais, the representation of all classes and many occupations, the cordial relations between hero and commonality and especially between him and his devoted and resourceful attendant, Robin, the reiterated mention of money both as sign of status among the grandees and as reward for faithful service from those who work for a living—all these elements confer on this romance a patina of reality.

Philippe produced one more narrative, "Le Conte de fole larguesce" ("The Tale of Foolish Generosity"), a short story undergirded by a moral. Like his romances, this tale is composed in rhyming couplets, the verse form of preference for French narrative composition in the twelfth century and roughly the first half of the thirteenth. The "Conte" figures in the set of miscellaneous poems following the two romances in the same manuscript. That it is the third in the series probably has no chronological significance, for the eight poems are arranged in descending order of length. At 426 lines, this work, like the two longer narratives, draws on established literary traditions, primarily that of the *fabliau*: the small-town setting, the man who gets his

living from hard physical effort, his young and imprudent wife, the gossiping and grasping neighbors, the importance of money and of mental sharpness. But there is no wandering monk or lustful priest to corrupt and disrupt, nor is the husband verbally or physically abusive when he realizes that his merchandise of salt is being not sold but given away by his wife, who blames him for not bringing home larger quantities. Instead, he agrees to fetch more if she will lend a hand, and proposes that she accompany him on his next trip, some four leagues each way: it will be a pleasant change for her. So it is, outward bound; but carrying part of the load on the way back teaches her a painful lesson and makes her appreciate her man's hard work. Refusing his invitation to repeat the experience, she promises to blame him no more for the smallness of his loads and to demand a good price for the merchandise she sells. So she does, the neighbors proceed to pay, and the prospering couple are able to purchase a pair of horses and a cart and thereby to expand their retail business. This tale is enclosed between a cautionary prologue and epilogue, both of them warning against imprudence, contrasting foolish and wise generosity, stressing the appreciation of labor that leads to prosperity, and teaching the obligation to make wise and charitable use of one's goods, coming as they do from God. (The epilogue also warns against idleness, as does the prologue of *Jehan et Blonde*.)

The tale and the two romances show a family resemblance. They are the work of a man morally and socially conservative, integrated into the institutional structures of his time and place. Proverbs and proverbial-sounding aphorisms bestrew his stories, as do pious formulas and actions and (in *Manekine*) some lengthy prayers. Beyond these conventions lie real charity and kindness: of the characters toward each other (with a few wicked exceptions) and of the author toward his characters, at whom he often smiles indulgently. Philippe was well versed in the secular literature of narrative and lyric generally available to a reading layperson; in his romances there are passages that suggest inspiration from the *De amore* of Andreas Capellanus and perhaps the *Roman de la Rose* of Guillaume de Lorris (the lengthy definition of love and its effects in *Manekine*, the allegory of Love's assault and triumph in *Jehan et Blonde*), and from a whole catalogue of writers for the protracted descriptions of feminine beauty in both romances. Philippe's debts to Chrétien de Troyes are particularly noticeable in the areas of motifs and verbal expression; he even on occasion resorts to direct quotation. On the other hand, and unlike many of his contemporaries, Philippe opted not to follow his famous predecessor in exploiting the vogue for Arthurian characters, situations, and atmosphere. There is in fact none of the Celtic Otherworld

in his narratives. Their supernatural elements are entirely Christian and orthodox, demonstrating the workings of Providence, God's and the Virgin's protection, the eventual recompense of true believers, and the extension of divine pardon to sinners who repent. Faith and steadfastness rewarded is one of the dominating themes in *Manekine*. *Jehan et Blonde* focuses more strongly on fidelity in human love and on the recognition by human agents of social and moral virtues. The interplay of psychological forces not only between the lovers but also between Blonde's father and her suitor, and later between him and his disobedient but loving daughter and her new husband, is observed with much sympathetic care. And the wedding night of the eloping pair, united at last, manages to be long and highly erotic while avoiding any sort of specificity or obscenity—no mean feat.

Along with psychological concerns Philippe demonstrates a considerable flair for the dramatic: the big scene enacted in full sight of a crowd. In *Manekine* there are two "executions" by royal decree; in both cases the royal will is frustrated in a charade of burning the heroine alive, but the throngs first of Hungarian and later of Scottish spectators are ignorant of this and react with violent expressions of grief and indignation against the party held responsible. The scene in which the King of Hungary makes public confession, he and Joy recognize each other, her husband at last learns her identity, and her newly found hand is reattached to her arm is played out in St. Peter's Basilica on Holy Thursday before (seemingly) the entire citizenry of Rome. That this healing was effectuated by God is declared in the hearing of all by a voice from Heaven, explaining how the hand was preserved and brought to Rome. (The healing of the innocent sufferer, along with the three voyages guided by unseen hands in response to fervent prayer, brings a hagiographical quality to the romance.) All the Romans rejoice at these signs of God's favor; the Pope proclaims a miracle; there is general festivity on that day and even more on Easter. The reunion of the family, and Joy's restoration to her heritage, are lengthily celebrated in Armenia, Hungary, and Scotland; the orderly passage of dominion confers a political dimension on the apotheosis of heroine and hero.

*Jehan et Blonde* depicts no miracle; but it too is charged with drama. For two years the protagonists risk detection, denunciation, and the ruin of their hopes, and John returns incognito on the very eve of Blonde's arranged marriage. To their elopement there are obstacles aplenty, the danger increasing as they approach the Channel. A high point is the nightlong battle on Dover Beach, during which, against heavy odds, John manages to protect his beloved, strike down his rival, take the rival's armor and

warhorse, and with two companions and twenty mariners rout the increasingly few and disheartened men-at-arms opposing him. Blonde, captured by the enemy but then rescued by John, is both spectator and cheerleader, urging him on with stirring words. The whole episode, with its preliminaries and the concluding escape to the waiting ship, takes up about one-sixth of the narrative and contains details recalling the *Chanson de Roland*. John's courage and prowess have been demonstrated to all the survivors; news of his exploit reaches and impresses the King of France and, through his agency, Blonde's father, the Earl of Oxford. The lovers have realized a goal long striven for; and to their private happiness is coupled public recognition: John is created Count of Dammartin (thus equaling Blonde's father in rank) and his social ascension is marked splendidly by the arrival at Dammartin of the Earl of Oxford and his retinue and by the King and Queen of France, the King to perform and the others to witness the promotion to knighthood of John and his brothers. The entire population of Dammartin, some thousands, turns out for the occasion. Having achieved happiness for themselves, the protagonists become the instruments of well-being for their families, their loyal servants, and the inhabitants of two counties, one English and the other French.

Philippe's predilection for communal action, for psychological truth, and for daily life rather than the marvelous (except for divine intervention, in *Manekine*), marks him as a man with an independent streak at a period when the exploitation, expansion, and prosification of Arthurian romances was very much alive and well received. This independence, and the eclectic nature of the materials on which Philippe did draw, may well be ascribed to his status as an amateur who read widely but wrote to please himself and entertain his small circle of friends and kin.

### On Translating Philippe de Remi

Philippe's narrative oeuvre, while well known to students of Old French literature, merits a wider readership than it has hitherto obtained. Here it is moved from French verse into English prose and accompanied by notes, a glossary, and an index of proper names, in a presentation meant to be useful to those interested in medieval romance and tale but who do not read Old French, or not easily.

The present translation is intended to stand by itself, while yet being propped by additional material explaining contemporary institutions,

customs, objects, place-names, and frames of reference. To *Manekine* and *Jehan et Blonde* I have added the “Conte de fole larguesce”; it is the only other narrative work of this author and, I think, deserves inclusion.

### The Manuscript

Putting these texts into modern English is both facilitated and hindered by the fact that they are preserved in a unique copy (BNF fr. 1588) made by two scribes (of whom the first broke off about one-seventh of the way through the first romance). Both copyists were reasonably conscientious; both made mistakes in, for example, spelling and agreement and sense, which in the absence of other manuscripts not every reader would brand as errors and not every error-suspecting reader would attempt to correct in the same way. They also (as was common with medieval scribes) added dialectal touches that, as the rhymes suggest, were not so strongly marked in the case of the author and of the authorial model(s) they had before them. Contributing to the challenge first to editors and then to translators is the physical deterioration of the surviving copy. This is particularly notable in the first several folios, so that a degree of conjecture is indicated in deciphering a fair number of words and lines. Such problems (which of course affect any translation) are indicated in the notes.

### Editions

The works of Philippe de Remi in BNF fr. 1588 have been edited, severally, partially, and in toto, over the past 170 years. Francisque Michel brought out an edition of *Manekine* alone in 1840, and in 1858 Leroux de Lincy published one of *Jehan et Blonde*. Henri-Louis Bordier made available in 1869 a richly documented study of Philippe’s family as well as a partial edition, interspersed with summaries, of both romances; he included a full presentation of all the independent poems in the manuscript. For more than a century the edition of reference was that of Herman Suchier in two volumes (1884–85), providing a complete text of the two romances and the eight long poems, accompanied by a wide-ranging exploration of both the literary past and the afterlife of the romances and by a detailed linguistic study. The songs, in a separate manuscript (BNF fr. 24006), were only slightly later identified as belonging to the same author; the texts thereof were printed by Alfred

Jeanroy in 1897 and by me in 2001. (The lyrics along with their music were brought out by Hans Tischler in 1997.) A set of independent verses, the “Resveries” (BNF fr. 837), perhaps by Philippe, figures in my 1999–2001 presentation of his works. This last comprises an edition and line-by-line English version of the two romances, an edition of the rest of his oeuvre, copious critical apparatus, and contributions by Alison Stones and Roger Middleton, all in two volumes.

### Earlier Translations

Translations of the romances into modern French and into English in fact go back to the 1980s: Christiane Marchello-Nizia (*La Manekine*, 1980) and Irene Gnarra (*Philippe de Remi's La Manekine*, 1988) put *Manekine* into, respectively, modern French prose and an English line-by-line version facing the original; as for *Jehan et Blonde*, Sylvie Lécuyer published a modern French prose reworking (*Philippe de Remi, le Roman de Jehan et Blonde*, 1987). English versions of *Manekine* and *Jehan et Blonde* (now independent of the Old French originals, revised, and written out as prose) are offered here. “Le Conte de fole larguesce” (one of the eight long poems and the only narrative among them) is included as well, and so is made available in English for the first time. (To my knowledge, the “Conte” has not indeed previously been put into any modern language.)

### This Translation, Again

This Englishing of Philippe’s three narrative works reflects a number of challenges that any translator must grapple with, even when dealing with near-contemporary texts. Complicating the task is the fact that Philippe was born some eight centuries ago, and born into a world whose structures and institutions are to us exotic if not totally unfamiliar. Monarchy, the feudal system, land tenure, inheritance laws, authority both within the family and in society at large, social categories, manners and morals, fighting techniques and equipment, the influence of the Church with its rites and clergy, all underlie the fiction produced in the Middle Ages. These matters are here designated by English equivalents, if any, and explicated in the Notes.

The narrative works offered here share other traits of medieval storytelling: inconsistency in verb tenses, a confusing abundance of pronouns where more nouns and names would be helpful, parenthetical remarks by the narrator, narrative markers (for example, “I shall leave ... and turn to ...”), and the like. Further complicating the translator’s task is the fact that Philippe, like most of the romancers of the twelfth century and his part of the thirteenth, wrote in verse, specifically in octosyllabic couplets. This is a useful phenomenon for editors trying to produce a correct text and being guided by meter and rhyme (errors in either furnishing a clue that a line may be corrupt). It can, though, make life a burden for translators, who must choose between reproducing fillers and tautologies and prolixities in the original (“without delay” “joy and delight,” “pain and suffering,” “here the story relates,” and so on, as well as long and perhaps overlong expansions of a theme, or emotion, or description, or situation) and getting on with the job. In spite of Philippe’s disclaimer at the end of his initial paragraph, he does indeed on occasion stretch out his lines—not to lie (how could we tell?) but to achieve the requisite count of syllables and to reach for a rhyme. Certain colors of rhetoric are also not likely to gratify modern taste. In the version facing my 1999–2001 edition I conscientiously reproduced such material, as an aid to the comprehension of the original; here I have taken the liberty of abridging some repetitions, on occasion substituting proper names for pronouns, and moving all the narration (but not of course the speeches) into the past tense.

Another matter arising is the question of register. All three narratives have an oral quality; it is most pronounced in the prologues and epilogues, but within these works as well we are reminded from time to time of the presence of the narrator. Philippe draws on the conventions of orality: these are tales being told *now*, by someone reciting preexisting accounts, who is well acquainted with the true stories, and who considers them worth his retelling and our hearing. He also on occasion acts as commentator. The narrator is both outside the fictions and inside them, and he has his own voice and authority.

This body of work brings before us a large cast of characters drawn from multiple social strata. They all express themselves in standard thirteenth-century French (except for the ridiculous Earl of Gloucester in *Jehan et Blonde*); yet in the original Old French there is clear stylistic contrast between the speech of royalty and court society on the one hand and of fishermen and salt vendors on the other.





*THE ROMANCE OF MANEKINE*

PHILIPPE DE REMI HAS AIMED, in composing this romance, at giving delight to all his hearers—and benefit as well, if they care to pay attention. But if there is anyone present who is pained by listening to something worthwhile, for God’s sake let him not stay here! It is neither courteous nor sensible to disturb a storyteller. I would as soon cut peat in a bog as relate anything before people who are full of base qualities, those who reveal all the bad things they know about while they are mum on the subject of anything good. And so, before beginning, I wish to invite them to depart, or at least not to heckle or make noise; for a fine tale goes to waste when it is not understood with the heart. Therefore I ask all ill-disposed persons not to listen to this tale that I am putting into verse. And if I am not skilled at clever rhyming, no one should be astonished, for I know little of scholarly matters and never composed in verse before.<sup>1</sup> I have embarked on it now because the account at hand draws on true material, and no one should keep to himself something that may give pleasure to others. And now I pray God that He let me carry to completion the work I have undertaken, and that He bestow blessings on all who think well of it. I shall begin forthwith, not lying by so much as a single word, except to stretch out my lines as straight as I can align them.

Once upon a time there was a wise and courteous king who ruled over all of Hungary.<sup>2</sup> He had a highborn wife, the daughter of the King of Armenia. She was so perfected in loveliness and virtue that anyone could travel for a long time before finding her equal. I shall not pause to describe her, but launch into the tale, which relates that they were together for ten years without having offspring except for one daughter. But she, to my knowledge, was the loveliest of any ever conceived of humankind. The child received the name of Joy because of the many people who were joyful at her birth. And God, who favors all good things, bestowed upon her all that ought to be provided by Nature, who unstintingly gave her beauty, goodness, discernment, and nobleness. Never was a girl of her age considered to be so wise.

Then came Death, who will never weary of turning high things to low and who spares neither king nor queen, but changes sunny weather into fog and makes happy people sorrowful. Nor will she ever take ransom for

anyone she holds in prison, young or old, except for the bare, livid body; for this, everyone laments. She did not await the Queen's old age, but so attacked her that her complexion, lovelier than a budding rose, lost all its color. The Queen was quite bedridden. This was far from suiting the inhabitants of the country, who were in great distress for her, or the King. He stayed beside her, unable to tear himself away; he could not help weeping when he could find no physician who knew anything about curing her.

One day he said: "My dear lady,<sup>3</sup> I am very concerned to see you so pale. Given your age, you ought not to leave me yet." She said, "Sir, truly, neither old age nor youth averts the will of God. Often the first bier is filled by the person expected to occupy the last one. If God wishes it, so do I. I well know that I must die and that it cannot be otherwise. But by that great love that you have often shown me, I beg you to grant me something as reward for all I have done well."<sup>4</sup> "Certainly, lady," the King answered. "There is nothing in this world that any man could do for a woman that I should neglect to do for you. Just speak your will; I am eager to carry it out, I swear it on my fidelity."<sup>5</sup> "Now my mind is at ease, sir, and so I entreat that after me you will never take a wife. And if the princes and counts of this country do not want the kingdom of Hungary to pass to my daughter after you, but insist that you marry in order to have a son, I make this concession: if you can have a wife who resembles me, you may form a union with her and avoid all others, if you are to keep your promise to me."<sup>6</sup> "Certainly, lady, I grant you this; I shall in no way fail to keep my word."

When the Queen had gained this point, she turned her thoughts toward her soul and made her confession. She felt Death pressing upon her; she asked for the last rites, and they were all given to her.<sup>6</sup> Then she passed away from this world. Many people wore themselves out with weeping for her. Even the King fainted over her many times, without anyone being able to comfort him. When he saw the Queen borne before him, dead on her bier, he lamented bitterly. No greater mourning was ever seen. She was buried in noble style. Her tomb was made of silver, gold, and precious stones, good, bright, and filled with power. The dukes and the prelates who were at her burial were portrayed on the tomb in ivory carving of wonderfully fine workmanship. They spoke together in pairs and it seemed as if they were overwhelmed with grief.<sup>7</sup> When the funeral Mass had been sung they returned from the church. Some of them departed; but the great barons remained to comfort their lord, whose heart was heavy.

All deaths must be forgotten. The King honored the covenant that he had with the Queen. He was for some years with his daughter Joy, whom he

greatly cherished because of the love that he had had for her mother. Every day the young lady grew in sense and beauty, in worth and faithfulness and good manners, until she reached the age of sixteen. She was devoted to serving and honoring the Virgin Mary. Daily she went to worship her with prayers that she knew, before an image designed in the Virgin's likeness. This was Joy's delight and her training.

Now I turn to the barons of the country, who by and by held a meeting. Many of the great personages attended it. When all were assembled, they elected the wisest one to declare what had brought them into conference. "My lords," he said, "hear me. In this land we have a king who had a wise and virtuous wife. Her death is a great loss to us. Of that consort he has no heir except for a daughter who, truth to tell, is very good and courteous. Nevertheless the Kingdom of Hungary will be in peril if a woman has it in her power. We would do well therefore to go to the King and beg him earnestly to take a wife according to our counsel." They answered: "This is good advice." All agreed with this proposal; there were no dissenters. On the third day they went to the King where he was in residence and requested of him that he marry for the honor of the kingdom. He replied, "My lords, I shall not. I shall never take another wife, for I made a covenant with my spouse that never would I remarry unless (I must not lie about it) I should find her equal in beauty, in behavior, in elegance. And I do not believe that such a woman is to be found under the moon. But if she can be found, then for the welfare of the country you see me ready and willing to comply with your wishes."

When the barons had heard his answer they chose twelve messengers, courtly, wise, and well taught, who knew several languages and who had all seen the Queen. (She had provided for them and advanced them, and so they minded less the great hardships they endured in going in search of her equal.) And these twelve, two by two, by order of the King and the barons of the land, went off on what would be a futile errand. Once they had as much gold and silver and provisions as they wanted, they decided that they would seek her for a year and then return. Six of them, in three groups, went toward the east and the others<sup>8</sup> toward the west, searching through many countries. They saw the daughters of many a king and count and thought nothing of them. They experienced much toil and hardship, without attaining the goal of their quest. The account of their troubles would make for painful listening. After seeking in numerous places, without hearing any news pleasing to them, they returned at the beginning of the next year—but not as they had set out. They had departed rich and happy, poor and downcast they came home; they had left in two ships, but returned in six.

At Christmastime they found the King and all his barons with him where he was holding a great plenary court.<sup>9</sup> There were many sorts of people there: ladies, and many a damsel who thought herself the most beautiful. At dinnertime<sup>10</sup> the messengers arrived and narrated their fruitless quest. Hearing the report, the barons scarcely rejoiced. But the messengers were not blamed. Far from being paid with straw,<sup>11</sup> they got white silver and red gold, with which each one could make up a fortune. I shall leave them and speak of the King and the barons who were with him. At the court were also a number of archbishops and abbots and bishops. There too was lovely Joy, with many a lady in her company. The damsel was sitting at table, served by one of the barons in attendance. (May God give him suffering! For great misery came upon the young lady through him, as you will soon hear.) This baron was much troubled because the King had no son. He too had heard the messengers. He looked at the damsel, who was pink and white; it seemed to him that she was her mother, except that she was younger.

When they had all eaten, the barons of the country promptly gathered in council. And the count who had carried lovely Joy's platter said to them: "So help me God, my lords, the King will never have a wife, nor will anyone find one such as he wants to have, unless, to speak truly, it is arranged that he can marry his daughter; except for her, there is not her mother's peer in the world. But if the prelates who are here, who will be in a difficult position if a bad ruler comes over them, wished to bring it about that the marriage of those two would be valid, I believe it would be to the benefit of everyone in this country." There were those who agreed with these words, and those who disagreed strongly. They argued at length among themselves. At last the clerics concurred that they would entreat the King to do it and would take the responsibility upon themselves. They would show the Pope the great benefit for which they had acted.<sup>12</sup>

They promptly went to the King and drew him into a council, saying: "Dear lord, because you cherish us, we should like to have an heir of yours to keep this kingdom. But you have sworn an oath to have no wife except for someone who closely resembled the spouse you had first. You see that in no way can a woman like that be found, except for one whom you are bound to love: your wise daughter. And so we beg you to take her in marriage. We advise you to do this, and we take on the responsibility for the matter. Do not be anxious about this, for a person may well commit a small wrong in order to avoid a greater one." "My lords," said the King, "I tell you that I shall not do this, not for anything. It would be too great a transgression." "Indeed you will, Sire! Even your clergy wish you to do it. And if

you refuse, your liege men will oppose you.”<sup>13</sup> When the King saw that his barons wished him to do their will, he asked for a delay until Candlemas.<sup>14</sup> Let them come back then and he would tell them whether he would refuse or comply. They granted him this and broke up the council. On the following day they took leave of the King and departed.

The King remained with his daughter, cherishing and honoring her. One day he entered her tile-paved chamber as she was combing her hair. She looked around, and seeing her father close to her she blushed with embarrassment.<sup>15</sup> “Sir, welcome!” she said. “Daughter,” he said, “good day!” He took her by the hand and seated her beside him. Looking at her very attentively, he saw that never did Nature form a woman more skillfully than Joy, whom she had adorned with beauty greater than Helen’s,<sup>16</sup> the cause of much suffering to the Trojans, killed, vanquished or exiled. But it has often befallen that through women the wisest and the most scholarly men have been destroyed; and sometimes with no guilt attached to the women for whom those men committed follies and excesses. The consequences turned upon the men, and upon the women also, for as is often said: one person’s wrongdoing is often paid for by someone who is blameless.<sup>17</sup> So did lovely Joy pay. For her father, touched by the spark which Love knows so well how to strike, let himself enter her path little by little; he was unaware of it, but he looked at Joy more willingly than ever before. Reason,<sup>18</sup> which set herself up in opposition, told him to depart lest he fall into danger. So he did; he took his leave of Joy and she commended him to Jesus. In departing, he carried away with him the dart of Love, which caused him much distress; she shot him so subtly through the eyes that she struck him in the heart.<sup>19</sup> He could never afterward find a cure before undergoing much affliction.

One day, Reason gaining hold, he took to complaining: “I may well despise myself, since I am not to win what my foolish heart desires. Love, which treats me like this, is behaving outrageously, making me love with a base and unreasonable passion whether I wish it or not. I well know that the one for whom I am so tormented is my own daughter. This frame of mind is foolish and ignoble; I have been brought to it by my barons and my people, who have pushed me into it. Yet why do I sigh about it? Do I not have from the prelates not only the permission but the entreaty to marry her? Unless I myself have some objection, I may both relieve my longing and also satisfy the greatest men of my realm. The other day, when I refused to grant them this, I was behaving like a fool. Like a fool? No, I acted wisely, for it is not at all customary that anyone should take his daughter in marriage. They make me contemplate folly. Folly? Yes, so they do, for there is nothing

reasonable in it. No, I shall not wed her. It would be outrageous. I must promptly withdraw my heart from her, my heart which keeps thinking of her. But from now on I forbid it to do so.”

Thus the King debated within himself. But Love tried another strategy, for she told him of the young girl’s great beauty and her manners, thereby canceling out completely the thought that he had had a short while ago; he did not in the slightest remember it. He was so stirred up that the fire could not be extinguished; he had to remain in that mad inclination. Thus he was of two minds, made to suffer by Sense and also by Love, who were at war within his heart so that they pushed the King now toward Sense, now toward Folly. Love bound him to a foolish inclination, and Sense attacked him from the other side, showing him that he must draw back from what Love advised him to do, since great misfortune would soon result. But this was useless, for Love attacked him so fiercely that whatever Sense showed him was contradicted by Love. And when Sense saw that the King was leaning toward Love and abandoning Sense, it sadly departed. Love, though, did not leave him, but was glad when Sense fled, for now the King was in her power and she did as she liked with him. Over and over she made him suffer, leading him on until she brought him to the decision to speak of it to his daughter, for whom Love was tormenting his heart.

And so he came into her chamber, where she received him amiably. Taking her by the hand, he seated himself beside her on a fine coverlet. There was no one there to disturb them. “Dear daughter,” said the King, “don’t be displeased by what I want to tell you.” “Surely, sir, what you wish cannot offend me. Say whatever seems good to you; whatever a daughter should do for a father, I must not refuse.” “My child, that is a fine answer; and I shall indeed not tell you anything that you ought not to do for me. For with the approval of my barons, I am giving you a husband, one who is by no means far away. I had a covenant with your mother that I would never, as long as I lived, remarry if I did not find her equal. But no such woman can be found—except for you; this is how things stand. And my barons do not want the Kingdom of Hungary to remain without a male heir after me. Therefore the clergy have given me leave to wed *you*; *you* shall be crowned Queen. At Christmas I would not agree to this, but told them all that at this coming Candlemas I would give them an answer. And now I am indeed of a mind to do it, provided that you agree.”

The young girl understood what she was being told; but she was devoted to God, and so her father’s proposal revolted her. She said, “Father, if you please, you can leave off such talk; for no one could make me think it right

for a man to marry his own child, according to our law. People who give you ungodly advice and urge you to do such a thing are full of wickedness. I'd never agree to it, not for anything; I would rather die. I am not obliged to do what would put my soul in peril. Far better that you should repent of the pledge that you made to my lady mother, for you made her a foolish promise. Take a wife who will bring you honor. In the whole world there is no man so proud that he would not rejoice if you wanted to have his daughter. And so I beg you to leave me in peace. My heart will never, for anyone, be brought around to wedding my father. A woman who loses her soul pays too dearly."

Hearing that he was making no headway in the matter of most importance to him, the King was even more determined than ever. He replied angrily: "Indeed, daughter, I shall do it, since I have leave to do so. You have answered me foolishly; but I realize that you do not know any better. If you do not wish to do my will, you will soon suffer for it. I shall never entreat you about this again. Candlemas is near, when all my barons will return, and I know that they will urge me. On that day I shall take you in marriage. Until then, I shall say no more to you." Before she could answer, the King left the chamber, without another word.<sup>20</sup> The damsel remained there, in great distress. "I wish I had never been born," she said, "since I am now brought to this: that my father will marry me. He will not give it up for anything, since he and his barons are so set on it. But I would rather be dead, for it is against the Heavenly King, and no one can reasonably do what they want to make me do. I really think that they will compel me. They will not leave off for anything I say—unless they see in me something that will make them renounce this project."

Time passed, and Candlemas came. The barons, knights, and prelates of the country all returned to court. They were received joyously by the King, who assembled so many people that it seemed as if never before had he held so great a court. All sorts of goods and riches were offered in profusion; everyone took as much as he wanted. It was so ordered by the King, in the expectation that he would soon gain what he desired. He cared nothing for the refusal that his daughter had made, for he took it into his mind that a woman's thoughts are so much wind. He well believed that he could overcome her resistance at the bidding of the barons and the prelates in attendance, who came to him and urged him not to disdain their counsel and to take Joy in marriage. The King answered that he would do it willingly, since it was needful and they all agreed on it. They were delighted that the King was minded to do their will, and told him that they would go to fetch Joy. "We wish no postponement of this match, lest it come to nothing."

They believed that they held in their hands something they were actually very far from grasping. To the hall Joy had sent a spy, who was eager to learn all their deliberations. And as soon as he had overheard them, back he came and told Joy how the knights and counts were coming to fetch her for the King. When she heard this she was so terrified that she did not know what to do; she burst into tears. Now she was certain that unless she could find some way out, her arguments alone would be worth little to her. But she would not wait for the courtiers to come. She left her maids-in-waiting, none of whom took notice, and slipped away. She went along from chamber to chamber, until she came into a kitchen adjoining the wall of the great hall on one side; from the other side the kitchen bucket would be lowered into an extremely swift river, not far from the sea. All the cooks in the palace had gone to see their lord pledge his troth to his daughter, so that Joy was all alone, and full of consternation. On the sideboard she found a great meat cleaver. The young girl picked it up, and had the idea of cutting off her hand and letting it fall into the river, called the Yse,<sup>21</sup> which is wide and deep. Then she began to lament: “Alas! Now I can truly claim that I have come to an evil pass. For if I cut off my hand, the King will take no pity on me; in truth he will know that I have done it to thwart him. How unfortunate I am! I know that he will have me burned at the stake; I shall have no other reward for it, truly. I must be mad, to want to bring about my death in anguish while I can well save myself and avoid this pain. How? By wedding my father. My father? Alas! A bitter life I should have, through fear for my soul. Virgin Mary, sweet Lady, I ask, I beg your counsel: please intercede with your Son about this. Since with my whole heart I plead for help, I know that I shall not be refused.”

Joy struggled and agonized until she heard the hue and cry of those who were in her chamber, meaning to escort her to the King. Now she saw that there could be no more indecision. Holding the great knife in her right hand, she stretched out her left hand until it was on the windowsill. Never before did a woman do this: she raised the knife very high and struck her fist so hard that she made it fly far down into the river. She fainted from the pain. While she lay unconscious her hand was swallowed by a fish, one called a sturgeon. (It seemed very happy about this; it went frisking downstream.) Recovering from her faint, Joy managed with her other hand to wrap a handkerchief around her stump, which hurt very much. Her complexion, usually rosy, was now colorless (which was not surprising). She emerged from the kitchen and returned to her chamber, where she found four counts waiting for her. They were very pleased to see her, and said: “My lady, it is a

fine piece of news that we are bringing you. But be glad! You will be queen of Hungary. The King awaits you in the great hall; through us he commands you to come to him without delay. The King well deserves to be honored by you, and so do all those of the country who have striven and searched so much that you will have a golden crown on your head. The one who does this for you gives you a fine gift. Now come along, for they are all asking for you. The prelates who are awaiting you will sever this bond of kinship; they will marry you and the King.”

The young girl answered briefly that since the King had summoned her she would go to hear his pleasure. Pale and wan, she went off with the escorting counts and many noble damsels. She was led into the great hall where all the barons were gathered and, around them, many a knight who loved the young girl for the great goodness they knew to be in her. They were all glad at her arrival; the King greeted her amiably. She answered appropriately, wishing that God might grant them a good day. The King took Joy by the hand, then embraced her warmly. Glancing down, he noticed her bandaged stump, “*Daughter,*” he said, “*how did you get this hurt that gives you such trouble?*”<sup>22</sup> He explained to her all that had been said to him. The speech pleased her little, and to whatever he told her she responded with few words: “*Sir, I have understood you well. But I may not be a queen, for I do not have a left hand, and a king may not take a wife who does not have all her members, upon my soul!*” Then she drew out her stump, bound up with a kerchief.

When the King and the assembly saw the arm and perceived that the hand had been taken off, in no time at all their happiness turned to dismay. Never before in so short a space did joy turn to such sorrow; for they took to shedding tears without end. The King, who very well knew that she had done it intentionally to avoid complying with his will, took no account of the steadfastness for which she had mutilated herself, but fell into such wickedness because of frustrated desire that he had her seized by his guards and put into a dark, grim dungeon. He swore to God that she would be burned alive the next day—but he would not be there; he did not want pity to take hold of him and perhaps cause him to relent. He called his seneschal to him and commanded that, without any opposition, on the third day he was to burn the Princess at the stake, “*If you wish to carry out my will; and if you do not do it promptly, I shall have the same done to you. If ever I get you in my power you will suffer for it and so will any man of your family afterward.*” (The barons were dismayed at this but did not dare to show it.) “*Sire,*” he said, “*I shall do it, since I have the order. I should not dare to neglect it, however much it may grieve me.*”

Thus the court broke up, a court of weeping and sorrow. The King himself went off to a castle of his, not wishing to stay where he was. His seneschal and his provosts remained there, as ordered, to carry out the sentence upon Joy, down below in the prison.

Now we shall turn to the kindly jailer. Into Joy’s dungeon he let down one of his daughters,<sup>23</sup> who kept her company; and with them they had burning torches so that they could see clearly. And if they had wanted to eat they would have had food<sup>24</sup> without hindrance. But they were not so inclined, for their hearts were heavy. In a short time the news traveled throughout the country; it was promptly known everywhere that Joy was to be burned. All the common people were dismayed. The poor especially, those to whom she was accustomed to give clothing, were full of sadness. Throughout the country you would have heard it said, if you had been there, “God! What a sorrow and what a misfortune comes to the dwellers in this land on account of the best woman who ever was born, who will be burned alive without mercy simply because of the goodness that is in her!” So they were all saying, quite broken down with grief; and they cursed the man who had brought this affliction upon her.

As for the seneschal, who was wise and full of good faith, he was greatly troubled because of the cruel order that had been given to him. Out of anxiety, he did not sleep for two nights. “Alas!” he said. “If I burn my lady I know well that I shall lose my soul; and I shall never be loved by anyone who hears of it, not a single day. And on the other hand, it often happens that while a person is angry, he does or causes to be done such things that can displease him afterward. Perhaps the King will yet change his mind; and if he does, and I have burned her, it would be better for me to be in Tarsus or in greater India, for I should still have a bad time of it. I shall not burn her . . . I don’t know what course to take. What shall I do, then? If I drive her away, I can still get into trouble. I fear my lord; I well know that when he returns he will want to burn *me* to death. What shall I do? I don’t know how to help myself, nor what is the lesser evil. But seeing that both these courses are risky, I shall not in any case let her die in such cruel torment. It is not very far to the sea.<sup>25</sup> I’ll take her there at midnight, no matter what. I’ll put her in a boat and furnish her amply with wine and food for a week. But with her there will be no companion, no oar, no mast, no rudder. If it pleases God the Heavenly Father that she should voyage to safety, this is the outcome I hope for. And if she dies out there, I shall not see it. May she be in God’s keeping! And to keep anyone from reporting that I saved her from death, after I’ve shipped her off I’ll have a big pile of thorny branches made; and at daybreak,

when she is out at sea, I'll have the fire lit before anyone can get to it. Then I'll give them all to believe that she has been burned, and I'll say that because of the common people, who would have made a demonstration, I had it done before dawn."

He lost no time in carrying out this program. He sent for the jailer, who came to him without demur, since he both loved and feared him, and asked him what was wanted. The seneschal replied that he wished to have his pledge: that he would never reveal what he was about to hear, and that he would help him to do something. The jailer quickly promised him this. Now, feeling confident, the seneschal explained the matter, how he had planned it and how he hoped to accomplish it. The jailer answered that this business was aimed in just the right direction; he advised hurrying it forward without losing a moment. "If you wish, here I go." The seneschal said that he did wish it, and the jailer went on his way. Coming to the sea, he hunted about until he had found and purchased everything needful: a boat and food and wine; and then he got back on the road. He told the seneschal that he had carried out his commission. "Well done!" said the seneschal.

They got three horses ready. On one of them they mounted Joy, who was scarcely joyful; the two men mounted the others. They departed from the city without being noticed, because of the dark night. They were resolved not to stop until they came to the sea, and straight to the ship that was awaiting them. Joy asked, "What does this mean, sirs? And by what design have you brought me here? Truly, never has a king's daughter been led away in so unseemly a manner." "Lady," the seneschal said, "know that I was ordered by the King to burn you in a fire without delay, on pain of losing my life. But the pity in my heart does not allow me at any price to kill you in such torment. And so I place you in God's keeping; may He guard and guide you! For, you must know, it troubles me greatly to be acting so; but I have no choice. The King is evil minded and rash; I greatly fear his ill will. I can tell you one more thing: if he learned that you had not been burned, the misfortune would fall upon me."

The damsel answered him: "Truly, good sir, they all of them do wrong, those who have brought me to embarking alone upon the salt sea. I have not deserved it. But since this is how it is, I'd rather be drowned than be burned, if it pleases God the Heavenly King. Since you had the order to do it, I am grateful that you have saved me from burning. And also from my heart I pray the true God to forgive my father for his sin against me, and to give him greater joy than remains to me." The seneschal cried hard, and the jailer as well. Weeping, they put her into the boat; then, commending her to God,

they pushed her off into the sea. Now may she go where God leads her! For the separation distressed them.

Turning back, they rode to the edge of the city. There, before daylight came, they had four carts filled with wood and taken to the fields. At dawn the seneschal set fire to the thorny branches. Off into the city went the jailer to raise the hue and cry; he kept saying: “Alas! What a pity, Joy, for your great goodness!” When the people of the town heard him thus lamenting their young lady, they asked him: “What has happened to her?” He answered that she had been burned. In a short time the town was in an uproar. Everyone nearly went mad with grief. They all went running toward the fire, where the seneschal was stationed; he kept assuring them that she was in the fire, and made a show of sorrow. Through such a ruse, he gave the people of the country to understand that Joy had been put to death. At this, the common people thought themselves badly abused, and the King was much hated because of it.

The seneschal went straight to the King and told him that he had carried out his order; and the King was very pleased with him, being still angry. (But afterward there would come a day when he would feel remorse having caused such anguish to be given, wrongfully, to his daughter; and then he would repent of it bitterly, as anyone can hear who wants to listen to the whole story.) Concerning the King and his barons and the people of Hungary I leave off here and return to Joy, alone in her little boat.

There she had a wretched time. Often she prayed to God and His Mother to save her from peril and bring her to a safe harbor. One good thing did happen to her: the skin grew back over her stump and it healed very well. But her heart was heavy. Truly, this is no wonder: a young girl at sea, without company, without sail or mast, oar or rudder, might well be anxious. So she was, and lamented aloud: “Fortune, for me you have turned over your wheel soon and badly.<sup>26</sup> You raised me up upon it to where I had joy and contentment. Now it seems to me that from such a height you have thrown me just as far down, beneath your feet, and no pity moves you—never before, because of doing the right thing, did any woman suffer such a reversal—no pity for me, who go alone and wandering night and day on the salt sea.

“Dear Lord God, by whose goodness all good people are rewarded, You who to save us from suffering were willing to die in pain upon the cross, because of the sin of Adam and Eve, from both of whom many a woe came to all who were born before the virginity of the Virgin was known or Your holy flesh had come—for there were awaiting You in Hell many worthy people who had died: Adam, Eve, Saint Abraham, and David, professing his

faith in speaking Your holy words, from which he had the Psalter written. He it was who prophesied, understanding in his heart that You would will to be born of a woman, and that in no other way could the first sin, committed by pride-filled Adam, be pardoned. True, sweet God, before that might happen, Adam had to leave the world. And thus it was: whoever left the world had to go to Hell to endure great pain. For many years this custom lasted, one that was very hard on the good people. You no longer wished to permit it, but came to accomplish what David had prophesied. For thirty-two full years You suffered poverty on earth. You took upon yourself the war that the Devil waged on man merely for a bite of an apple, and You engaged so much in that war that You received five wounds on the cross where You were fixed, and pierced in the side with a lance. There You willed to give up Your soul; and without more delay You went into Hell to seek Your friends whom the devils had seized. You broke down the strong gates of Hell and brought out all Your friends, and for this act the devils were aggrieved. There will never come a day when they do not lament it. Then You willed to rise from death, and to visit Your apostles on the day of the Resurrection. It is well known that both before and afterward You performed many a miracle, like One who does His good pleasure as He wishes things to come to pass. Fair Lord God, as surely as I believe that what I have related is true, so may it please You, through Your goodness, that I may be guided to such a harbor that no one will harm me, and where I may be delivered from this sea, if it pleases You that I should go on living."<sup>27</sup>

God, who heard her prayer, did not wish to forget her. He so guided her boat that an arrow shot from a laburnum-wood bow would not fly with such speed as that boat did, day and night. Joy was at sea for eight days. On the ninth she caught sight of a land that is near England; Scotland is its name. Just then, on the first Sunday of Lent, the people of Berwick<sup>28</sup> were at the seaside, where they were enjoying themselves. Some were stamping their feet, some leaping; they all were playing hard. Such was their custom; they had gone there for many a year. With them, seeing to it that they would not become so bold as to fight among themselves, was the provost. He turned his face toward the sea and saw the vessel approaching. He could not help watching it because it was approaching so swiftly and because he saw no one steering it. He signaled to the people who were there, pointing out the boat that was coming so, without sail or mast. They all watched it attentively. Meanwhile the boat drew near, not stopping before it reached the shore. The provost and the others came up to it and beached it. In the boat they perceived her, the one who had come without any company.

The provost, a man practiced in speaking wisely and well, greeted her appropriately.<sup>29</sup> "Young lady, may that God Who never lies give you good adventure and joy!" "Sir," she said, "may He whom you have invoked hear you!" "Young lady, do not conceal your origin from us; and, if you don't mind, we want to know your name." "Sir, I am an unfortunate woman come to shore in this place. If it pleases you, you will save me. Know that through me you will learn nothing more." "Truly, fair lady, I agree to this. I believe that, if someone has wronged you, you have arrived at a good harbor; for you will be taken to my lord, king over all this land, a young and jolly bachelor. You will be well placed with his mother; there you will lack for nothing." "Many thanks, sir," she answered. With joy they kept her with them and took her into the city. On that day much attention was paid to her lovely person (though her face was pale from the hardship she had undergone). The provost came with her to his house. He questioned her much concerning her story, all day long, but she said nothing about it; and so, through weariness, he let her be. He thought that there was much goodness in her. That night he made her very comfortable with two daughters of his. On the next day, when it was light, he did not wish to stay longer. He had Joy mount an ambling palfrey and took her straight to the King at Dundee, where he had his principal residence (as did his mother with her ladies-in-waiting). They came to the court and dismounted at the mounting block.

The King was seated at dinner; with him were twenty-three great lords. The provost came before him, holding the lovely girl by the hand. First he greeted the King, and then the barons who were with him. "Sire," he said, "today I bring a fine acquisition to your court. Yesterday I and your people were at the sea to amuse ourselves. Soon there came along a little boat in which there was no one but this young girl. I believe that she is of high rank, for she is very courteous and wise; but she has one hand cut off, a wound that is well healed. I know nothing more of her situation, although I have questioned her about it. She refuses to tell me anything, but I know that she is suffering from her adventure and from her hurt. If she had not had misfortune, I believe that no one so beautiful was fashioned even from stone or wood. Now she is yours, and you can do with her as you like, without opposition, since she has come here as a castaway. If you consent, let her be taken in. She will be well placed with my lady; and, if it pleases God, she will behave in such a way as to win her love."

What his provost told him was very agreeable to the King, for he was full of goodness. He called Joy close to him and addressed her courteously. "Fair one," he said, "I should like very much, if you don't mind, to inquire about

your country and your people. Tell me; and be sure that this will bring you no harm, for you shall have whatever you wish, to your heart's content." The damsel answered: "Sire, all those who are kind to me perform a very good work, for I am poor, without any possessions, come from a foreign country all alone across the salt sea, like a wretched unfortunate and the most miserable thing alive, one who would prefer not to exist, if it pleased the Heavenly King. Let no one inquire anything more about me! I would rather be on my bier than narrate my trouble. I'd sooner die." While she was speaking in this way the King looked at her and saw tears falling from her eyes. Because they disfigured her he sent her away to the Queen, requesting her not to fail in gratifying the damsel's wishes and not to pain her by inquiring about anything that might upset her, until such time as she would seem happier than she was at the moment. The Queen did not neglect to carry out her son's request. And she induced her ladies-in-waiting to honor her and love her. All that day the provost remained with his lord; on the next, he left him and went back to where he had come from.

Joy remained at court, much attended to and much loved. But they did not know what to call her and could not persuade her to say her name, her country, or her part of the world. One day the King went to see her and hear about her situation, if possible; but he could not bring her to speaking of it. Therefore he said, "Since we do not know your name, we must still call you something. So be it: I proclaim that you will be called Manekine."<sup>30</sup> (Thereafter she had this name for a long time, as you will hear. She did not wish to identify herself because her heart ached at the baseness of her father, which she was paying for in many ways.)

Now Manekine was in as much comfort as she had been distressed before. She conducted herself so courteously and agreeably that soon everyone took pleasure in watching her. And she was cautious of those who serve through slander; for no one could say anything but good about her, unless he were to lie. The ease she was made to feel made her beauty return; for the King caused maids to serve her at her pleasure and give her whatever she needed without stint. She made herself beloved by everyone who knew her, and everyone who heard about her esteemed her highly. They all said that her behaving so wisely in a country other than her own came from a good heart; they gave her much credit for it. Word of her spread so much that even those of the country who had never seen her were well disposed toward her because of her virtues as reported by the men and women who were with her. Even the King liked her very much. Every time he stayed at Dundee, where he had a residence, he went in Manekine's direction. With her he

would engage in courtly pastimes. She knew so much about the game of chess that no one could have checkmated her, however expert he was. She knew chess, backgammon, and several other enjoyable games that she played with the King, without any unseemliness.

The King went there and returned so often that later, many a day, he thought himself a fool. For when an arrow is released, it cannot be drawn back before it has made its flight; likewise, when love has flown through the eyes into the heart, it absolutely cannot come out before hitting its mark. And often it makes many a man and woman suffer, lament, and languish and throws them into many long thoughts. This love is highly perilous. If it were not delightful, if the suffering did not please the heart, it could not be endured. And how can suffering please? This is a quite contradictory thing. How can it be pleasing, this anguish that one feels night and day? And how can there be, in love, anything that must be called pain or sorrow or torment? I shall tell you straightaway, so that you will say that I speak the truth, if you know how to look within yourself.

Love is an inclination by which many hearts have been tested; and I shall relate how.<sup>31</sup> Love has many messengers in the world: these are the eyes. Every heart directs its eyes where it wishes and must believe them entirely. And all eyes are by nature more stupid than beasts in a pasture, for they look at what pleases them most, not taking notice of anything but the heart's inclination; for they are placed so artfully that they are the light for the heart. And the eyes, encouraged by Nature, are very eager to see a beautiful form. Then come Nature and Inclination, who do as they will with the eyes and through them look at what most delights them; and when they see something pleasing, they promptly seize the heart and demand that it take notice of what is before it. The heart quickly pays attention, so much so that it lets its guard down. Love attacks it from front and rear and leaps through the eyes to the heart, then so stirs it up that it is set to yearning. From this the heart, bound by so many cares, is deeply wounded and goes from one extreme to the other, more than summer differs from winter.

Having told you of the suffering that Love can bring, I shall say why she is called Love. It is because people love that from which frustration can come, while hoping to gain what they long for. This hope does great good to those who have such desire, since because of it they better endure the trials that a lover can experience. People in love feel both suffering and hope. At one moment the hope of what they desire advances them, and at another they lose heart and torment themselves in vain. By this you may well understand that Love is gentle and tender to one person and, to another, bitter and

distasteful. Anyone who trusts her is a fool; to one she is a stepmother, to another a mother; to one she is generous, to the other stingy. Love is both good and bad, death and life, joy and sorrow. One person loses from her, another gains; therefore it is right both to rejoice and complain. The illness of Love is cold and hot; now it is ice, now it is the sun. And if anyone plunges into it, it is no wonder if he is beaten. These two people took that plunge, and were beaten thoroughly.

To return to my tale, the young girl called Manekine pleased the King so much with her beauty and her manners that he was pierced by the desire with which Love strikes her own. She bound him with such strong bonds that he could not thereafter free himself except through the one for whose bondage a great longing came over him, a longing that afterward caused him great trouble. But on this occasion Love proved herself better than she is toward many people; for, if the King felt pain for Manekine, she for her part was not unscathed. Love assailed her too, binding her as well. And so she loved the King, and he loved her; they had a common affliction. They were both inspired with a single desire and inclination. But to tell the truth, he did not at all know her will, nor did she know his. They would agree together very well if one of them knew that such a desire would be pleasing to the other. Yet neither of them knew of the other's love.

To begin with the King: his trials were severe. One day, after he had left the young lady and bedtime came, he retired, but sleep did not come. All night he tossed and turned; his thinking grew muddled, and he said, "I must be quite witless, when I think so hard without finding any answers, and yet I cannot keep from constantly remembering the one who delights me so much, today and yesterday and every day when I spend time with her. Is this love? Yes, I believe so, for I think of her day and night. I did not believe that there was anything harmful in love. Yet there is; the thought of her so weighs on me that I see only two solutions, both bad: if I keep her as my mistress, that love will be false and fleeting, and I should be strongly blamed for it. I ought not to agree to it at any price. What shall I do, then? I shall take her in marriage. Take her? What am I saying? I shall not! I don't know where she was born. Perhaps she had her hand cut off through some misdeed of hers and was sent out alone on the sea because of it. That cannot be; God made her with His own right hand. Truly, from what I can see in her, she did not deserve such a fate. But it happens in many a court that someone who has done no wrong is punished.<sup>32</sup> Supposing that she has committed no crime; still I don't know who she is. Perhaps she was born of base people. Of base people? No, she never was. I am wrong to impute baseness to her; it is proud

and wicked of me even to think of it. For that, I should do penance. It is very apparent from her behavior and from her person, which is so elegant, that she is extracted from a great lineage, for never before did Nature shape so fair an image in this world. She is so beautiful that it seems to me, when I look at her, that her clear eyes, her sweet looks want to say to me: ‘I want you.’ No, they don’t! This is what troubles me the most.<sup>33</sup> Pale eyelids, lovely nose—Lord! How well placed it is! And it is neither too short nor too long. She has long, curling hair, and attractive ears, which support the treasure that God has placed on her head<sup>34</sup>—which can be no hardship for them; and it isn’t, for they support it very well. Her brown eyebrows become her so well that I could not express it. And then her clear forehead, broad, white, and smooth—I never saw one so well shaped. Lord! What a mouth she has, and what teeth, close together and white! It seems as if they are made of ivory. It would be a great delight to anyone to kiss her as his sweetheart. I am at a loss to tell<sup>35</sup> of her sweet face, which makes my heart surrender and consider itself hers; for against its whiteness I see a rosy hue; it becomes her wonderfully well. As for her chin and her throat, there is no reason why anyone should turn from her, for never was so lovely a throat borne by any lady or girl. Neither bones nor veins appear there; it is like shining crystal. There never was any creature with her noble person, her figure. If I were embraced by her arms, I should be happy forever more. But I am speaking to no purpose, again. If anyone looks at her lovely hand, fine and white, the fingers white and delicate and straight—if only she had, in one fling, made a sweet circle around my neck (provided that she had her other hand), to me it would have been worth a hundred thousand marks! Nothing would ever trouble me after she had so embraced me. And when I see her little breasts, developing and firm, which shape her garments, it’s no wonder if they trouble me. Everything I see in her makes me desire her love.

“And yet I should be blamed and called a foolish king if I took her in marriage. I can’t help it, for my love of her holds me so tightly that she seems worth more than anything I might have without her. Without her, truly, I should die, for I should never find a cure. Therefore it is better to take her than forever entertain such a desire. So I shall do: I shall take her in marriage, if I have her consent. Her consent? Then the choice is not mine, if she does not want it first. Want? Lord! What would she want, then? There is no woman in the whole world who is not highly honored if she is crowned queen. How could a poor woman refuse a crown if it’s given to her? How? Because she would not dare aspire to accepting so great a distinction. Accepting? Truly, she will, she will never be so foolish, I hope, as not to be

inclined to honor and serve me so as to deserve my love. That's all there is to it; however it may go (provided that there is no objection on her part), I willingly grant that she will be my queen and my lady. So-and-so will promptly criticize me; but if he knows her behavior, his heart will soon be changed, and he will say that the country will be blessed with a good queen." So the King meditated every night in his bed; his thoughts were his delight. I do not believe it ever happened that Love held in her prison any king as she did this one, who was anxious in two ways: if he took her in marriage he feared that it would not please his people; and if he did not take her, he believed that it would be the death of him.

In such torment and indecision he thought night and day of his beloved. But *she* was always thinking of *him* and feeling every bit as much distress. At night, when no one heard her, she would lament and say: "Alas! Why was I born? What has brought me to this? Where does such folly come from, such a notion, such boldness as I see in my unstable heart, which shows me that I love the King? No one would have thought of that except me, for I am the most foolish woman in the world. My heart, which urges me so, went to a very silly school. If it pleases the King to treat me nicely and to play with me at backgammon and other enjoyable games, and if he keeps me company, do I believe on this account that I am his beloved? That he is thinking of me? This is an empty hope. He does this out of courtesy. Didn't he preserve me from death and save me from great shame? Do I believe, on that account, that he condescends so much as to love a wanderer, one who has one hand cut off? Don't I remember that I cut off my hand to avoid being a queen? And so I am thinking what cannot be, since I shall not be his wife; and I would rather burn in a flame than be his mistress. If he is handsome and noble in appearance, he may wish this more than anyone. Must I suffer on his account? No, not if I pay heed to Reason—but she is scarcely in season within me, when I cannot turn away my heart from him. What shall I do, then? If my heart remains with him, it works at a task that will never be rewarded. And so it is better to keep quiet, lest something worse should come of it. If my lady noticed anything and knew my mind, I'd be badly off; I well know that it would be the death of me. Therefore it is far better for me to control myself than to give in. No gain can come from it, nothing but trouble. Now I want to go to sleep, and not think about it any more."

She did expect to fall asleep. But Love came to arouse her, Love who cares for no reason and goes about nothing straightforwardly. She so pricked her and goaded her, excited her and stirred her up, as to make her relapse into folly, more deceived than ever. Now she refused him, now she wanted him

again, now she sighed, now she suffered for him, now he grieved her, now he pleased her, now he was agreeable, now he offended, now she said that she would love him, now she said that she would not. In such thoughts she tossed and turned, comfortless in her bed. The nights seemed very long. “Now, Day, it is really too much to bear,” she said, “that you do not come. Ah! Love, how you possess me! I see well, however it may go, however long I remain with you, like it or not I must do your will. I must be yours, whatever danger I see here. I don’t know whether I can survive. Now there is nothing for it but to endure and to hide my feelings, so that the Queen may not know them and no one else may take notice. Now I must frustrate the inclination of my heart; and shall suffer for it. I never knew before what Love is; and I never wanted to meddle with her. I have learned about her in a short time. But since I have undertaken to serve her, I shall do her will to the very end. Truly, I must love, for in my name I see the reason why.<sup>36</sup> Am I not called, by my baptismal name, Joy? That name as much as signifies: having the joy of love. From now on I should be wrong to blame Love, for she has honored me and led me into so exalted a love that I love the King himself. In the future I must not complain of any suffering that I have from her. I give myself entirely into her keeping, yet I don’t know whether I shall ever enjoy it. I shall endure in hope.”

Thus she struggled with herself, in travail and pain. There was not a night when she did not turn over a hundred times before day came. (Thus they were to love each other for seven years,<sup>37</sup> and both of them were sorely tried.) They played games together often, and she had the impression that the King had a tender feeling for her; therefore she behaved more cheerfully.

But the Queen took note of this and read their hearts. God curse her, body and soul! There was no such wicked lady in the world. She became very cunning because her son was clearly far from hating the girl, and she was convinced that they loved each other dearly. But this love would come to an end, if she could do anything about it. Therefore she sent for Manekine, who, fearing and respecting her, came without delay. The Queen said straightaway: “Manekine, so help me God! It seems to me that my son willingly puts himself in your path and that he loves you wholeheartedly. And so I forbid you to keep his company anymore if you value your life. Wicked slut, what right have you, what inclination forces you, to keep company with my son? You will pay for it. If this happens again, you will be burned in a fire. Now take care that it doesn’t recur, if you don’t want harm to come to you.”

The damsel answered: “Lady, by the Lord of the world, never has my lord asked anything dishonorable of me. You do wrong to blame me and call me

wicked, for truly I have not deserved it. If my lord, who gives me everything I need, invites me out of courtesy to play games with him, it would not be polite of me to refuse." At that the Queen became angry and said to her: "You will abstain from it, or you will come to an early death." "Lady, that would be a bitter dish. I shall abstain, then, from now on." Thereupon she left with a heavy heart and in tears. She had good reason to lament. "Alas! Now there will be no lack of sighs and sadness; they will always be with me. How for a single day shall I be able to keep from my friend, from my lord, who has honored me so much that he preserved me from misery after I escaped from the sea? I must love him a thousand times more than I do his mother, who has set me such a cruel prohibition. But now I know what I am to do: I'll tell him about this order and how I am hated on his account. If he wants my company after that, I do believe that he will save me from death. He will not fail me, in spite of his mother."

In such conflicting thoughts she waited until the third day, when the King returned to her tile-paved chamber. The other ladies made way for him. And Manekine was more shy than usual, because of the interdiction that weighed on her heart. She was trembling from fear. The King, looking at her, guessed that she was uneasy and was far from being pleased. He said, "My sweet friend, why are you so flushed? By the faith that you owe me, I beg you not to conceal the reason." "Sire, you have entreated me solemnly, and so I shall not hide from you why I am afraid. My lady told me that she will have me burned to ashes in a fire if she ever again hears that you are keeping me company. That is what frightens me." "Indeed? My friend, did she say that?" "Yes, Sire, so help me God!" "Friend, do not be dismayed, and set your heart at ease, for I shall protect you well against her. And from now on I shall not hide from you what I have kept to myself for some time. I see that my feelings are clear to my lady mother, and to others; yet I have never spoken to you about them until now. I realize that if I delayed too long I might lose what I desire. And so I beg you to listen to me and give your heart to my words.

"Know truly, my sweet friend, that you are my life, my wealth, my health, and my joy, the one to whom my heart surrenders for all the days I shall live, the one to whom I belong and always shall, the one for whom (if she wished it) I want to live and die. You are the one for whom I want to do without hesitation whatever will please her, the one I love in good faith at least as much as I do myself, the one of whom I am always thinking, and with much distress, the one for whom I weep and sigh, the one of whom the desire and the thought do not let me sleep, desire and thought from which my heart

will never be turned, if not by you. From you comes the spark that makes me daydream and tremble, hope for good things, and then know fear. It is Love that has given me such an inclination, setting up her court in my heart. The sweet desire for you pierces me. I have been in such a state for a long while. Through longing for your company my heart has a hard time of it; it covets nothing but you. And understand from the outset that what I ask of you is without any base intention. I love you with good, true love. If it pleases you that I may have you, I grant you wholeheartedly that you will be my lady wife and will have a crown on your head. All the country hereabouts, Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall,<sup>38</sup> will be yours without fail. I shall be the lord of it, and you the lady. And you need have no fear about my lady mother, or about anyone who might do you harm. Thus Love gives you my favor. Now do not refuse it, for it would be folly to do so.”

The damsel, listening, heard what made her heart rejoice. Without showing outwardly the joy she was feeling, she answered: “Sire, it is scarcely fitting for you to condescend to me; I am not at all suitable for you. Therefore it would be reasonable for you to give up this love and make no such plans. If you ever plighted your troth to me you would hear so much talk, both from my lady and from other people, that it would take away this inclination of yours. That is what would make me suffer. If once I had entered into such an honor, being deprived of it would be very hard. Therefore it is better for me to aim low than to reach high only to come down. Nevertheless I do not refuse you. My heart would be considered very proud if it withdrew from you and refused so great an honor. But if it pleases you to take me in marriage, keep me with faithfulness.” “In God’s name, fair one, so it will be, as may God keep me from peril! Every day I live I shall love you with a faithful heart.”

Then he took her by the chin,<sup>39</sup> acting like a man who loved and esteemed her very much, kissed her more than twenty times, and said: “Do not be uneasy about anything, my dear friend. From now on, honors and riches will come your way. You are not unpleasant to kiss, for your breath is very sweet. Now I shall be happy evening and morning. Come, now! I am taking you to the palace; there are my people, who many times have requested that I send to England to seek out one of the King’s daughters. But know, once and for all, that my heart is so set upon you that I have not wanted another wife since I perceived your good sense. You are the one from whom I expect to have joy throughout my life.” Then he took her by the hand and led her off with him, hand in hand. And along with him he called the ladies who were murmuring among themselves because those two had

conversed privately; they were saying: "If my lady knew of this conversation, she would be very much on the watch to shame this damsel." Thus they were whispering; but in a short while they would hear something that would astonish them much more, for when the King called them they all trooped after him. The Queen was sleeping and knew nothing of all this. The King would have been loath to send for her, lest she oppose his plan, for she would be deeply offended. But if he had his way she would not know of it until after he had carried out his intention; then let the matter be known!

The King came into the palace, keeping Manekine close beside him. He sent for his chaplain, who promptly came. The King explained to him what he wished to be done. The priest did not dare resist his will, but rather placed their two hands together immediately, and united them by word. The King plighted her his troth and wedded her; the mass was sung straightaway.<sup>40</sup> It was done so privately that no one was present except for his household; his own retainers were there, much amazed at what the King had done. The event was soon reported to his mother. Such ill will seized her that never afterward did she do anything but plot to bring Manekine down from all honor, if she knew how and had the opportunity to do it. The King summoned her to the dinner but she went to lie down on her bed, saying that she would not go. "Shame on him for taking her in marriage and on anyone who henceforth will hold him to be king! Now he has done something really outrageous, taking in marriage a wanderer, a miserable woman, a foreigner, a woman with one hand. If only he were in the River Jordan!" The knights who heard this promptly left her, returning to the King and relating briefly how she had answered them. But the King showed no emotion. "If she wishes," he said, "let her come; and if she doesn't wish, let her stay where she is."

With as many people as he had there, the King behaved well and nobly that day. He was sorry that there were not more present. But he thought of something for which he was esteemed and therefore less criticized. From the day he took Manekine in marriage there were, as I reckon, only two weeks until Pentecost;<sup>41</sup> and so he formed the plan of bringing together then as many people as he could. On that day he would hold his wedding feast and would crown his beloved in order to do her honor. Just as he had projected it, he carried it out. He sent word through all of Scotland, into Cornwall, and into Ireland, summoning ladies and knights to the feast. The news spread throughout the country, until everyone was informed that the King had Manekine. And so those who knew her were happy; all the others were troubled and kept asking who she was, what her character and conduct were.

“Who she is,” they were told, “we do not know; but as to her behavior we learn that she is very courteous and wise and is disposed to doing good.” Thus they were talking, everywhere in the land, some of them urging on the others; and so they said that they would all go to see the feast and celebration that would take place at court on Pentecost. There were few people who did not get ready.

Meanwhile the King was with his beloved, where they were leading a happy life. They lay together at night and had much delight, more than I could relate to you even if I had given it long thought. But in equal measure to the desire and torment that they had suffered, Love now served them with such enjoyment as true lovers experience in private. Very sweet to them were the embraces and touches, the kisses, the tender gestures, the solace that they had in each other’s arms. And all that fortnight the King went to great lengths, because of his wife’s entreaty, to bring it about that she might have her lady’s love again. But his efforts were useless, for the old lady was seething from her resentment that *that* one would be Queen—not for any misdeed of hers that she was aware of but simply because envy was preying upon her. The King observed that the more he implored her, the more malevolent she became. And so, not finding in her any kindness or generosity, out of weariness he left her in peace and gave his attention to providing for his feast. He had the finest arrangements made that ever were prepared for a celebration. He ordered his provisioners to set up tents along the riverbank; and his plans were carried out just as he intended. At the water’s edge, in the great meadow, the feast would be held. The day came, the people gathered; never before had so many come together.

It was in the sweet season when the nightingales sing because of the cheerful weather, when the meadows are green and flowering and the orchards are laden with the promise of fruit,<sup>42</sup> when the lovely rose is in its glory—with roses ladies make garlands with which lovers do as they like—when the green grass, withered by the cold, has returned. Every bird in its Latin sings sweetly in the morning because of the new season, and all things revel. The water-courses receive again the waters that were scanty in the winter. Now the peasant girls run to dance the carol: Beatrice, Marietta, Margaret; with them they have Robin and Colin and Johnny.<sup>43</sup> Then they are off to the woods for lilies of the valley; they make all sorts of garlands before they come back. The nights and the days are delightful for those who are in love. In such a season as I am describing falls Pentecost, that high festival.

On the day before the feast the court assembled at Dundee. Many an ox, pig, and bear were killed there to provide meat, so many that I cannot know

the number.<sup>44</sup> If only you could have seen the ladies come and take the knights by the hand! All the tents were filled with dukes, counts, and barons. In the evening, when they had had supper, they all gathered in the meadow as if it were high noon; for I tell you truly that there were burning torches; no one ever saw larger ones. No wine or meat or wax was denied to anyone; each person had as much as he wanted and received it gladly.

When all night long they had danced carols and made noise, and day was about to break, they went off to rest a little so as to be fresher the next day. The Queen, rising early, was dressed with great care. Her hair was bound with a thick golden cord; on each finger were two rubies. (The weather was never so gloomy that you could not see quite clearly with the great brightness that came from them.)<sup>45</sup> Her lovely body was clad in a gown woven with gold, sewn all over with pearls. I can scarcely describe the material of her belt, except to say that there were many golden plaques held together with links of fine, clear emeralds. A precious alms-purse hung from it. At the buckle there was a sapphire that was worth a good hundred marks of silver. On her breast there was a clasp of gold and many precious stones. A mantle of cloth-of-gold was closed at her neck; nobody ever saw one like it. The lining was of sable, which makes people very elegant. On her head she had a crown; its equal could not be found anywhere. It was wonderful to look at for the precious stones that were in it and for the powers they had: emeralds, gleaming sapphires, rubies, jacinths, diamonds, of these the finials were made; more beautiful ones were never crafted. The crown above was of gold; but her hair was even brighter, more lovely and shining than the gold, you can take my word for it. She was beautiful, and had such beautiful adornment that no woman ever had better. Such was her finery on that day. As for the King's clothes, they were as rich and handsome as they should be.

When they had heard the service,<sup>46</sup> they returned to the tents, where the dinner was ready. The preparation was splendid; there were more than five hundred tables for the great lords and barons (whose names I do not know, nor is there any need to know them). If only you could have seen those squires preparing to serve properly! Some sharpened their knives in order to carve before their lords,<sup>47</sup> and others had several tasks according to how it was arranged for whatever rank each of them was to serve. They carried in bread and wine in plenty; everyone had as much as he liked. On that day nothing was spared. The tents were strewn with lilies of the valley and violets and many other small flowers. When the servants gave the signal, the trumpeters summoned the guests to wash their hands.<sup>48</sup> The King was seated first, and then the others all at once. At this table and that, just as it

pleased them, they sat down side by side, ladies and knights together, no commoner mingling with them. If I described their food, I should stop here all day. So much, so good, of such quality was never before given by mortal man. Everyone had his fill of it and of whatever he wished to have: meat, fowl, game, or fish prepared in many ways.

After eating, they washed their hands. Then the minstrels went off, each to ply his trade so as to earn his pay. It would be a waste of time to go seeking elsewhere for music such as was heard there. Viols, pipes, flutes, bagpipes, harps, zithers and psalteries, horns and trumpets and clarions—all of these performed such wonders as were never equaled. When the guests had listened to them for a little while, they ran off to carol dancing. Such a carol was never seen; it extended nearly a quarter of a league. Through the carols moved knights and ladies, singing, decked out in cloth-of-gold and in silk. Every man and woman rejoiced, except for the wicked lady (God curse her, body and soul!), who refused to be there; she was as distressed as she could be. She remained at a distance of seven leagues, in a city called Perth.<sup>49</sup> I'll leave her now and return to the feast, where they all knew how to behave properly.

The ladies and the knights went several times to change their clothes on that day; then they would return singing and lightheartedly rejoin the carol. If it were not for the injury that the Queen had to her hand, nothing could be said against her by any man who admired her beauty. (But this defect greatly troubled all those who rejoiced at her good fortune.) She was much looked at on that day, so lovely, so well adorned, so pleasing in every way. Her beauty and manners so impressed them that they said among themselves: “The King does well; in the matter of his marriage we'll ask nothing more of him.” So said all the men and women; but when they would come to know her character better, they would love her even more. The festivities lasted three whole days, as great and as abundant as I have related before. And when they wished to leave, the King had each male guest presented with a goblet of gold or fine wood or silver, according to people's rank.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, Manekine by the King's order gave many a fine adornment to the ladies: belts, rings, brooches of gold, gifts for which she was beloved ever afterward.

With that the court came to an end, and all the guests went back to their own regions. They were no longer astonished at the King for taking Manekine in marriage, for they thought her admirable. The King remained behind, and his wife with him. They loved each other so deeply that they would not wish to be separated for a single day. (And yet they were obliged to part later, with great suffering, through treachery, as I shall tell you. May God give shame to traitors! In this world they have caused much trouble.)

Now the King was with his beloved, leading a very joyful life; and she was with her beloved, far from unhappy. If she had been at peace with her mother-in-law, there would have been nothing to distress her. She begged her husband to attempt bringing it about. Far from refusing, he went to great lengths about it, but without success. His mother told him in few words that she would rather let herself be torn apart than ever find Manekine pleasing. The King replied: "I'm sorry; but seeing you in such a state of mind, I do not wish you to be with her anymore; you might soon make mischief. If you did her any harm, you would lose my love forever. I give you two choices; take one of them: either you set aside your anger toward her, or you receive your dower.<sup>51</sup> If you do not wish to pardon her, I shall give you Evolint<sup>52</sup> and the castles round about it. There you can settle. You must elect one of these options; tell me your pleasure." She said: "Since you have given me this choice, to be plain, I want my dower and nothing else." "Lady," said the King, "this grieves me, for she is very good and courteous. It is at her request that I entreat you, my dear lady; but I well see that it is useless. I put Evolint into your hands." "And I take it." Thus his mother left him, and on the next day she departed. Off to Evolint she went, much aggrieved because Manekine was Queen; she hated her out of envy. So she left the court, the thoroughly wicked lady.

Manekine remained at court, treated with great honor by the King. And she behaved so well that she made herself much loved, for there was no bitterness in her heart. She did not fall into pride because wealth had come her way, but gave of it abundantly, especially to the poor. She arranged marriages for poor noblewomen. She led a very pious life, honored God and His Mother, greatly liked to be in church, would read her Hours and her Psalter.<sup>53</sup> She delighted in such works. Her fine reputation pleased the people of the country, and the more so the better they knew her. She gained the goodwill of all, the well-born and the common folk, with the single exception of the King's mother, who was bringing dislike upon herself. The people of the country came to hate her because of the lady whom they saw to be better, but who for all her virtue and good sense could not win her mother-in-law's heart. But now I shall leave off speaking of the people and of the Queen Mother, and turn to Manekine and to the King, who loved each other very much.

Now the story tells that until Easter they lived in joy and pleasure, as they should, until she became pregnant. But toward Easter she conceived. Before five months had passed the King was aware of this and was extremely happy. In his joy he thought that idleness would no longer hold him from going to

France in order to make himself talked about. He wanted to go to the tournaments.<sup>54</sup> (From this he later had such regret that no one could express it and no clerk could put it into writing.)

"The goat paws till she spoils her bed."<sup>55</sup> He came to his beloved and said: "I come to entreat you, my dear, you who are my heart, my life, my wealth, my health, and my joy, that you give me leave for a journey, to win honor. This ought not to distress you."<sup>56</sup> "Sir," she said, "I want to do your will, however much I must regret it. And so you can command whatever seems good to you. But now tell me what you intend to do." "My gracious dear, there is to be tourneying in France; this ought not to grieve you." "Grieve? With all respect, this is scarcely an explanation that pleases me. I am dismayed at this project, for I am alone in this country, hated by your mother, and carrying your child. And so I fear, if you are in France, that I may suffer harm. Here there is no one attached to me personally and no wealth that does not come from you. I have told you how things stand; answer me what you please." "In God's name, lovely one, you needn't be uneasy. I shall leave you under such guard that you will have no concern about my mother, nor about anyone who might wish you ill. It is fitting that I should gain honor while I am young. Only until Lent; I do not ask you for a longer term."<sup>57</sup> "Sir, this seems to me too long; and nevertheless I grant it, since this is your will. May God give you much more joy and health than remains to me!" The King observed that she was crying and he cried too, out of sympathy; weeping, he thanked her for giving him leave to go. After this he made no delay, but sent for a hundred knights, valiant, handsome, strong, and agile, and kept them with him to accompany him to the jousts. He had his ship prepared in the port at Berwick, laden with wine and food and outfitted with good equipment. When he had arranged for his journey, he set out for Berwick and was escorted that far. There he took leave of Manekine, whose heart nearly broke as they separated.

The King had a seneschal, a knight, whom he trusted more than any other man living. This man and two other knights were his counselors and had been of his household ever since he had been king. He called these three to him and said: "My lords, I am going away for a short time into another land to win esteem and praise. You will remain with the Queen, whom I love dearly. Guard her, upon your lives, and see to it that my mother does her no harm, for it would go badly for you if this happened. And if the Queen gives birth before I return, do not fail to send me, promptly, the news about her and her child; send it in a letter, without any deception, to France, where I shall be found. Take care to acquit yourselves so well toward her that she

gives me a good account of you, if you like being at peace with me.” “Sire,” they said, “we must not find it hard to do your will. May God let us carry it out so well that it may please both you and Him! From our hearts we have a covenant with you that we shall serve her faithfully.”

“Lady,” said the King to his beloved, “here are three men whom I trust more than all others in all the world, for upon their lives they have sworn to guard you so well that you will lack nothing suitable for any queen. And so I request, my dear, that you trust them completely and follow their counsel.” “Sir,” she said, “I shall carry out your orders. I do believe that they will act loyally, for they are faithful and worthy men. But you should know this: my heart warns me that we shall pay for this journey of yours. May God keep you from hardship and regret, as He is king and lord!” “Lady,” he said, “so may it please Him!” Thereupon he kissed her more than twenty times. Seeing that she was weeping, he tarried as little as possible, but took his leave and put out to sea. Then she fainted; she would have fallen to the ground, if the knights had not supported her. They took her into the town and comforted her.

When the King<sup>58</sup> had prepared for his journey and had taken his leave, he embarked with his knights. They took with them many warhorses, many sumpters and palfreys, many suits of armor and much equipment, much cloth-of-gold and silk. The King also had plenty of minted coins with which his expenses would be paid, for he intended to live in fine style. He was on the sea only one night, without experiencing storm or distress. The next morning, in high spirits, he arrived right at Damme.<sup>59</sup> He had his horses taken from the ships to the shore so expertly that they suffered no harm. Then he passed into the town, where his lodging was arranged. He inquired about the Count of Flanders and where he was to be found.<sup>60</sup> They told him that he was at Ghent, where he was making preparations for the tourney at Resson. This information greatly pleased the King. The next day, when daylight came, he did not wish to stay there but set out toward Ghent.<sup>61</sup> The Count of Flanders had heard the news about the King of Scotland. He hurried to go and meet him; he greeted him and made much of him, saying: “Sire, it is a great joy to me that you are pleased to come here. You may do with me and my people whatever you wish.” The King answered: “Many thanks!” Thus talking they came to Ghent, and that evening the King and his retinue were with the Count, in cheer. And the King inquired of him about the tourney and where it was planned. The Count told him: “At Resson.”<sup>62</sup> Then the King said: “We shall go there. And I have one request to make of you: that you agree to joining my company.” The Count willingly granted him this.

That night they were very much at their ease and lacked for nothing. The next day, very early, they all were on their way. That night they came as far as Lille, where they were also made comfortable, for the town belonged to the Count. Again they set out promptly. Leaving Artois on their left, they entered Vermandois, then kept on their way through Roys until coming to Ressons. There the King dismounted at the castle, Flemings and Scots along with him. Then others began to arrive and take lodgings and occupy them.<sup>63</sup> Boulonnais and Artesians, Brabanters and men from Vermandois, Flemings and Normans and men from Poix, Swabians, Germans, and Bavarians—all these men dismounted at Ressons, and through the windows they put out many a shield and banner of different kinds.<sup>64</sup> Into the other area, near Gournay, came men from Beauvaisis and from Berry, Bretons and Frenchmen, Poitevins and Hurepoix, and Champenois also, all coming to the tournament; they dismounted at Gournay. Thus they awaited the day of the tourney. And when it came, they all heard mass; then they armed themselves and mounted their warhorses. They advanced toward the field for jousting (no sport for cowards).

The King of Scotland came forward first; in his company were a thousand knights, all of whom he retained with him.<sup>65</sup> He had such fine trappings that his equal was never seen. His large horse was covered with a rich cloth of gold. And on it he himself, tall and handsome, made a splendid appearance, equipped as well as anyone might wish. On that day he had no device on his arms; they were of plain gold. He did this as a sign that his desire was attained; for his proper arms were such: three golden lions rampant, on a black field.<sup>66</sup> Such arms he ought to have, but he had removed the lions; he bore arms of pure gold. Close beside him was the Count of Flanders, who supported him very well that day.

Approaching from either direction, they had come onto the field. If you had been there you would have seen many a fine horse and also a variety of shields and banners. Some were black, others white, others of gold or silver, others tinted red and other hues; and the sun made the colors resplendent. In numerous places there were sounds of trumpets and drums, and many horns were blowing, so that the whole field resounded with them. When both sides had come forth, each man thought about whom he would fight and which group he would join. Then everyone took his position, putting on his helmet and holding his shield close to his body. The King signaled to his men to give him his shield; a knight held it out to him. Then they laced on his helmet, which was of gold, bright and shining and delightful to see.

Once it was on his head, he positioned himself in the forefront of them all. Well schooled in love and arms, his shield placed close to him, a thick lance in his fist, he pricked his horse and it hurtled him forward. He never stopped spurring until he reached an opponent. It was a French knight who lamented when they separated, for the King struck him so hard that he knocked to the ground both rider and horse. But the knight could not help falling, for both his saddlebows broke and dropped down beside him. The King had broken his lance; he immediately gripped his sword, with which he gave many blows that day, for without losing a moment the adversaries engaged him. More than twenty went striking at him, on the arms or the body. But he was so strong and aggressive and kept his seat so well that he was not unhorsed, but defended himself until his own people came at a gallop to aid him. At the encounter there was a clashing and noise of lances, which were broken on both sides; such blows were exchanged that it sounded like thunder. More than fifteen hundred fine lances flew into splinters at one shock. There were many men struck down, many a horse caught and held, and many that ran away through the fields, reins dragging at their feet. Some squires ran to catch them, and others to prevent it.<sup>67</sup>

Now the general combat was joined, where there was much fine array and many well-mounted knights, and many others facedown on the earth. One man won, the other lost, for so goes the game.<sup>68</sup> They fought in more than twenty places. Many fighters were knocked to the ground; often with their swords they gave each other blows on the head, and sometimes too on the shields, so that all these were split. Each man tested his own adversary, and they did not go counting up their blows; for if one of them dealt a stroke, he got back three. Above them all the King proved himself, spurring through the melee, receiving and giving many a blow. Right and left he brought them down. Any man he struck came right down flat on the earth. The King did not go chasing their horses; that would not have been suitable. What mattered to him was striking well, attacking and defending well. He was so intent on this that he put his whole heart into it and busied himself to the point of attracting much attention. One person said to another: "Watch the great feats that man is performing! You hardly notice anyone else; he seems to be everywhere. Do you see how he receives blows and how he returns them? He doesn't spend too much time in returning the strokes that he gets; he quickly repays the favor. It's good to lend to such a man, for he knows how to pay back quickly. Look at the shield he has at his neck! Really, a dove could wing its way through [the holes] without touching the frame. There was never such a king as this one, who comes to a foreign land to win

fame and who conducts himself so well. All knights ought to esteem him highly.” So, throughout the ranks, said all those who had the opportunity. And others tugged and pulled; they tore apart many good hauberks among them.<sup>69</sup> Many a knight went upside-down underneath his saddle on that day;<sup>70</sup> many a helmet ring was detached and many a face bloodied. It went well for one and badly for another; one was on foot, the other mounted; one lost, the other won. There were many combatants in the field who lost their horses and never got them back except for the men who had a master;<sup>71</sup> but these men did retrieve their losses. In many places there were great mists from the heated breath. The sword blows came so thick and fast that if there had been two thousand carpenters carpentering in a wood, the noise would not have been so great.

So they carried on that day, not stopping until night came and separated them. They left the field quietly, and were not as they had been on arrival. The bodies of most of them were black and blue from the strokes they had suffered. Off they went, on horseback and on foot, until they reached their lodgings. The King with his companions came to *Ressons* and made straight for the castle. He was glad to get there, for he was much wearied by the many blows he had taken. He was quickly disarmed, and the Count of Flanders also, who had done very well that day, although I have not told of it. And the King gave the order that they all were to have supper with him. So they did. Every one of the knights on the *Ressons* side was invited to be with him, and they had plenty of food and wine. By the time they had had supper, it was getting light; then they went off to bed, for they badly needed to rest. After sleeping until *terce* they rose and dressed, and all went back to court.<sup>72</sup> The King did not turn a deaf ear to them; he honored them greatly, calling them friends and companions. To many, he made good their losses and kept the best of them with him; he gave them many fine gifts. He did so much that, fittingly, he had the prize of the tourney; each man individually granted him this. There were numerous winners on one side and losers on the other; it was hard to decide which region could congratulate itself more.

Before the King left the place, and with the consent of the *Gournay* party, he set another tournament, at *Epernay*,<sup>73</sup> in a fortnight. They let this be known generally; in the King’s name the heralds went crying it down the town.<sup>74</sup> It was not taken lightly; everyone said he wanted to be there. They were already beginning to pack their clothes and put their hauberks in bindings; thus they prepared to go, every one, to that tourney that was being cried in the King’s name. There he went with his people and conducted himself

well and nobly. He loved the valiant knights and was openhanded with them. At Epernay they tourneyed, and the King had the prize. Thus, seeking esteem, he journeyed on through France, greatly exerting himself to do well. The result was that he had everyone's goodwill; whatever he did pleased them, and he was very welcoming with them all. But at this point I shall leave him and speak of Manekine.

After the King took to the sea, leaving her heartsick, she returned to Berwick but stayed only three days. On the fourth she went back to Dundee, for that was her favorite place in Scotland. She was escorted there by a large company, including the good provost, who first set her on her way when she had been taken from the sea. It was he who had conducted her before his lord at Dundee, with the result that she gained honor. Therefore the Queen loved him all her life; and she gave him many fine gifts, so that he was a rich man ever afterward. With him was the seneschal, wise and loyal, and also the two knights whom the King had entreated to guard her in company with his seneschal. These three would be very reluctant to leave her. They were of her household, and they had served her very well. They scarcely awaited her orders once they knew her mind, but willingly had her supplied with whatever was needful. Thus she lived in great comfort. Yet she saw nothing that pleased her when she could not see her lord. This was the distress that troubled her; but she comforted herself as well as she could because of the fruit she was bearing within her.

She carried it until she gave birth. She had the fairest child, a son, that Nature ever made. A more beautiful creature was never born. Swiftly the news traveled throughout the country that the Queen was delivered, and there was general rejoicing. And what did they do, the three knights who soon learned this piece of news? The seneschal called his two companions. "My lords," he said, "we must not delay. We need a messenger who will go to announce the news to the King in France; it will be very pleasing to him." They answered: "You speak truly. Get us one quickly. Write the letter yourself, and we shall be present to hear the wording." The seneschal, who knew both French and Latin and was able to write very well,<sup>75</sup> took parchment and wrote, beginning: "To the King of Scotland, his lord, to whom may God give joy and honor, greetings and friendship are sent by the seneschal whom he left to guard his land and his wife. I write to inform you that my lady is delivered of a child. Nobody ever saw a finer one. And she has remained well, she whom you have loved so much. The child's name is John. This is all of our news. But for God's sake, return quickly, if you please, for my lady misses you and finds it hard to do without you."

When he had written it all in this way, he read it out to his companions; they saw nothing to correct in it. They sent for their messenger and gave him the sealed letter, with the instruction that no hardship was to prevent him from going to France and giving the King that letter. They had him put it in a case; then they gave him money, more than he needed. He took leave of them and went off. In the morning, at daybreak, he set out, making his way straight toward the sea. In two days, not stopping, he reached Evolint, where the Queen Mother lived, and approached her residence. (This was unwise; but he was unaware of the hatred she felt for the young Queen.) He came up to her and greeted her. She asked him where he was going. He said: "To France, to your son. May God keep him from danger! I am taking a letter to him there. I don't know what words they put into it; I believe it is news that must be very pleasing to him, for my lady has given birth." "What sort of child does she have?" "I don't know, lady," replied the messenger, "except for what some people have told me: that it is a son who will be very fine if he lives until he is a young man."

What the wicked lady heard displeased her. Yet she gave the messenger no sign of the treachery within her heart. (It never was evident before the time came to pay for it, as she would learn.) In order to mislead him she had him given forty sous; and to confuse and deceive him she had him supplied with strong wine to drink. The wretch had no suspicion; he drank so much that he quite took leave of his good sense. When the wicked lady saw this, she smiled because of the evil she was plotting. She talked to him and flattered him so much that she made him lie down right inside her alcove that night.<sup>76</sup> He was longing to sleep. Because of the wine, which had gone to his head, his brain was all muddled; and so he slept. But that woman was awake. She went close to his bed and felt through his clothing until she found the case containing the letter. Jubilant, she quickly went away and called a clerk of hers from whom she did not conceal what she was planning. "Come here! You must do what I shall tell you." "Lady, speak, and I shall act." "Now detach this seal for me so neatly that I can have the letter out from under it and can replace it with another one." "In God's name, lady, willingly." Then he got what he needed. Prying off the seal with a very thin-bladed penknife, he opened the letter, which he read before his lady. "It says that the seneschal greets his lord and gives him to know how it is with his lady. He announces that she has a child, a son. Nobody ever saw such a fine one."

When the lady heard what kind of letter this was, she was far from pleased. She caused another, contrary letter to be drawn up. Just as she wanted it the clerk wrote it, putting in such words: That the seneschal sent

greetings to his lord and also conveyed to him, with much regret, some news at which he would not be happy. "Sire, my lady has given birth. But never before was there born such a thing as she has carried in her body. It has four feet and is covered with hair; sunken eyes and a big head—no one ever saw so hideous a creature. From its appearance it seems to be a devil. As soon as it was born it fled away, like a viper, from the hands of those who were holding it; they scarcely dared to pick it up again. Throughout the country, everyone who has heard about this is dumbfounded. Now let us know your will, what you wish to do with such an heir."

After dictating this letter, she had it put under the seal so that it would appear as if it had never been touched. She inserted the parchment into the case, putting it back where she had found it. Then she went to bed in her chamber and let the messenger sleep until the daylight woke him. Finding himself in there, he was much astonished; he feared that someone might have stolen his letter, and so he looked at the seal in his case and was much relieved to see it. He realized that he had been drunk; but now he was sober again. He thought that they had made him lie down there to rest in comfort; it was out of love for those whom he served, he believed, that such hospitality had been given him. He lost no time in getting ready. The wicked lady was already up (may God damn her, body and soul!), and sent for the messenger, who came to her promptly. She entreated him to return her way and to let nothing hinder him. He replied that since she wished it, he did not mind doing so. He would return that way willingly; no obstacle would hold him. When he had pledged this to her, he swiftly took leave; she gave it, and he went off straight toward the sea.

There he entered a merchants' ship that was bound for the Flemings. With a good wind they went sailing across the sea until they came to Gravelines. The merchants did not hold back the messenger, who took leave of them and went off, not stopping before Saint Omer. There he asked where the tournament was set. "It's to be right between Creil and Senlis,<sup>77</sup> this coming Thursday." After hearing this, he went on his way, traveling through Artois, and afterward through Vermandois, until he came into Beauvaisis. He did not stop before Clermont. There he inquired where the King was; and they told him that he was staying at Creil, where he was having fine preparations made for jousting. The messenger did not tarry but went straight back on the road. Only three leagues remained. Covering them quickly, he came to Creil; he did not slow down before reaching the castle where the King was lodged, Flemings and men of Artois with him. There too were many lords, to whom he had given fine gifts.

In came the messenger, who greeted the King in his own language. “Sire,” he said, “the seneschal, who is very upright and loyal, sends you this letter by me. Have it read to you.” Then he held it out; the King took it, broke the wax, and spread out the parchment that was inside. He well knew how to read French; he had learned it as a boy in daily lessons from his tutor, who had taught him to read and write both French and Latin. And so he himself read that letter, which had been drawn up through trickery. When he had seen part of its contents his blood froze; he did not have the power to read it all. And in order to keep the strangers from noticing anything, he moved away into his chamber with two companions. Then he no longer refrained from reading the letter from beginning to end. He saw the bad news that was falsely written in it.

He might have considered it a bad dream; but because of the seal, which he recognized, he readily believed the heartbreaking letter. Therefore he began to mourn, to pull out his hair and tear his clothing; and he was very much disfigured by the tears streaming from his eyes. The knights who were with him were heartily sorry for his distress; and they entreated him to leave off this grieving, for it was not fitting for a king to weep because of any trouble. “If your barons knew of it, they would blame you a great deal.” “My lords,” he said, “I can’t help it, for no man ever heard such news as I have read here in this letter. For she whom I have deeply loved so much, she from whom came my joy and all my riches, whom I love more than anything, has given birth to such a thing that it is all I can do even to look at the letter informing me of it: she has given birth to a beast, she, Manekine, the Queen. What a vile gift this is! And my counselors, whom I left with her not long ago, write that I am quickly to let them know my will. I don’t know what to reply to them. I wish to ask your counsel. On no account would I permit or cause harm to come to her whom I have loved so much. Now tell me your thought.”

“Sire,” answered one of the two, “I shall tell you what my counsel is. If God has done His will with the fruit she has borne in her body, she has not deserved death. Send word that she is to be served well and honorably and that likewise that creature of hers is to be guarded until you return. It is only a fortnight until Lent; then you will leave, no later.<sup>78</sup> You would be much criticized, because of the tourneys you have undertaken, if you left immediately, and your esteem would be diminished. And never reveal this news, for it is unwise to acknowledge what one may be ashamed of.” The King replied: “You speak truly; I can have no better counsel. I shall do it just so. I’ll write the letter myself, to be more certain of the wording.”

In his hands he took parchment and ink, then composed his message in such words:

“The King of Scotland orders the three to whom he entrusted his beloved that she be guarded in her lying-in. And the creature from her, let them guard it carefully, as dearly as their own bodies, if they do not want to bring on their deaths. And let them know that he will return when Lent begins. At that time he will do as he sees fit concerning the matter of which they have informed him.” When he had written these words, he put them under wax and sealed them with his seal. Then he called the messenger who had brought the letter and gave him this one; he added the oral message for his seneschal that he was not to fail in carrying out what he would see in the letter, or else he would regret it. The King did not ask the messenger for any news, nor did the messenger give him any, because he thought that the seneschal had sent it to him in the written communication he had brought, and so he dispensed with telling the King such news as would have been most welcome. But Fortune, enemy to many a worthy man, did not wish it. The King handed the letter to the messenger, who took it, putting it away in his case so as not to tear or crumple it. The King told him not to delay, but to leave early the next day. So he did, as soon as he saw the daylight. The King, remaining at Creil, honored his companions and showed them no sign of his distress; his good sense caused him to hide it and to put on a happy appearance. Thus he concealed his situation, so that no one knew of it except those two, deeply troubled by his trouble.

Now I turn to the messenger, who was speeding along and wished himself back in Scotland. Up hill and down dale he went; having traversed Arras, he arrived in Lens and then passed on to Bruges. At Damme he embarked on a ship used by people crossing to Scotland. (The sea is fairly narrow there.)<sup>79</sup> After a day and a night the ship came to shore. The messenger lost no time in traveling to Evolint, as he had trustingly agreed, and came up to the house where the wicked lady lived. She was very happy to see the messenger returning. After they had exchanged greetings, she said: “Now, tell me the truth. Have you been in France?” “Yes, lady.” “Did you see my son? How does he do?” “Very well, lady. And he is so valiant that he is winning all the tournaments.” “And about the news that he received, tell me if he rejoiced at it.” “Indeed, lady, I well remember that he went into his chamber to read it, he and only two others. They were there a rather long time. I don’t know what he saw in it or what he did, except that in turn he made up this letter that I am carrying back to the seneschal. And I am taking him word that he will pay for it if he does not do what he will see in the letter.”

Hearing this, the lady did not dare to question him further lest he grow suspicious. And so she let it go at that and thought about putting him at ease. Strong wines were offered him, and he made such a disposition of them that he sank into a drunken state. Thus he failed twice, and afterward many a day he thought himself a fool. (Much evil is done through drunkenness; therefore he who indulges in it is very foolish. Many men have been killed through it, and many a great deed hindered.) The toper swallowed so much that he became intoxicated. This gladdened her, the evil, arrogant lady. As she had done on the first occasion, she made him lie down that night in her chamber, at the back. There the messenger satisfied his desire to sleep; on that score, he was most unwise.

Once night had come, the King's mother set to work; she stole the letter and took it into her chamber, so that no one knew of it except the man who had opened the first letter. The wicked lady exhorted him not to resist her will, but to detach the seal on this one. The false clerk, on the path of evil just as his lady was, said, "Gladly," without urging. He removed the seal with the little penknife, unfolded the letter that was inside, then spread it flat and read it aloud before his lady. When she heard that the King would return at Lent, and that until then his wife should be well served and honored and that the creature from her was to be carefully guarded, such a message did not please her. She tore it up quickly and had another and different one made. Such treachery was put into it that worse was never contained in a letter. The words were set down for her by the wicked clerk, who wrote that the King was instructing his seneschal not to await him a single day if he did not have his spouse burned at the stake as soon as her lying-in was over, and with her to burn her issue without delay. He had heard news of Manekine that was not good. He knew why she had only one hand; it was not for nothing that she had this affliction. "Burn her, do not wait, if you value your life."

When she had dictated this, the clerk put the letter back under the wax without breaking the seal. Then they returned it to where the messenger was sleeping (the wine still having him in its power), restored the letter to his case, set it down at his bedside, and departed. The wicked lady went to lie down and rest at her ease, until the dawn broke. Then the messenger arose, well pleased with his lodging; there was nothing like it along his route. By the time he was ready, day had come long since and the King's mother was up. The messenger asked leave of her and departed.

He did not stop until reaching Dundee, where they were expecting him to come with news of the King. He had been away for three weeks. Here he was, returned too soon! (It would have been better if he had been drowned.)

He showed the letter to the seneschal, saying: "The King gives you to know that, if you value your life, whatever you see and find in this letter you are to carry out without fail, or you will regret it." The seneschal took the letter. The two knights who were his counselors were with him; all three saw the seal, which they recognized as the King's. Then the seneschal broke it and saw the letter that the wicked lady had had put there. He read it aloud to them; but when they all grasped what it contained, they were astonished and quite disconcerted. Each of them wept copiously and sighed, and they were silent for a while without saying a word, so full of distress that they did not know what to do. At last they asked the messenger how the King had behaved when he saw the letter; and he said: "Very badly. To judge by appearances, he was not at all at ease. I know nothing further, except that he orders you to do what he commands in the letter I've brought you, or you will come to a bad end. Here you see his mandate. Carry it out so as to please him, if you don't want to have trouble." They believed this deceptive letter to be authentic; and so they conferred with each other.

"My lords," said the seneschal, "what can we make of this message? We don't know why he gives us such an order. Perhaps someone has told him, off there where he is, about her birthplace and why she had her hand cut off. There may be some reason for this; but he would have been very reluctant to wrong her, not long ago. I have no idea where this present intention comes from. It is truly said: 'In great love lies great hatred.' What shall we do about this business? My heart shrinks from burning her to death. And if we let her live, we are not free and clear; for the King will have *us* burned, or make us die as it pleases him. Say which of these you agree to; I am quite at a loss." The others pondered, then answered him briefly: "Doing his lord's pleasure is fitting for anyone who esteems and fears him. Although we feel affliction or pity, we must still do his pleasure; otherwise much harm could come to us."

Thus all three agreed that they would burn Manekine at the stake the day after her lying-in was over. Soon, throughout the country, spread the news of the order that the King had given to his officers: to burn his wife and his child. The common people were stunned at this and deeply grieved. They all kept saying: "What can this be, dear lord God? What is the reason of such sorrow and pain, that the best lady in all the world will be burned with her child? How can he have such an inclination, the King who so loved her? No one would have believed that he might hate her enough to put her to such a death. How can he know any reason why she should have such torment? It seemed as if he loved her so much! Seemed? No, he did,

without fail. No one can suspect a lack of love. If he had not loved her with his whole heart he would hardly have married her, given that she was mutilated. But he saw her so well taught, showing such behavior and such qualities as a good lady ought to have, and so he took her in marriage; for she was well worthy to be queen. When he had wedded her, he honored her as long as they were together. And when he left her, the love was still there; you could tell by the tears they both shed at their parting. Now he orders her to be burned in a fire, and with her his fine heir. In faith, this is a great pity! Shame on anyone who will ever trust in affection, if it turns to such suffering!” So they were saying throughout the country; and they were all broken down with grief.

The Queen still had not heard the news, for they kept it from her. She remained in her chamber and knew nothing of all this; yet her heart was not at ease. She had a feeling that trouble was coming, without knowing where or when or how, but she would soon learn. When she had lain-in for her entire month, all that was fitting was done for her. She arose honorably and went to be churched,<sup>80</sup> greatly pitied by those who knew what was in store for her. The day drew toward evening without her suspecting anything. She looked at the seneschal, close to her, and called him to her. “Seneschal,” she said, “my heart is troubled by the delay of my lord, who has loved me so much. What has become of your messenger? He really ought to be back. I am astonished that he does not come. Truly, my heart is fearful of bad news. I shall never be happy until I see my lord, who has done me great honor in taking me out of my servitude and joining with me in marriage. He must be waiting for Lent; I do not expect an earlier date. For God’s sake, if you know anything about him, tell me! You will do well.”

Hearing these words, the seneschal nearly collapsed from grief; pity so overwhelmed him that for a long while he couldn’t answer. Tears came from his eyes, unstoppably; his whole face was covered with them. By and by he controlled himself enough to speak, and said: “Sweet lady, so help me God, there is no longer any use in concealment. This is how things have gone with you: the King my lord hates you. I don’t know why. It’s a full week ago that I had news from him; but because it wasn’t good, we’ve kept it from you. But now it will be revealed. My lord has commanded that, as dearly as we value our lives, rightly or wrongly, we are to put you to burn in a fire, and also that which is born of you. And furthermore, he writes that if he finds you alive when he returns, he will put *us* to the ordeal. Now Lent is coming, when tourneying will no longer detain him. And so we are obliged to carry out his command promptly. You have three days’ respite, no more. But now do not

put off thinking of your soul, for your body is doomed to being burned. I should not wish it, not for a thousand marks; but I know that if I neglected it I'd quickly die as a result."

When Manekine heard this news, she was so dismayed that her whole heart contracted. She fell down in a faint, and for a good while her breath failed her. Overcome by pity, the seneschal lifted her up. And when she had regained consciousness she cried out: "God, help! Where does it come from, what this man is telling me? Am I to die in such dishonor? What have I done wrong, dear Lord God? What has caused this hardness in my lord, after he did me such honor? Now he brings suffering upon me, he who so loved me. His love is turned away, replaced by hate. Unfortunate, miserable, what shall I do? But since it is so with me, how has my sweet son deserved this? What wrong has he done? For what crime is he to die? By my faith, I don't know what to say, except that we shall lose our lives wrongfully." After speaking so for a time, she slipped down to the ground. The seneschal did not comprehend this until he saw that she meant to kiss his foot.<sup>81</sup> Swiftly he drew back and said to her: "Lady, may God never again give me honor on any day when you touch my foot. Truly, you would degrade me too much." "But I shall do it, sir, provided that you let my child live; you may do with me as you choose." The seneschal wept and sighed; words failed him. He was moved by her tears. Pity seized him; and so he told her that he would speak to the two knights and if possible would contrive some means for her to be saved. Still in distress, Manekine thanked him.

At that he came away to his companions. "Sirs," he said, "what shall we do? We must form another plan. Our hearts would be too hard if we brought about the burning of our benefactress. It would be well to find some way to deliver her, while keeping the King from knowing of it and doing us harm. Here is my idea. Just now I remembered that when she came to this country, she arrived in a vessel without any sail or mast. If you agree, we'll put her back into it, and thus save her from death. If God wills He will protect her; and, if not, she will perish out there. And to avoid the King's displeasure, if you think well of what I say, I'll have a wooden statue in her likeness made by a sculptor, as well as he can carve, and another that will look like our young lord her child. When mother and baby are at sea, we'll have a great fire lit; into it we'll throw the statues so cleverly that everyone in the country will believe they are my lady and her child. We must make a show of this sort, for such pity comes to my heart that nothing could make me burn her. I believe that I'd rather die. Now tell me your will: do you agree?" They answered: "We wish it, indeed. We have no objection, provided that we can

so carry it out that we have no trouble from the King, for we greatly fear his anger. He will have us all killed if he can perceive that we have not obeyed him. But it is better that we set ourselves at risk than that such a creature, one who has done us so much good, receive such cruel treatment at our hands. We agree with what you say. But now let us act quickly, for my lord will soon come and haste is called for.”

Thus they planned the business. Promptly they caused a good sculptor to carve two statues: a small one for the child and a larger one for his mother, having obtained his assurance that through him this deception would never be revealed. He promised this easily for the sake of his lady, for he trusted that by this means she would be saved, and so was pleased to do the work. In a short time he had finished the statues, shaped like mother and baby. As for the seneschal, his heart full of pity, he did not delay. As soon as the daylight was gone, he and his companions caused the Queen, holding her son, to mount an ambling palfrey; thus they led her into exile. They rode for two days and two nights, making few stops on the way. They came to Berwick by night, not wanting the people of the town to see them lest they inform the King. They dismounted at the house of the provost, for they knew that she loved him very much. The seneschal promptly told him of their project and how they wished to carry it out. The provost was so dismayed by this that if I took all day I could not tell you his sorrow, for he loved the Queen dearly—and well he might, for she had done him much good. When she begged him for mercy, his heart was filled with gloom. But it could not be otherwise; the fear of the King so drove them all that they brought her to the shore where the boat was ready, the one in which she had come and been received with joy. Into that very one they put her again, pity stirring their hearts. The leave-taking was painful; they all wept. There was no laughter or playing among them when she said: “Farewell, fair sirs. I thank you that my body has not perished by fire. I require of you that on my behalf you greet my lord the King; and tell him that it is without just cause that he brings about my loss and his son’s. Truly, I love him more than any living thing. And since my death is pleasing to him, I prefer my dying to his behaving in a way that would pain me; for I should be in great distress if I were with my lord and he showed me an unfriendly face. I prefer to die like this. May God forgive him this misdeed and give him honor and health! When he parted from me, I should scarcely have thought that he would so soon deal me such a choice. Well do I see that man’s love is only wind.<sup>82</sup> Now may God give me His love! For in that there is no sadness.”

In this way the Queen took leave of those who, most reluctantly, put her in mortal danger. Through treachery and wrong, she was made to believe

that the King desired her death. (And yet there would be nothing so painful for him, as soon as he heard the news. His wheel would have turned over badly; he would have to suffer bitterly from it.) When she had said everything she wished, they commended her to the Virgin and then pushed her out to sea, and with her the child she loved. Many a time she called herself wretched.

So they separated from her, their hearts nearly breaking with pity. They returned to Berwick; but there they stayed only a short time, departing before dawn. Of two days' travel they made one. At night they rode by moonlight and came back to Dundee after dark. Without noise or notice they managed to obtain the statues. The maker of them was a skilled craftsman, for they resembled the models as closely as if there were life inside them; no one would believe that it was not she who was then at sea in the little boat. It seemed as if the statue of the Queen were weeping and praying to God for help. When the three of them had obtained the statues, the seneschal was very glad. As soon as dawn came, he caused a great heap of thornbushes to be brought to a place alongside the castle. This was far from pleasing to everyone.

The news had already traveled about so much that the common people of the country had come to Dundee to see the ill-treatment that the Queen was to receive, as they all believed. When they saw the thornbushes being dragged in, on all sides you would have heard the shouts: "Ah! King of Scotland, bad king! What wrong has my lady done you, she who did you so much good? We do not believe that she has deserved death." So they spoke. But much more, and very soon, would they be horror-struck when they saw the thornbushes alight and smoking everywhere and watched the seneschal descend from the castle, his companions carrying what looked like the Queen and her son to deliver them to such suffering, and noticed that in back and in front of them were the men-at-arms (who did not want the spectators to be so eager that they observed from close by, lest they detect the ruse)—and saw those two knights, before and behind, seize the statues and throw them into the fire. They truly believed that it was their lady and her child. Then, without hesitating any longer, they all began to cry out; and everyone kept saying: "How miserable I am! Why am I alive on this day when are losing the best lady who ever kept a kingdom? We do not know for what reason she has died so unjustly; it can only be the will of the King. May God give him such uneasiness that some day he repents of the pain and torment that he has inflicted on her, who loved him far more than herself—and also on her child, who is barely a month old. The King has done the

greatest wrong that ever was seen. May God never give him joy of it!" There were many so overcome by grief that they fainted repeatedly. They were quite broken down, and they put upon the King the deed in which he had no part. (This was apparent when he learned of it. On this account he hated his mother; for in the end such treachery is not hidden but is revealed to shame those who have committed it.) Of the people in Scotland nobody was happy, except for the one who had plotted the great betrayal and murder (for which she later had such a bitter time). She, on hearing the news, was jubilant, believing that the other woman had been burned. But as for her and the seneschal, who were far from being alike in will and in heart, and as for the common people and the gentry who were in mourning throughout Scotland, and as for the woman adrift with her son in the boat without sail or mast, I shall here leave off the tale. I must tell about the King and pick up where I left him: back at Creil.

Now the story relates that after the King received the news that the one he loved had given birth to such a creature as you have heard about, he did not know a moment's happiness. He greatly desired, if he could manage to do it without incurring dishonor, to leave the tourneys and turn back toward Scotland. For him, Lent was slow in coming; that was when tourneys were to end and knights were to go back to their homes. (Such is still the custom.) Until then, as well as he could, he had to conceal his chagrin. Until Lent he masked his feelings so well that his demeanor revealed his heart to no one, except for the two who had witnessed the writing and sealing of the letter. But they, knowing his heart, comforted him. So he awaited Lent.

When it had begun, he delayed no longer but took leave of the barons. He gave them many fine gifts: palfreys, warhorses, fine and unblemished pieces of armor, for all of which they were grateful. Thus he did to each one what was pleasing to him. Then he departed forthwith. The Count of Flanders accompanied him, for his own route lay in the same direction. They made their way through Vermandois, then on until they passed Artois without stopping. They came to Flanders on the third day from Creil. The Count was very much pleased by the King's behavior toward him. He would gladly have retained him in Flanders a fortnight or a week, to enjoy themselves. But he could not succeed in this wish, for the King was very anxious at staying away so long. He could hardly wait to see Manekine and learn whether what he feared was true. (Alas! It was not as he thought. His mother had caused him a loss that he did not anticipate.) When the Count of Flanders understood that his urging was in vain, he entertained the King very well for three days until his ship was ready at Damme, where it was anchored. Thus far he

was escorted by the Count, who was not at all happy that the King was leaving so soon. Over and over he offered him his own power and lordship. The King thanked him amiably and had him given four warhorses; not one of them was worth less than one hundred pounds sterling. The Count made no refusal. For his part, he gave him seven or eight hunting birds: falcons and goshawks and gyrfalcon, well trained. But the King took little delight in them; he had another matter on his mind, one that he did not yet grasp. When his ship was prepared and well laden with provisions, he briefly took leave of the Count and then climbed aboard, along with his knights who had come tourneying with him. The mariners who were waiting there and who were to take them across raised the sails high and wide. The strong wind filled them, and the ship moved off rapidly.

The seneschal of Scotland was staying in the port [of Dundee]. When he saw Lent beginning, he knew that without further delay his lord would come back; he would remain in France no longer.<sup>83</sup> And so he said to his chief barons: "It is well that we go to meet the King at Berwick—he will come through there, I believe—and we shall ask him how, why, and for what ill will he has made us throw into the flames our good lady and her fair son. My anger will never be appeased, yet at least he will have stated the reason to me. We must all be greatly afflicted, for we shall never be able to recover such a queen in all the world from among all the women who are in it." "Indeed," they said, "you speak the truth. We cannot again have one so good. We greatly desire to hear why he has caused her to die. But let us go, promptly, and await him at Berwick. The closer we are to the port, the sooner we shall know this news." Thus most of them prepared to go and meet their lord.

They came to Berwick and engaged, here and there in the town, the lodgings where they dismounted. For three days they awaited their lord; on the fourth the King came to the shore and his nobles with him. The seneschal learned of this at once, and the barons, who had their horses saddled and then mounted them. To meet their lord they went down to the shore. The King was glad to see them; there he received many greetings. And he lost no time in calling his seneschal and the other two also, for he wished to question them on the matter closest to his heart. "Now tell me, my lords," he said, "how she does, she in whom I have placed my love and never withdrawn it? You have caused me much distress through the letter you wrote and sent to me across the sea. But since God wishes it, I wish it—although it afflicts me greatly—for we must suffer in patience what pleases God. I shall comfort her about this matter; I shall never love her the less for it. But now let me know how she is and what she is doing."

"Sire," the seneschal answered, "for the Lord of all the world! Are you not aware that I have carried out your order completely? I do not know for what reason you commanded such madness. It is because we want to know this that there are so many barons here. If it pleases you, you will tell us how you could have been angry enough to ordain—such a thing; it is a bold man who dares to repeat it." "I sent you word," said the King, "I wrote it myself, that she was to be kept in great honor until my return. As for the creature from her, you were to guard it well, without doing it harm, until I came back; and then I should decide what I am to do with such an heir. For you gave me to understand that it was the ugliest shape that Nature ever formed: a beast covered with hair. I myself read the letter; because of it my heart was heavy. But restore to me without delay the one whom I left you to guard, or I shall skin you alive!"

When the seneschal heard the King's answer, he was so fearful and angry that for some time he could not express what was in his heart. At last he said: "So help me God! Sire, I never caused any such thing to be put in the letter. I should have told you a lie. Instead, I put—do not think it a dream—that the Queen had a son; no one knew a fairer child. I wrote that you should be very joyful and should know for certain that my lady was well and cheerful and happy with her issue. And thereupon you wrote back to me—and sealed it with your seal—that upon receiving your letter, if I did not want to die in shame and anguish, I was to burn my lady as soon as she had risen from childbed, and her creature with her. If need be, and so that you may do me no harm, I call to witness the two counselors you left with me. We saw your letter, all three of us, and we were not mistaken; we well recognized your seal. When I read such an order, my heart was indignant and grieved; and nevertheless such compassion took hold of us because of her friendship (I shall tell you the whole truth) that we were unwilling to burn her. Instead, we put her in a boat in which there was neither sail nor mast. As alone as she came here, just as alone she departed, except that she had her child with her. And because we feared you, we did not dare to do in full view what I have just related to you. Instead, it was carried out so secretly that no one knew of it except for just four people. For to cover up the truth and because we feared incurring your displeasure if you knew of this affair, we had two statues made; and we put them into the fire so deftly that it seemed to everyone that my lady was burned up; and they still believe it. I have lied to you in nothing. I do not know the origin of the error that has brought such an affliction upon us, for never did I write such a letter as the one you have given me the gist of; nor did

you ever send me the one that you summed up just now. I cannot explain anything so strange; I am amazed. Do with me as you please. I have told you how it is.”

The King listened to this extraordinary account. It was so hard and bitter for him that he could not hold himself up; he sank to the ground. His heart was constricted to the point where he could not say yes or no. He sat there as if in a faint, and his seneschal beside him. The barons and knights who were on the pebble beach learned the news very soon; they wept from pity. Those who believed that she had been burned, and through the King’s order, when they heard that she had had no harm because of him, but saw that it was through treachery that she had suffered such an outrage—they were so afflicted that they tore their clothes; most of them pulled out their hair. But their grief was not equal to the King’s; for never before did a man grieve so much. He was so afflicted that no one could comfort him; he was forced to faint many times. When he regained consciousness, he did not refrain from lamenting her:

“Dear heart, lovely, sweet friend, you who were my life, you from whom came my joy, you from whom I expected always to have comfort and delight, you whose heart was empty of all malice and full of goodness, you in whom nothing was lacking, you who were both wise and worthy to be queen of the world, you whom I loved so much, you who were my bride—how, through what extraordinary events, does this misadventure strike me? Where can it come from, the treachery through which you were driven from the land of which you ought to be the lady—and were nearly burned to death? Burned! God! And for what crime? How did anyone think that I should want to command doing such a thing to her, who could have commanded of me anything she wished? Never, truly, would her request be so onerous that I would not do it, whatever might be the outcome for me. Now you are on the sea, in misery—or, perhaps, drowned. How shall I ever be happy for a single day? I am so disconsolate because of you that I am at a loss. May it not please Our Lord that I have joy and you have suffering! It would not be true love if I did not share your misery. I well know that for you it is great, even if it were only the belief that you were exiled by my will. Indeed, I never had that will. If you do not believe me about this, beloved, you doubt me wrongly; for I never had such a desire. I shall show proof of this; for before a month has passed I shall do what no king ever did before. I mean to leave my people and my country and go in search of you through land and sea. I shall never stop until I hear of you. If the news is bad, I shall die of it; and if God wills that I recover you, He will thus heal the wound in my heart, which will

never leave me unless you make it leave. Alas! How can I learn through whose plotting I have lost such a treasure as wife and son? For this I myself shall go into exile, never returning if I do not find her, far or near. My heart warns me that my mother has done this thing; for I do not know who else would hate her to the point of committing such treachery; but she hated her without any reason for it. I do believe that my mother has done this to me. And so for a long time I shall lead a bitter life, and so will she who has not deserved it. But if my mother has treated you thus, and I can find it out, may God never again give me joy if I do not make her repent of it and feel harsh imprisonment!"

Thus the King tortured himself, and wept and sighed; thus his heart was overcome with anger. And with him his people grieved until they could grieve no more. They all thought themselves lost. In such sorrow and anguish they went together into Berwick, to their lodgings. Never was seen such mourning as they made, all through the town; they wept together openly. The King went to the castle, with a large troop of knights. That day there was neither laughter nor play; knights, men-at-arms, cooks did not eat; no one remembered to do it, for anguish gripped them.

The King called his seneschal, not concealing his distress, and said to him: "The messenger who went to France, have him come to me immediately. I want to have words with him." "Sire," he said, "very willingly." He sent two squires for him. They soon went and returned, bringing before the King the messenger, trembling in terror; he believed that he must have done wrong. On seeing him, the King asked what route he had taken when he had left the seneschal to go straight to France. "And let there be no concealing from me the lodging where you were received, both coming and going. With that, I wish to acquit you. If you tell the truth, you will have nothing to fear; if you lie, you will soon know what death by hanging is like. You will be defended by nothing else."

The messenger understood the King and answered like a sensible man. "Sire," he said, "I shall tell you the whole truth, whatever I may get for it. Outward bound, I slept at the home of your mother, who was very hospitable toward me, I do not know why. She had forty sous given to me. Through cunning, as I guess, she had me drink so much of her strong wine that it went to my head. Thus folly took hold of me and did with me as it pleased. She made me lie in her alcove that night, until I arose the next day quite early. When I found myself in that chamber, my limbs trembled with fright. I feared treachery so much that I put my hand into my case. When I saw the seneschal's seal I no longer had misgivings, but believed that it was

through love of you that she had bedded me there. As I was about to depart, there she was before me. She strongly urged me to return that way without fail; and I immediately agreed. I kept my word to her: I went to you, I came back by her way—for which, the next day, I thought myself a fool. I drank so much that night that I was drunk; I did not recover until the next day. And the second time I lay where I had lain before, like a man fearing no harm or even thinking of it. Since I had your seal, in no way could I have perceived that someone might have changed the letter. But since you did not intend putting into it the words that the seneschal saw, I do believe that the treacherous woman, your mother, had them changed; but I could not have believed it. So help me God! Were I to die for it, if I had known, I should not have allowed it. I have told you the whole truth. Do with me as you will!”

Now the King knew truly that his mother had plotted this suffering for him and carried it through. And so he swore that what she had brought about would be a burden to her in turn. The one whom she had sent into exile would not be alone in undergoing hardship; she herself would have her share in it. Straightaway he sent for masons. Having assembled a good five hundred of them, he led them to a cliff near the sea, with no town nearby. Then he called the chief among them. “Master,” he said, “I require of you that with stone and good mortar you make me here a great tower, quite round. Let the walls be good and solid, fifteen feet or more in thickness. Make it high and wide, with no entry at the base. Up above, make a window through which the interior can be seen. And take care that within thirty days the tower is completed.” The master answered briefly that the tower would be constructed with all speed. Anyone who then would have seen people building, some of them cutting the stones, others shaping them with hammers, others rapidly making good lime mortar, others putting up scaffolding to apply it, others beginning the tower starting with the foundation, and those masons shouting: “Stone here! Mortar here!”—he would have said that they meant to finish that tower without stinting. They all worked so diligently that in thirty days the tower was quite finished.

Then the chief mason came to the King and said: “Sire, in faith, the tower you decreed is completed. You never saw a stronger one of its size.” The King answered: “It is well done.” He had the man paid so much money that he was rich from it and no longer had to be frugal. After the tower was finished, the King sent privily for his mother, who suspected nothing. It was all done so secretly that there was no warning until the moment when she saw the seneschal who was coming for her, accompanied by some barons of the land. “Mount!”<sup>84</sup> they said. “The King sends for you.” “Why?” she asked.

They did not tell her, but made her mount without delay. At the hour the King had named to them, they approached the tower, where the King was awaiting them. Here they came, pounding along.

When the King saw his mother he was greatly moved; but her treachery had harmed him so much that it was time for her to have what she deserved. It is an ill thing to turn one's heart to treachery, for because of it, when the end comes, it will not be good; God hates faithlessness more than any other misdeed. And since God hates a traitor, He who sees and knows whatever is done, the person who becomes one is a great fool; he strikes himself down with his own action. By treachery a person can for a long time make life a burden for someone else; but the more harm is caused thereby, the more cruelly it turns back upon the one who has brought it about. This woman did not avoid that vice, and so she came to a bad end. For the King had her immured in the tower, where she long had to endure a hard life; never thereafter, all her days, did she emerge. She had nothing good to eat, nothing but the bread and water that was brought to her every morning and let down through the window. There the King made her stay, whether she liked it or not. Manekine would not be the only one to feel discomfort, nor would her son, who were both at sea in great peril; she who had brought this about had loaded the weight of it on her own shoulders.<sup>85</sup>

When the King had put her in the tower and had decreed what supplies were to be brought to her and lowered by a rope, and had given the command to those whom he chose that they should guard the tower and that, upon their lives, they should take care that no one removed her from it without falling into harsh bondage, he did not wish to stay any longer. No day dawned when he did not weep all his tears, two or three times, over the one for whom he was distressed. To go in search of her he had a ship fitted out, the swiftest and sturdiest that ever was seen in a harbor. And he said that with him would go his seneschal and those who had put her to sea, because they had believed the letter that had misled them. He wished them to suffer for it; therefore he would take them along. But concerning the man who was preparing his journey the tale breaks off here and returns to Manekine, who was weeping on the sea.

Now the story relates that, full of necessity, distress, suffering, heavy thoughts, grief, and tears, Manekine departed from Scotland in a little boat. With her she had no lady or maid, no valet, man-at-arms, or knight, no one but her cherished son. Over and over she complained of her sad lot, lamenting: “What is the cause, Virgin Mary, of my being so afflicted? Why is it, sweet Lady, that the day before yesterday I was the wife of the one I loved best, and

wore a golden crown as Queen? What has caused my lord's hatred for me? I loved him as much as myself, and I was bound to do so, for he showed me honor. And since he honored me so much that he swore always to keep faith with me—and in fact he did keep his pledge for a good while—how then could he come, without my deserving it, to order my burning? How did it please him? How can he now be so hard toward me? I do not know, truly I do not know what it means, unless someone made him believe a falsehood—but he ought to have had so understanding a heart that he could not have believed anything for which he might harm me so.

“Truly, I see no reason why I should have such injustice, except for plain bad luck, which has put me back into the peril I was in before. Fortune has taught me her power and shown me that she always keeps turning her wheel. On it she holds the whole world attached; and I see the consequences. Those who are placed in the highest seat apprehend nothing until they fall into the trap beneath her feet, where a person is shamed and bruised and pitiable. A little while ago he was high, and now he is low. At this moment Fortune has on the wheel many persons on the way up, mounting so high that they overtop the highest; and often they are happy and confident when they have risen from bottom to top. Then it happens that the wheel turns upside down and they are back where they were—or worse. For they are stabbed in the heart by being vilely brought down in a short while from where they had long striven to be, through climbing on the wheel that now has mocked them. Such a wheel is not reliable; he who trusts in it too much is a fool. I trusted in it, and it has turned me according to its will. At first I was high upon it, and was on my guard against no evil; but it soon deprived me of all good things when it put my father into a mood that was not reasonable or good. It was on me that the blow fell; for in anguish I was maimed by it and exiled from the country. I was put out to sea—where I am again. At that point I was under her wheel. Then, through some unknown mercy—unless it was God's love—she took me again on her wheel and held me until I was in greater honor than ever before. When I had risen high, I was once more so confident that I did not think of falling again. But it is said that ‘the goat does not fear the knife until it strikes her in the skin.’<sup>86</sup> And they also say: ‘Much of what a fool thinks does not come to pass.’<sup>87</sup> Much of my own thought does not come to pass, for Fortune has punished me, too, for my foolish belief, and put me back where she found me; and so I am more miserable than before. When someone has been well off, mischance is all the more bitter afterward, and far heavier to bear. I see that in this world there is nothing but pain, for Fortune with God's permission leads people according

to her will. She has made me very sorrowful, for from great joy and prosperity she has plunged me into sadness. Of the person I loved best, and of all the wealth I had, she has left me only my son, who is with me in danger, and my clothes and this beautiful ring on my finger. The King gave it to me when he spoke to me of his love. Through it he made me the promise that never in all his life would he hate me. But he is not keeping this promise; and so I am in grievous danger. Earthly love is quite empty; there is no good, if God does not bestow it.

“Virgin Mary, sweet Lady, you are the star and the gem through whom good people are saved. I beg you to save me and to pray to your Son for me, that He may rescue me from this peril and make me understand the cause of what I am undergoing and that He may restore to my son his heritage, from which we are being driven without deserving it. Never before did a woman suffer such a loss. I entreat you concerning all this; please intercede with your Son about it.”

So Manekine lamented, over and over, and she had ample cause for it. If God had not been with her, holding and comforting her, she would have died at sea out of grief. But God sustained and guarded her so well that she did not fear the sea. She entrusted herself to the Mother of God, who had always protected her. The devotions to the sweet Virgin that she had always kept up were not wasted, for in her need they helped her. The Virgin prayed to her sweet Son so much on her behalf that He guided Manekine’s boat. In spite of perils, storms, and contrary winds, on the twelfth day she left the sea behind. She came straight into a river called the Phare<sup>88</sup> that keeps its course through Rome and from there flows directly to the sea. Into it her boat turned at night. And when day came, three poor fishermen of Rome, who scarcely had any great sum of money or provisions, arose very early. They took their tools and their nets and promptly entered the Phare, going toward the sea in their boat. They went along until they saw a single vessel that was coming toward them before the sun rose. They perceived that there was no one in it except for one woman. They pointed her out to each other; all three of them watched her intently. And the longer they watched this vessel, which they saw without sail or mast, without rudder or oar, going along the banks of the Phare, the more they wondered what this could be. It was unheard of that in their part of the world a vessel might move along without a pilot; yet in it they saw no one steering.

One of them addressed his companions: “Men,”<sup>89</sup> he said, “it’s fine pickings that God has sent us today. We have finished our fishing; in this catch we have gained a vessel and what is inside it. It seems to me that I see a

woman there. Let's go look, all three of us! If we seize this gain, no bargaining is needed." They answered: "That's fine with us." Thereupon they turned their boat and sailed until they neared the vessel, then with boat hooks caught and held it. In it was Manekine, still weeping. They were much amazed to see the child she had borne, not yet two months old, laughing in the lap of his mother. The most sensible of the fishermen said to the two others: "Men, now let me talk to her. I see well that she has had a hard time. If you said anything disrespectful or foolish to her, you might be accused of behaving badly; and it's a good thing to avoid doing what you might be blamed for. I believe that God loves us, when He sends us such a find; and so let us go about this so as to get no reproach. And if it's all right with you, I advise that you listen, and I'll talk, and ask her where she is from." They answered: "We'll be quiet and do as you like, provided that all three of us share the gain." "I agree," he said. "I want you to get as much as I do; now don't worry." "Then," they said, "we agree. We'll let you do the talking." So said the fishermen, making one of them their spokesman. And he came to the woman sitting in the boat. "Miss," he said, "or Madame—I don't know which, upon my soul!—may God, who dwells in Trinity, bring you to greater well-being than you are in now, dear lady, as it appears from your looks." "Good men, and may He give your hearts great joy, of which I have none!"<sup>90</sup> "Fair lady, I am sorry. But, for love's sake, I entreat you to tell me where you were born, and what chance has brought you by sea, and alone, with no one with you except a child who must need a nurse; for I don't believe that you are prepared for such a task. Such clothes, so well cut, as you have—nurses don't have them; they will never be so rich. If you please—do not be angry—tell me where you come from."

Manekine answered him: "Truly, good man, my sufferings are so painful to relate, I could not speak of them. If you knew my trouble, you could not amend it; and so it is better for me to be silent. But tell me—as to this country where I have come—what city is it that I see, so large, situated on this river? And I wish to know who you are. If you want to have my vessel, I give it to you on this condition: that you take me safely to town; for I am thoroughly weary of being at sea." "Fair lady, I shall tell you, for I am very sorry about your trouble. As for this country, it is called the Roman region, and the city you just asked me about is named Rome. And if you want to know what sort of men have stopped you and captured you here, we are fishermen, all three of us. We have no other fief or land. Today we were coming to look for fish, to have something to eat right away, for we need it badly. But we shall fish no more today; instead we shall take you, unharmed, straight to

Rome and to our houses. For you we shall leave our fishing and go sell your vessel, and so you will have money to spend. And you will be with my wife; you will have no ill-treatment. As long as the money lasts, we shall make you very comfortable, you and the child you are carrying. But leave behind this sorrow that you have taken to your heart. God is still in Heaven; He can well restore joy to you. You must not doubt this. For be sure that, insofar as we can, we shall carry out all your wishes.” Manekine grasped that she was in the hands of poor people who wished to treat her decently. She could not have been so happy for all of Rome. She thought that she would stay with them; she would have to earn her bread, but thanked God heartily for it. She promptly said to the fishermen: “Good men, I thank you very much for addressing me courteously here. Since it pleases God, it suits me well to be in your company. I shall give you my silken clothes in exchange for others of less value, and also the vessel in which I have come. Except for this child and this ring, take everything; I am quite willing. But if you took the ring from me, you would have killed me; for I have no other comfort in my grief and wrong. But take all my other possessions and lead me to your homes, where I can have bread. Do not concern yourselves to know who I am or where I come from. Do not inquire any more, I entreat you, about this affair if you want to respect my wishes.” And they all granted her this, just as she asked; she could not, with honor, better bring about her own well-being and theirs. After these words they put about and prepared to go to Rome. The boats were made fast to each other; the fishermen sped them along with their oars. But before they came to Rome, God, accomplishing all His will, sent them news that was pleasing to the fishermen and good to the wanderer whom Fortune had sent to that place.

In Rome there was a senator, wealthy and living in great state.<sup>91</sup> There was nobody so rich in Rome, and no one known to be more generous. Generous, straightforward, kindly, courteous, openhanded, full of alms and charity, he was considered the worthiest man in the city. He was well on in years, a man respectable and wise, loved by God and by the world. It was ten years since the death of his wife, a very good lady. With her he had had daughters whom he had given in marriage, and two who were still unmarried. These two kept him company; they managed his household so well that there was none to match it in Rome. This excellent man had risen early that day. It was Lent, and so he was fasting. Restless in his house, he soon called his squire and ordered him to put on his saddle and to be quick about it. He was to bring him his palfrey and to mount his own. “Go promptly,” he said, “and return promptly; and we shall ride out to amuse ourselves outside the

city, two leagues away, or three or four, along the Phare, and we shall see whether we meet some fishermen. If we find good fish there, I shall buy a quantity of them.”<sup>92</sup> “Sir, he said, “what pleases you will quickly be done.” Thereupon he left his master. In haste he put on the saddles, and then the bridles, then took the horses to where his master awaited him at the step. The Senator mounted his long-maned palfrey, then went riding off in the direction of the sea and amusing himself along the riverbank. Glancing toward the water, he noticed the fishermen who were taking away the one they had found in tears inside the boat. The Senator looked at the lady, the child, the boat that they were pulling along so rapidly, and it occurred to him to ask how they had made this acquisition.

“Men,” he said, “may that God who gives and distributes all good things guard you—you and the one whom you are towing along! I see that you intend to take her into the city. If you do not mind, I want to inquire about this woman and where you got her. She does not seem to be one of you; your wives do not have such overdresses.”<sup>93</sup> I see from her appearance that she has had much hardship. Now say, so help you God! from where, and how, does she come to you?” The one who was the best speaker answered: “Sir, I shall tell you truthfully all I know about this. The three of us had climbed into our boat to come fishing on the water, for we needed money. We were going toward the sea, still seeing little daylight, when we noticed this vessel, without oar or mast or sail or rudder, and without guidance; and we expected to find it empty. We hurried in that direction and caught the boat with our boat hooks. But when we looked inside we found this lady, and a child with her. It is clear that she has known hardship; I found her sad and tearful and very much at wit’s end. When I saw her I promptly greeted her and inquired about her situation. But I could not bring her around to speaking of it. This much she did say: it would be too painful to tell me of her misfortune. As to this land and the countryside, and well-established Rome, she asked me the nature and the name, and I told her readily. Then she begged us to conduct her into the city without any trickery and take her to our homes. For this she offered us her belongings: her boat and all her clothing. Since, she said, what she has on is too noble, she will want to have simpler clothes. Thus we can have everything of hers with the only exception of her child and a little shining ring that she has on her right hand. And besides, I assure you—I don’t know how this can be or what it means—that she does not have a left hand. I wasn’t able to learn her story. Now she will have to endure her poverty with us. For, so help me the good God! I have such pity for her that if I had not eaten for two days and if I had only bread

enough to last until tomorrow, I'd give her the larger share of it, seeing her misery.<sup>94</sup> Now I have told you what we know, how we have her and her things.”

Then the Senator answered: “So help me God!” he said. “Men, you have told me strange things here; I never heard the like. She does seem descended from great people, for her appearance is fair and noble. And you do not have any great means to provide her with much clothing and food for herself and her child; and if she must seek for her bread and ask for alms in God's name, it will be a shame. In Rome there are both fools and wise men; the fools will perhaps give her bad treatment; since they will see that she is beautiful, they will want to have their way with her. Yet she is, perhaps, a noblewoman and formerly the lady of much land. It is a great pity when such a woman loses her honor through no fault of her own. If you are capable of pity, and if you want to free her from distress and see her established in a mode of life fitting for a good woman, such compassion for her fills me that I shall buy her from you and shall treat her with honor, provided that she does not object. She will be well off, so help me God! And I shall have her child reared just as it will please her. But now I put it to her: if she desires good company and a good place to live, to her liking, rather than poverty (which is hard for those who are not used accustomed to it), and if she wants me to buy her, let her tell me, without quibbling, whether she will want to keep herself decently and come with me. If she likes, she will be with my daughters. My heart aches with pity for her, because it is clear that she has known hardship. Now let her answer me: whether it is more to her liking to be safe in my house than be someplace where she might meet with ill-treatment. I give her to choose one of these options, and tell me her decision.”

Manekine understood what the Senator was saying to her from the river-bank. She responded sensibly: “Sir, it was the true God, who does His will in Heaven and on Earth according to His pleasure, Who put into your heart the will to take me from this dangerous exile where I have been sent. Therefore I want to do whatever pleases you, except that—I must say this—I am not to be shamed in my body. For I do not belong entirely to myself; I have a husband to whom I promised to keep faith forever. And keep it I shall; never, for any wrong or pain or peril of death, shall I break my vow to him. Be quite certain of that. As for my hardship and suffering, I shall not relate it, come what may; for if I were to tell of it, no one would ever believe me. I prefer to bear it like this as long as it pleases God. But if there is in you such pity, such nobleness, such friendship, that for God's sake you will take me in and protect me from bad treatment, and not inquire where I come from, and

you will for the great God have this child reared, I shall thank you for it in His name. And I shall do whatever pleases you, in honor, to deserve your good opinion."

Having heard her answer, the Senator said: "As God may see me! My heart grants you this as you have requested it. But I want to be informed of this much: that you tell me your name. How shall we call you? I ask nothing further of you." She, still concealing her past, replied: "Sir, I was called 'Manekine' in the land I have left behind." "I never heard such a name. . . ."<sup>95</sup> In this country there is none such." "Sir, he who gave it to me saw in me some reason for it." The Senator called to the fishermen and said to them: "Men, for how much, if you agree, shall I have the lady and her ring and the child that is with her? Now don't make long difficulties for me." "Sir, you shall have her for a hundred marks, which we shall divide into three parts and each of us will have a third of it. Know that if it were not for our desire to set her in honor—it is because you are held to be the best man in all the city of Rome that we mention so small a sum. But we are sure that she will be well off, if only her heart is easy; and we are all three happy about this." "Truly, there will be no haggling," said the Senator, "at any length. Come to the house for the money and deliver to me the goods that I am to have for it." Thereupon without further discussion they rowed toward him to beach their boat, and set on shore the grief-stricken wanderer. So good came to her again, good equaling the evil that she had experienced.

The Senator dismounted and came up to the vessel. He took in his arms the one who was much the worse from her sea journey. Pity so mastered him that he set her on his own horse, then took his squire's and mounted with the stirrup. He showed such courtesy that he himself carried the child in front of him. At a gentle pace he thus led her through Rome, which was full of townspeople, just as might be expected of so great a city. Before coming to his residence, he was asked by some of them whose were the child and the lady. And he replied: "I do not know, upon my soul! I have no idea where she comes from or where she was born. I have found her by chance." Thus he answered those who inquired, until arriving at his house and dismounting. There were a number of servants who received the child. The Senator led Manekine into the stone-built hall. His daughters came to meet him, very much pleased at Manekine's arrival; and everyone treated her with honor. And the father exhorted them: "Dear daughters, I require of you, as you love me, to honor this lady and do as she desires. Carry out all her wishes, if you want to please me." They answered: "Sir, we want to follow your order in every way. Doing it will be no trouble for us. She is welcome!" With much

joy they took her from their father and led her to a room apart. There they served and comforted her and brought her whatever was needful. They gave her food, but she did not eat much. Her bed was made up for her, and so they urged her to go and sleep, which she greatly desired. And for her child they sent out for a nurse, and she promptly came. The daughter who was holding the child handed him over to her; and they both told her that she was to let him have every bit as much as he wanted, and they would provide for her. And she was not to leave the house; she would suckle him there with them, as her lady would desire.<sup>96</sup> If the woman agreed to this, she would be well rewarded. She promised to carry out their wishes.

Now Manekine was at Rome, in the house of the most worthy man in the whole city and the one of greatest humility. To the fishermen he paid a hundred marks and so satisfied them. He loved Manekine dearly, truly, and purely and treated her with respect and gently comforted her. Whatever he thought she might want he straightaway had prepared for her. She was not arrogant or wicked or disagreeable, but as she had always been: full of goodness and decency, of sense and courtesy, without pride and without baseness. So she conducted herself for some time, until God restored her to health.

When she had recovered from the voyage, which had worn her out, she began to make herself useful and to run the whole household. She carried the Senator's keys.<sup>97</sup> And she lived so simply that in the seven years she was in that house she never put on colorful clothing or any furs; all her garments were gray—although, if she had wished, she might have had far richer ones. Nor, in seven years, did she ever laugh, or utter one verse of a song. And so they were much concerned, the women who were with her, whose hearts were lighter. Many a time they tried to cheer her up, and they often asked her about her situation, how it could be that a woman as young as she was did not care to laugh or play. They spoke like this, without ever bringing her to the point of being willing to speak of her trouble or sorrow. This silence caused much astonishment among those who were with her; the Senator himself was greatly amazed. But he perceived so much goodness in her that he never wanted anyone to ask her anything disagreeable; he let her do as she pleased. Every day to hear God's service she would go to church along with the Senator's daughters, who loved her dearly. She was often on her knees before a very beautiful image, which was of the young Virgin;<sup>98</sup> this service seemed very sweet to her. And her son thrived; nothing hindered his growth, for he had everything he needed, without stint. And he was as handsome as anyone could wish, for Nature had placed in him beauty as great as she could. In Rome there was no child so fair, and the

Senator loved him so much that he called him his son. His mother scarcely hated him; he was her comfort and her life, her treasure and her solace. Many a time under her breath she called him unfortunate, and longed for the man who had begotten him. But her whole mind was on God: she clung to Him while He tested her grief, her sorrow, and her wrong, and then He sent her comfort. As for her and her son (who developed more in one year than another would do in two), and as for the Senator who cherished and honored him and his mother, I leave off here and shall return to speaking of the King. He was having his preparations made to seek his wife and his child. (For this quest he put himself, on land and on sea, into great peril, which was hard for him to endure.)

The King went off to Berwick, impatient to be away. He had caused his ship to be fitted out, and laden with biscuit and wine. All the barons of Scotland were with him, very sorry that he was leaving and for such a cause. They pitied him and their lady as well, both of them afflicted through treachery. The King addressed them, instructing those whom he wished to guard his people and his land, so that no one might wage war on them. And in his castles he ordered the placement of men-at-arms, crossbows, bolts, and knights in plenty, as many as he pleased. When he had settled his affairs and his ship was fully provided with food such as the sea requires, he took leave of his barons like a courteous man. Then many tears were shed and garments torn; the barons were much distressed for their lord, who had done them many an honor. They thought that he would never return, and so not one of them refrained from weeping and showing his grief. And the King, who saw their distress, got into the boat along with eleven companions and was rowed to the ship,<sup>99</sup> in which sail and mast were not lacking. He took with him his seneschal and ten knights, who would have much distress, pain, and grief before coming to the end of the quest they had undertaken. But the King esteemed them greatly for the fact that they were carrying with them gold and silver and in such a quantity that never before did so few people take away so much wealth. It might be very needful.

The mariners soon busied themselves; they raised their crossed sails,<sup>100</sup> and these were filled with a wind that moved the ship rapidly and smoothly. The barons on the shore watched their lord, who was going off to seek adventures. There were many who were heavyhearted at seeing him depart. They escorted him with their eyes until they lost sight of him; but in a short time he had moved far away. Then they returned, full of regret, to their lodgings. They would not see him again before he had had many woes. (But she who had done this to him led a hard life in the tower. She was alone and had

little to eat, once a day, sparingly. She was never let out from those walls; she died within them. But before that, she remained there a long time and endured much discomfort. She had her share and her reward for her folly and for the loss that she caused her son by treachery, for which he put himself into great peril.)

He, the leader of the expedition, was in his ship, where the sails were raised. They were all at sea for many weeks; for God, who acts at His pleasure, did not permit him to find what he sought as soon as he wished; He made him endure much hardship. In all the world there was scarcely an island or a good city on the seashore where he did not look and ask for news of his lost beloved. He went about asking whether anyone had seen a woman with one hand. But never, evening or morning, could he hear any news that was pleasing to him. And whenever he was in a country and did not find what he was seeking, he promptly turned back to the sea. Wherever Fortune willed, he went. I am quite amazed that any man, for any love, was willing to suffer so many trials. More than forty times they encountered such stormy weather that they did not know where they were. They saw many a region that was inhabited only by tigers and lions, serpents and scorpions, and many other dangerous wild beasts. They would have perished over a hundred times if they had not had help from God. From Greater India off that way to the Far North in this direction, there was not one town to which Fortune did not lead them. For seven years they never stopped: time enough to have hardships in plenty. Many a misfortune, much torment and grief, and many conflicting thoughts did they have during those seven years; yet the King was never minded to return to his country, as long as he heard mention of a land where he had not searched. But when he had been in so many places and passed through so many perils, asked so many questions without hearing news of any value to him, and no longer knew where else to inquire, and they had departed from Friesland and put their ship back to sea again, the King was quite at a loss. He had to believe that she had perished, she whom he had sought for so long. Then he began to grieve, and weep copiously, and lament the one for whom he had suffered so many afflictions.

“Alas! Dear heart, sweet thing, you who were all my wealth, my solace, my comfort, my delight, my pleasure, my heart, my will, my health, you whom I meant to serve all my life without infidelity or deceit, now I do believe that you are dead. I have sought you in so many countries that henceforth I do not know where to turn, so God keep me! To what land shall I go to search for you? I believe that I have been everywhere, voyaging so much that we should have been wrecked forty times if it were not for God, who has saved

us in this wooden vessel. And how shall I go back without you, dear, sweet friend? Never for a single day would my heart know joy,<sup>101</sup> when it would remember that I have lost you thus. Truly, never will any land be governed by me, if I do not find you, nor, without you, can I have joy, but I shall want to die of sorrow. If you are dead I do not wish to live a single day longer. If I knew now for sure that you had died, death would come to me quickly. But still I am not certain of your death, and from that I have a little comfort—nor do I know of your life, and that is what dismays me most. Thus I am troubled by conflicting thoughts, and do not know which to believe. For I have misgivings about your death; on the other hand, I have hopes of your life, sweet sister. And so my heart is in such turmoil that henceforth I do not know what to do, where to go, what direction to take. I am so far from the right way, I shall never be set on it again if the Mother of God does not do it for me, she who directs all those who have gone astray, if only they entreat her guidance. And so I must not put off praying to her, for otherwise I cannot recover my lost joy. So that she may aid me, I shall repeat to her the greeting that has been helpful to many a Christian.

“Ave Maria!<sup>102</sup> Do you hear, Lady, you by whom many a soul is saved? You whom the angel named Mary? At first you were amazed because of the light that you saw in him, and because from him you learned the most marvelous news that ever was and the best for all who are Christians and have heartfelt faith in you. For they were damned, all those born of Adam; but from that damnation you have saved us by that holy Annunciation. But you were quickly reassured when the angel said ‘*Gratia plena*.’ He addressed you courteously, calling you full of grace—he spoke truly—fuller than a fountain that overflows from a surge of water. There are not so many waves in the sea as there is grace within you. For no one, if he prays to you wholeheartedly, is ever refused. To each one you grant his wish, if he is worthy to receive it. And whatever grace he finds in you, he will not fail to find it again, grace inexhaustible. Therefore the angel called you ‘full.’ He showed you the reason when he said ‘*Dominus tecum*.’ And this amounted to saying that He who is both King and Lord, of Heaven and of all the world, was in your company. And so you were well supplied with that promised grace when the Lord placed himself within you, He in whom there was nothing but grace—grace so great that He made you the gift of Himself. Who will be able to repay this? No one, unless He sends His grace. Thus it must be that He completes what He has begun for us. And so He will, if in us there is no fault through which we lose Him. If we cling to you, to whom the angel announced that God was with you, we shall leave behind all our afflictions.

“Then the angel blessed you, saying: ‘Benedicta tu.’ And truly so you are. Even before you were born, you were so blessed that you were free of all sin;<sup>103</sup> you have never had an equal, woman or man. Above ‘In mulieribus’<sup>104</sup> you were blessed by Him. He made you as if for Himself, for He concealed Himself within you, without any sin, placing Himself there without breaking the vessel that He had created whole. Without damaging virginity, within you He took humanity. Thus you were pregnant through God, for according to His will you were worthy. And the good Elizabeth followed this greeting very well. When she felt her child rejoicing at your coming, because of the true God who was in you, she greeted you and then the One whom you were carrying. It was for Him that she said: ‘Et benedictus,’ adding: ‘Fructus ventris tui.’ Thus she blessed the One who was the fruit in your womb and from whom all good derives. The righteous who were in Hell had long awaited that fruit, lady, that you bore. In bearing it you rejoiced, and well you should have done, for no woman could have borne such fruit except yourself alone. For the true God, who placed in you authority over all good things, willed that He Himself be yours. Of you who were His handmaiden, He made His mother, and you were a virgin afterward as well as before. Virgin you were in conceiving, virgin in carrying; virgin you gave birth, and virgin you suckled Him who was your Father and your Son. He was very humble and full of goodness when, within you, whom He had formed, He formed Himself of human flesh. By this we may know that in you is so much wisdom, merit, and goodness, that it would not be possible to relate a tenth of it, or even a hundredth. Never will anyone who sincerely appeals to you be cast into the abyss, for through your holy prayer your Son does your will, He who is never slow to help those in need of your aid. Theophilus learned this well,<sup>105</sup> after the Devil tricked into giving him the kiss of homage<sup>106</sup> and handing over the letter written with his blood. Thereby the Devil believed he possessed him entirely. But he did not, for your aid came to help him. As soon as he repented and appealed to you, you brought him back that charter that would have held his soul in prison had it not been for your power. At his entreaty you saved him from all evils. You have caused the redemption not merely of this person or that; universally those who devotedly serve you are saved. Lady, just as I entirely believe in your great goodness, I pray you to give me counsel about what perplexes me. It concerns my beloved, who by treachery has been taken from me. Pray to your Son to relieve me of this suffering and to aid me quickly, as I greatly need it.”

With this he finished his prayer. And she who is Queen of Paradise forgot neither his request nor her who had served her so long. On the King’s

behalf she prayed to her sweet Son, who immediately gave her leave to carry out her will concerning those who were being tested and whom He saw to be good and faithful. Their vessel was turned toward Rome. (Henceforth they needed to have no fear, for the Mother of God was guarding them.) The King perceived that a gentle wind arose for them, making their vessel advance. They sailed along until from the sea they entered the Phare, where they found themselves one morning. It was on the very day of Palm Sunday, when the flowers bloom on the trees, that the King came to the riverbank of Rome<sup>107</sup> ... for many weeks on the dangerous sea.

Learning that he was at Rome, he was as happy as he had been distressed before. He called his seneschal. "Seneschal," he said, "good friend, since God has brought us here, here we shall stay for a time. This is the week in which God died for us;<sup>108</sup> ... On Holy Thursday, to be absolved of our sins, we shall go where the Pope will be. Go quickly to look for suitable lodgings where we can stay until then." "Sire, willingly." Thereupon he had his horse led out, mounted it, and rode through the city, where he saw many signs of wealth. His errand turned out very well. He rode along at an amble until he came before the house where she was, the one the King had sought for a long season. The seneschal noticed the dwelling, and also the Senator sitting at a front window, looking at the city. Gazing at him, and taking him to be a worthy man, the seneschal addressed him. "Sir," he said, "may the King of Heaven give you joy, provided that you accept a condition I shall propose to you: that you lend this dwelling to my lord the King, who is King of Scotland and of Ireland. He asks nothing more; he will have everything he needs, if only he can have the house."

The Senator answered: "Sir, I have understood you well. But except for my relatives or neighbors or friends, no one takes this dwelling. And nevertheless, since he is a king, I should hardly be courteous if I refused his request. So help me God! I'd rather that the house be burned to ashes. You may take over, at will, halls and chambers and stables, wines, food, benches, tables; whatever he needs I shall willingly let him have." The seneschal thanked him. He swiftly returned to his lord, who was awaiting him on the riverbank, and delivered his report: that he had engaged for him such a lodging that there was no equal to it in all of Rome. "He seems to me a man of an excellent way of life, the one who owns the house where we are to stay."

The King promptly mounted when he knew that his lodging had been arranged. They decided to go straight there. Meanwhile the Senator lost no time, but called together his well-trained servants and had them sweep the house and clean it from top to bottom. Then he went to don his best clothes

in a fine and noble chamber where he found Manekine and his daughters, who had been embroidering a rich alms purse; the Duke of Austria had none such. After greeting them, he announced: “My dear daughters, put on your best clothes and quickly too, for God is sending us a guest whom I want to make much of. For indeed one must show respect to those whom God wills to honor so much that they are called king, as this one is—this personage who desires and asks for my house. He is King of Scotland and Ireland.”

When Manekine heard this her heart nearly broke. She sank fainting to the floor. The astonished Senator raised her and held her in his arms until she regained consciousness. Then she began to grieve; she could not keep from bursting into tears. The Senator comforted her and asked her to tell him what all this was about, why she was crying, why she was overcome by such sorrow. When she could speak, she said: “Sir, now I must tell you part of the trouble that I have never before related to anyone. Know that if this King who is coming here has the opportunity and the power to get hold of me, I believe that he will have me burned—not, truly, for any misdeed that I have ever done him; but it often happens at court that it is the innocent one who pays. Once I lived at his court, and found much good in him; but I was harmed by slanderers and attacked so badly that he ordered me to be burned. But God inspired such pity in the one who received the order that he saved me from death and put me to sea by night. Thus God let me escape and come into your house, where I have been for a long while. Now I have told you part of the burden that was allotted to me. Besides, I shall tell you this much without lying by so much as a word: I love him more than anything born, for he showed me great love before he ever thought of giving me torment and shame. But if you wish that my life should be prolonged, I beg you not to let him see me, for, if he did, I should die.”

Whatever might come of this, the Senator was much amazed at the tale and answered: “Now be still, my dear, and calm your heart. Since you are under my protection, you need have no fear of him. If I had known about this affair, he would not have been received in my house; but since I have agreed to it I shall keep my word. And you are not to move from here. My daughters will keep you company in this place and will do as you wish. If you want to please me, console yourself in this distress; for there is nothing to be gained from sorrow except loading evil upon oneself.” “Sir, I shall follow your advice. If I did not fear him, there is nothing I should see more willingly. But it is much better for me to abstain from that than to come to greater suffering.”

Just then the Senator heard the King and his retinue already dismounting within the courtyard. He came down from the chamber, where he left

Manekine, and went on until he singled out the King. He greeted him respectfully, and the King returned his greeting. Thereupon they passed into the hall, where the tables were set up on the trestles.<sup>109</sup> As soon as the King entered, he encountered little John, his son, who was playing there like any seven-year-old. He was a handsome boy and well brought up. He went running toward his father and said to him: "Sire, welcome!" as he had been taught to do.<sup>110</sup> "Dear child," the King answered, "may that Sire who is King of Kings give you life and growth! For you are a lovely child."

The King looked at him very hard; and the more he took notice of him the more he was pleased by him. He addressed his host, saying: "Now tell me truly, my dear host, whether this child here is yours." "Yes, Sire, truly, he is mine; I love him more than anything." At that the King did not know what to say; he sighed for sadness, and a flood of tears sprang from his eyes and ran down his face. Observing this, the Senator said: "What is the matter, Sire? It seems to me that your heart is full of trouble." "Dear host, I shall tell you why I am so moved. When I looked at this child, my mind turned to a son of mine whom I had over seven years ago. He might well be as big as this one is, if he were alive. But through treachery he was taken from me so young that I never saw him. I lost both the child and his mother. Just now, when I looked at this boy, I remembered that loss, and this is why I wept." "Sire," he said, "I believe it, without a doubt. It has happened to many a good person to encounter a mass of troubles. Thus God, at His pleasure, tests His people."

As they were talking, the dinner was made ready; the first course was already on the boards and the plates set. Having washed their hands, they went to seat themselves. The Senator had the King sit next to him, at his table. They had many a dish of delectable fish,<sup>111</sup> which I shall not pause to describe. The child went off straight to his mother, whom he found in tears. This did not suit him; with such wit as he had he demanded: "Madam, why are you crying? Come see the king who has arrived; there are fine people downstairs. You're crying, you're being bad!" His mother did not answer; she was so troubled that the Senator's daughters could not comfort her. She continued to weep, so lost in thought that she was aware of no one. The child, inattentive to her distress, looked at the shining ring, set with a diamond, which she had on her finger.

It was the ring the King had given her on the day he crowned her. And when the child caught sight of it he wanted it; grasping his mother's hand he slipped off the ring (which she would not have parted with for a hundred silver marks). Manekine took no notice of this. Little John left the chamber straightaway and ran downstairs, returning to the hall where the Senator and

the King were sitting at the high table. The hall was clean and swept; its floor was paved with square tiles worked in a chess-board pattern. The lively boy began to throw the ring on the tiles and pick it up again. Now here, now there, he went about playing this game until he came before the King and threw the ring upon the tablecloth. Stretching out his hand, the King picked up the ring, glanced at it, then began to study it intently. He fell to thinking that he had seen it somewhere else. The Senator noticed that his guest was neglecting to eat because of the ring and the child, and so he told the boy: “Go away!” But the King requested that he be allowed to remain there, for he was not being a nuisance. This entreaty was so pressing that the child was given leave to stay, and was very happy about it. He forgot all about the ring, which the King continued to hold.

He did not leave off studying it until the time for hand washing arrived; and he was very close to recognizing it. He thought indeed that the ring he had given to the woman whom he had crowned in honor was very similar. And on the other hand, he had his doubts, for he could not believe that it could have come to this place. The puzzle so absorbed him that not a word escaped from his mouth. By and by he was addressed by the Senator, who was astonished, and awakened him out of his reverie by saying: “Sire, if you please, I should be glad to know why you are studying the child’s ring so intently that you neglect to eat. It seems to me that you are lowering yourself. I should like very much to know what is troubling you so.” “Dear host, I cannot help it. If you do not enlighten me concerning this ring—when and how it came here—I shall not be at ease all day. And as to the child I should like to hear, if you wish to cheer me up, whether he is the son of your wife.” The Senator answered: “Upon my soul, my wife<sup>112</sup> bore him in her body; and the ring that he brought with him is his mother’s; have no doubt about that. I am not concealing the truth of it from you.” (He considered them to be his wife and his child because he had bought them.)

Now the King did not know what to say. He sighed from the bottom of his heart. The tables had already been taken away and they had washed their hands. But he would not let it go at that; he would question his host again, for the ring betokened for him the true token of his beloved. He could not doubt the ring, nor could he believe the truth. If his host did not set him straight, he would never get into the right way. Therefore he said: “Dear host, in the name of Jesus Christ, Lord of Paradise, and in the name of all His friends, and in the name of His very sweet Mother, who is not grudging with her pity and her grace, I require you to tell me without concealment the story of the child and of this ring, which I see shining and beautiful. It really

does seem to me that formerly the ring was mine and that I gave it to my beloved, for whom I have led a wretched life for a long time. Therefore I adjure you to tell me the truth; for I believe that you know the way either to my grief or to my joy.”

What the Senator heard made him wonder. For Manekine was miserable, and so anxious that she did not want the King to know of her presence in the house, for fear of getting a worse dwelling; for she believed that he hated her more than anything born; and therefore the Senator did not dare tell the truth about this matter. On the other hand, he understood that the King’s request sprang from distress, and he did not know what this signified. He hesitated to tell the truth, yet he was unsure how to conceal it, since he had heard himself adjured. He mulled this over for a good while, and in the end decided to reveal the whole truth. He would protect her well in that house, if the King wanted to do her any harm. Thereupon he began to answer him: “Sire, you have solemnly charged me to let you hear news; but before I do so you must swear to me that, for anything I may say, no distress or torment or shame, grief or harm or base act will you do, to anyone. And you must grant me this as well: that you will put aside your anger toward the one about whom I shall relate my tale; otherwise, I shall tell you nothing.” And the King promptly promised him this, being eager to know where the ring came from and also the child, who was so fair. He reassured the Senator and swore to him everything he wished. And once the King had sworn, there was no delay in the telling.

“Sire,” said the Senator, “in this Lenten season, seven years ago as I estimate, as I was going along to amuse myself following the bank of the Phare, I saw three poor men coming up the river. Beside their boat they were keeping a small vessel, and in it was a beautiful woman. She had fine adornments and clothes, and a child with her. It is this child whom you see. And this ring, so shining and so beautiful, was on her finger. She had no other riches with her; but distress and suffering there was, in plenty. I inquired about her situation; but I was unable to bring her to speak of it. I felt such pity for her that for the love of God, as it seemed good and decent to me, I paid a hundred silver marks for her to the fishermen who had found her alone and were taking her away. But before she agreed to this purchase, she made me promise that she would have no base treatment. And she told me that she was not free, for she was married to someone who loved her, one to whom she would keep faith; she would rather let herself be burned than break faith with him. Therefore she made an agreement with me that she would care for no man. And thus I took her under my protection and

brought her into this house, where she has never been ill-treated. She is so sensible and well taught and zealous in all goodness that I never saw her equal. But I greatly wonder at one thing: that she has been here for seven years, winter and summer, but never once has she laughed, or sung one line of a song, or put on colored clothing. Her whole life is spent in tears or in heavy thoughts. And I never knew the reason why, except that (I must not lie to you) a short time ago she told me of something that gives her much anxiety. When I informed her that the King of Scotland was coming and was to lodge in this house, she fell down in a faint. I was much astonished at this and promptly raised her and held her until she recovered. I asked her why she had fallen, and she answered me this much (for now there was no use in concealment): that formerly she was in your country and with you. As long as it pleased you, you were her good friend; but then because of slanders you ordered her to be burned. Yet God caused those who were charged with carrying this out to feel so much pity that they were unwilling to drag her to such a death, but instead put her out to sea and by so doing preserved her honor. But God guided her until she came to this house, where out of love for Our Lord I have treated her with the honor due to a woman who is sensible and good. And furthermore you should be aware, if ever you were to see her, or do her such a wrong as she told me about just now—I tell you: she bears a visible injury, for she does not have a left hand, and it does seem to have been cut off. Whoever brought such a misfortune upon her was full of cruelty. I could never persuade to speak of her trouble or her injury, except that she told me her name. She has herself called ‘Manekine,’ she who came here by sea. Now you know the truth that you so adjured me about. But now, I require of you to set aside your anger toward her, for you have pledged your word that she need have no fear of you. He who does not keep his word is a fool.”

When the King had heard this story his heart was so constricted, both from the joy he felt and from pity for his beloved, who believed that he hated her, that before he was able to speak a man could have gone on foot the distance of six crossbow shots.<sup>113</sup> He wept tears both of joy and of pity. But as soon as he could, he called the Senator to come close. Before the latter knew what was happening the King knelt before him, an act that caused much shame to his host, who did not yet grasp the situation. “Sire,” he said, “for the grace of God! What are you doing? Get up! It never happened to a king to behave so inappropriately, to lower himself so much, as to kneel before me.” As quickly as possible he raised him up. “Host, do not be troubled!” said the King. “You have done me such a service that I could not

have earned it if I had served you for a year by taking off your shoes. Through you God wills to remove from me the greatest sorrow and pain that ever came to human flesh without causing death.” “Sire,” he said, “how so?” “I shall tell you,” he said, “briefly.”

Then he began to relate what you have heard me tell: by what treachery she had suffered such injustice, how she had been found and how he had wedded her; how he had loved her so much and so truly that he made a queen of her; how he had gone off to France to seek fame and esteem; how she had been snatched from him by his mother, who hated her; how he had sought her through many trials for seven years. He told him everything: her merit and her goodness, and how he loved her without knowing anything about who she was or how she had lost her hand, whose daughter she was or where she came from. He told it all, whatever he knew about it, to the Senator, who marveled at it. He responded: “If I had known, Sire, that I had a queen and a king’s son in my manor, I should have caused them to be honored with whatever I possess, so help me God! But she never said anything to me about it; in this, she treated me very badly. If I had known the facts of the matter, I should surely not have permitted that she be less than the lady of this house. And nevertheless you should know, upon my soul! that she has had everything just as she likes, winter and summer. But since the matter stands thus, I shall go and tell her, without delay, what will please her very much. I shall bring her to you straightaway. Now, if you were to come with me, you would see her faint upon seeing you, because she would be terrified. So it is better if someone tells her beforehand how she was snatched from you and how for a long time you have sought for her in grief and torment.” The King consented to this without demur. And so he remained behind in the hall where his companions were, their faces still pale from the hardships they had undergone. But soon their hearts would be lifted up, for their lord called them near and announced that he had accomplished what had wearied them all so much. Thereupon he related to them just what you have already heard. Then they all, forgetting their hardships, thought themselves fortunate. They greatly desired to see their lady, for they had striven for this a long time. They still could not believe it was true; they said that they would never believe it until they saw her. While making such remarks and listening to the King, they awaited her.

The good Senator went in haste, a happy man, to the one who was still weeping, and said: “Lady Manekine, I had no idea that a queen had carried my keys for seven years. The news has circulated so much that the King knows you are in this house. From now on concealment is useless. But he is

putting aside his ill will toward you and freely gives you leave to come and speak with him. I am confident that he would cause you little distress.” Then he began to relate to her, as you have heard me tell, how the King had glimpsed the truth by means of the little ring, which the child had brought to him and which he recognized. As yet she had no idea that it had been slipped from her finger, until she looked at her hand and saw that the ring was not there. She wondered how it had been taken from her but gave it no thought, listening instead to what the Senator was relating to her about her lord. He gave her an account of the trials that the King had undergone while seeking her on so many seas and in so many lands, and of how he had lost her. He told her everything, including in his account how her lady had hated her so violently and betrayed her; he hid nothing of whatever the King had communicated to him. “Such is the news I bring you; it ought well to give you comfort.”

When she heard this news, her heart skipped with happiness. With the revelation that her lord had suffered so much affliction for her, and that it was through cruel treachery that she had had such unjust treatment, from which God had now relieved her, her grief gave place to joy. Swiftly she dressed more becomingly, for the Senator’s daughters had many sorts of garments and clad her in the finest. And out of love for her they too changed into better clothes, rejoicing for her honor. Now in came the Senator. Taking Manekine by the hand, he led her beside him, and his daughters gladly followed them down the stairs. They came to where they were being talked about.

When the King saw the arrival of his beloved, for whom he had endured a hard life, and when she saw her lord, who had paid her many an honor, it would have been difficult to keep them apart. The King rushed toward her, and had kissed her more than a hundred times before he managed to say, “Beloved!” And she did the same to him. They were in each other’s arms for a long while before they could speak. Their hearts were filled with so much pity and joy that I could not relate it all. At last they regained the power of speech. “My well-tried beloved,” said the King, “be welcome! And may the Virgin to whom I prayed, and through whom I have accomplished my quest, be blessed by her Son, He who has made us escape alive from so much peril and suffering and then has given us comfort!” “Sir,” she said, “so be it! Blessed be His name! And blessed be the Senator, who has honored me by maintaining me in his house and saving me from shame! And also his two daughters here, who have kept me company for seven years and have so graciously nurtured your son, whom you see here, that he has never lacked anything! To both of us they have done so much good that I could not relate it, however

long I might try. If you love me, thank them for it!" "I do thank them, beloved; and as reward for their service I make them this present: I shall give them both in marriage and shall bestow on them such land that no man of their lineage ever had property so good or so extensive." Their father was gladdened by this gift and expressed his gratitude for it; and the girls both thanked him on their knees. But the King, distressed by their kneeling, raised them up. And what were the King's companions doing? They were rejoicing as never before. Shamed and exiled—so they had considered themselves, this very morning; but now they were on the straight path to their will and desire. They had all that they had wished. Even the seneschal was jubilant as never before in his life.

While conversation continued, the King seated himself and seated beside him the one whom he had believed he would never again see so close to him. And they told each other about the hardships they had had, those seven years. They had plenty to relate, and each was eager to hear what had happened to the other. In the course of talking to her lord, Manekine learned the source of the grief and peril brought upon her by the treachery of his mother, who was now leading a hard life for it. Their exchange of news did not stop until supper time. Meanwhile, the Senator, always mindful of honor, sent for some of the great lords of Rome, so many that there was a crowd; the whole hall was full of people who were far from base. He did all this to honor the King, whom he considered to be his lord. And the King was deeply grateful to him for fêting him in such a way. (But this gesture of the Senator's was not wasted. For his sake his daughters were rewarded, just as you will hear in the tale—if there is someone who is willing to relate the rest!)

To return to my story: it was already time for supper, and they partook at their leisure, as much as they liked, of the food being served in beautiful vessels of gold and silver. The King ate more cheerfully than he had done for many a month. Manekine, as well, ate happily that day. When the tables had been removed and they had washed their hands, and the Romans had gone away to their homes, the Senator<sup>114</sup> came up to the King, who was keeping his beloved beside him and holding his child in his arms, kissing him over and over. He addressed them both and gave them counsel that turned out very well for them. This is what the worthy man said to them:

"King of Scotland, you must be very grateful to God, who causes you to have joy again according to your wish. From great misery to great well-being! Dear friend, for this you ought to do something that will please Him. This is Holy Week, when for us He suffered great pain and was fixed to the

Cross and pierced by iron in five places. If He has granted your wish, you ought not to be slow to do penance, for this is a thing that profits everyone who does it. You have both long abstained from that love for which no one can reproach you, as I understand, so that you have not slept together; but this was because you could not. But from now on you can sleep together, if it pleases you. Yet, by my advice, you will still keep from it until the Passion of Our Lord is over, so that He may hold you in honor.<sup>115</sup> Soon it will be Holy Thursday, when all those who repent of their ill deeds, and make confession, have their sins remitted. On that day the Pope will be in residence in this city, and he will give the benediction. If you wish, we shall be there. Then we shall be absolved from our sins, for such a load is too heavy to bear. It is an excellent thing to free ourselves of what can burden the soul.” “Sir,” said Manekine, “for God’s sake, do not refuse to do what he advises; he does it for a good purpose.” The King answered: “My beloved, I find nothing to blame in this counsel, for it is very courteous and sound. We ought indeed to put aside our pleasure this week for the sake of Him who has alleviated our distress. In order that we may maintain ourselves in righteousness, I advise that we refrain.” And so this abstinence was freely agreed to by both of them. The Senator was very pleased at this. Meanwhile night had come and the day was over. The King and his wife slept in two beds all that week. They endured another penance also, for they would not at all, that week, wear a chemise.<sup>116</sup> They were in languor, in mortification, in alms giving, in prayers, all for the love of Him who had had compassion on them. They stood the test like wise people, and no harm came to them from it. So they awaited the Thursday when they would turn toward the Pope.

But here I must leave the two of them and their good host and speak of the King of Hungary, about whom I have been silent for a long while.

The true account relates that after the King had caused such shame and injury to be done to his daughter, he was in such a madness of anger that he had no regrets; and so the nine years passed. But at last he was assailed by conscience, when he remembered the wrong that he had committed. This thought kept gnawing at him, so that no week passed without his weeping for the sin with which he felt himself so stained. One day he sent for the seneschal, the one whom he had commanded to burn his daughter. It was to this very man that the King lamented. And the seneschal had little sympathy for him, but told him that a greater misdeed could not have been done by anyone, than without reason and because she was doing right, to cause his own child to suffer such misery. He reminded him of this so many times that the King was filled with remorse; his heart was close to breaking whenever

he remembered her. He came to hating everything he possessed; he did not know how to comfort himself. When the seneschal, who was glad that he was repentant, saw him so changed, he told him that he had not dragged the princess to such a doom and martyrdom as the King had ordered him to do, but had put her to sea; and he told him how. The King did not much rejoice at this account. "Anyway," he said, "you did well in not having her burned. But she is drowned in the sea; and so I must call myself unfortunate, for she was right and I was wrong. If I do not seek comfort from God, I well know that my soul is lost. But I shall not leave it at that; I shall go to Rome, to the Pope, and shall confess this sin to him and take my penance."<sup>17</sup> However painful it may be, I must indeed pay for such a transgression. I have erred too grievously. May God, if He pleases, forgive me! For this is the thing that most troubles me." "Sire," said the seneschal, "thus you can be saved. And I, who put her to sea, also have a heavy heart; and so I want to go with you and speak to the Pope." The King answered: "This pleases me. But now let no time be lost. Anyone who remains in sin a single hour after he knows of it is a fool. Nine years have already gone by since this evil was brewed, by me; and so there is no question of postponement. Have your ship laden." "Sire, gladly. There will be no further waiting."

With that, the seneschal left; he was impatient to make preparations. He went straight to the sea, retained the best ship he saw, and had it prepared quickly and laden with wine and biscuit. He also put in water, victuals, and meat, in such supply that there would be no shortage. Soon afterward he informed the King that his ship was ready and that they could climb aboard. Meanwhile, the King had caused his barons to assemble for leave-taking; he told them that he meant to go to Rome, and explained why. He singled out those he wished to go with him and also chose at his pleasure those who were to guard his kingdom and his rule until he returned. As for the others, he entreated them to live peaceably together; and to this they agreed willingly. Then he took leave. At his departure he wept with emotion, and the barons too, who loved him very much except for what he had done to his daughter, the deed for which he was now making this voyage. For a long time he had been hated by all the common people of the country; but now they saw that he was repentant and was undertaking the voyage to Rome because he wanted to accept penance and so relieve his soul of its burden. He asked them to pardon him and to pray for him to the true God; and so they did, gladly. Thus he departed with their goodwill. He took along thirty companions, men rich from their own domains; and the seneschal of Hungary did not want to stay behind. From the boats they entered the ship, where

neither sail nor mast was lacking. The crossed sails were raised to the wind by the mariners, who undertook to speed the ship across the sea. A strong wind moved them all forward. They went by the wind and the stars until in three weeks they came to the Phare and left the sea.

Now listen to something wonderful: how God, full of pity, prepares for His own what they would not dare to ask for. We ought indeed to seek His love and grace and favor. It is said that whoever serves a worthy master does not waste his service.<sup>118</sup> Manekine served God and His Mother as well, and put herself entirely under their protection; therefore the wound was healed.<sup>119</sup> For in that very Lent, when the King of Scotland found the one for whom he had so tested himself and whom he had sought for seven years until at last finding her at Rome in the Senator's house on Palm Sunday (when in many places the crosses are decorated with branches), and they were both filled with joy—in that same penitential week, in which their complete reunion was postponed because of the penance that they had undertaken—the King of Hungary arrived at Rome. This was on a Tuesday. His people took over a lodging within the city, fine and well furnished, suitable for such a man. His lodging was very luxurious; there were scarcely any like it. But it was not in the street where he might have seen his daughter, nor did he believe that she was still alive. He called his host and inquired whether the Pope, whom he was seeking, was in the city. “Tell me the truth about this,” he said. His host promptly told him: “Sire, on Holy Thursday Pope Urban,<sup>120</sup> who is free of all vices, as we believe because of the good we see in him, will give the benediction, by which many a soul will be saved. Then all those who are before him, being repentant and having confessed, will be absolved. If you are in that crowd you will hear many a confession; for everyone speaks aloud the sins by which he feels himself sullied. Then he is absolved of all the ill deeds that he has just acknowledged.

When the King had heard this from his host, he left him and resolved to go there. On that day he would tell the Pope the sin for which his heart ached and for which he had left his country. Just as he had thought it out, he did it. The day was over, and when night came he went to bed. He stayed in Rome for two nights, until Thursday dawned and the people of Rome arose and went off toward St. Peter's. (So they did every year; there they would find the Pope, and there they were always absolved on Holy Thursday.) Incited by repentance, the lord of Hungary went there as well, with his seneschal and his companions. The King had a fine company: he had brought with him from Hungary thirty knights of his household, and he took them all along. They escorted him to St. Peter's, where they found

the Pope. The King of Scotland went there as well, and beside him was Manekine, whom he loved with true love. The good Senator also went with them willingly. His two daughters did not remain behind; they went with Manekine, whom they still dearly loved. The seneschal of Scotland also did not want to be left out; he and all his companions went off to the benediction; fittingly and in good order they followed after their lord the King. The seneschal, glad of his task, carried his young lord John so close to the King that he could be seen, for the King took great joy in the sight. He loved him as much as he possibly could, and his mother was far from hating him. He was their jewel, their delight, the distraction from their troubles.

In such a manner and array they came up to the church where Pope Urban was, and with him so many Romans that I cannot say the number, nor do I care to, except that the church was full, capacious as it was. When the people were together and assembled from all sides, the Pope spoke to them about God. He related to them the great pain that God had suffered in that week. When he had finished his sermon, he told them that whoever wanted to have pardon was to confess and repent of his misdeeds. "And if there is anyone here present who feels within himself a heavy burden, in penance I exhort him to unburden himself here before everyone. Then I shall give the absolution."

Hearing this, the King of Hungary waited no longer. He got up from where he was sitting, like a man troubled by his sins. All the Romans kept still, making no disturbance, and they listened to what he had to say, this man who had stood up before the Empire. Then the King began his confession before the whole crowd. "For God's sake!" he said, "Lord Pope, now listen well to my words and then give me penance, if you please, for my evil deed. I shall confess to you a sin that greatly distresses me. It happened long ago that I had a wife, beautiful and virtuous, and I was with her for ten years without our having any children except for one daughter, the loveliest that ever was, lady or maiden. This daughter's name was Joy. Her mother did not live very long after her birth. But before she died I promised her that I would refrain from marrying, that I should not take a wife all my life long—if I did not find another one like her.

"Then she passed away from the world. After her death there elapsed a long time when I had no desire to marry. But the people of rank, who wanted me to take a wife, came to importune me; they kept saying that I should be blamed if I did not follow their advice to wed so as to have a male heir whom, after me, they might make their king. They pressed me so much that I replied: if someone could seek out a country where a woman similar

to the spouse I had before might be found, I should be willing to take her to satisfy their wishes. And so she was sought for in many a land, but they never found her equal. When my courtiers heard this news they were very much downcast, until one day they noticed my daughter and studied her well and took note that she resembled her mother, except for being younger. The dukes, counts, and barons of all Hungary round about caused the great prelates to come to me. These men counseled me to take a mad course, for they wanted me to take in marriage my daughter, Joy. When I heard this piece of news I considered it madness and thought the wisest of them to be a fool. But they had so resolved on it that they told me that *I* was a fool if I refused their counsel, since I wanted no wife except one resembling the mother. Although the business would be distasteful, they would take the responsibility upon themselves if in any way I was at fault. They said that they would speak to you about it and would make peace very well.

“Thereupon I asked of them a delay, for agreeing or refusing. I was granted it until Candlemas. But before that date approached, I was overtaken by so mad a will that I wanted it more than they did. I was wrapped up in that folly to the point of speaking of it to my daughter. But she, who was by far the most beautiful girl of her age whom anyone knew, and the wisest, told me that she would not do it for anything; she would rather be burned. Then I departed in a bad humor. But before leaving I told her this much: that I would carry this business through; I would not let it go for any consideration. Thus I waited out the delay that I had specified to my barons. They returned to me at Candlemas and solicited me again; and I quickly granted them what by then I greatly wanted to do. Thereupon my daughter was sent for to accomplish our union. Four counts went to seek her; they brought her, very sad and tearful, to where we were. When a bishop had explained to her what was required of her, she said this much in answer: that she was not worthy to wed a king or to be a queen, for her body was not whole. At that, in front of us, she untied a kerchief from around her left arm, as bloody as could be, for she had cut off her hand for fear that I might marry her. And so the project that I was intent upon came to nothing. Out of the anger I felt at this, I wanted never to have mercy on her. I ordered my seneschal, whom you see here, to seize her and put her to death in a fire. He did not dare oppose my will, but took her in charge willy-nilly. And nevertheless, such pity overcame him, as he has told me, that he did not want so wrongfully to make her die in that way; instead, he put her to sea by night, without mast or sail or escort. Then he caused a great fire to be lit, greatly to the country’s distress; for all the people believed

that my daughter Joy was there put to death. And likewise I myself really believed it for a long time. Nevertheless this cannot matter to me now, for it can truly be known that she was drowned in the sea, and so I may call myself miserable. For without cause and very unjustly and because she was doing right, I put to death my daughter, in whom God had put beauty, goodness, sense, and nobleness, the one who feared evil so much that she cut off her own hand—and then I had her put to death! I ought to die of grief! Lord Pope, I repent of this and make confession to you, and I request penance to remove my soul from affliction.”

Joy had heard her father’s confession she could wait no longer. Before the Pope spoke or gave any counsel to the King, she rose, and rushing alone into the crowd she began to make her way toward her father, overcome with joy and pity. The King of Scotland, seeing this, greatly wondered what it meant and so did all those who knew her, for it was quite unlike her to go off like that without having any company with her; and so they watched to see what she would do. Without a moment’s delay she came up to her father, who was near the Pope. Once she was close to him she threw her arms around him, saying: “Dear father, King of Hungary, I am Joy, your own daughter, the one whom you wrongfully condemned, the one who was put into the vessel where there was neither sail nor mast, acts for which you are now so contrite. Do not be downcast any longer, for you have found your daughter, whom God has saved from many evils!”

The King of Hungary answered: “My dear, it would not be easy to believe that this was true. So help me God! I should desire it so much that I could scarcely believe it. Women resemble each other a good deal,<sup>121</sup> and so I do not know whether you are mocking me. On no account shall I believe you until I see the place from which the hand was cut off, cut off in pain and for my fault.” “Sir,” she said, “that matter will not keep you from recognizing me. See here on my arm the stump from which I cut off my hand. This is proof; you must indeed believe in my real identifying mark. Know in truth: I am Joy, for whom so many have felt sorrow.” Now the King no longer doubted that what she said was true. He went down on his knees before her; in no time his face was wet with tears. “Dear daughter,” he said, “from my heart, more than a hundred times, I beg your pardon for the great injury and the wrong I committed in meaning to put you to death through my arrogance and madness. For this I entreat your forgiveness; I cannot be absolved otherwise.” Joy raised her father, and was heartily sorry that he had fallen to his knees. “Sir, she said, “it was a great shame when you went on your knees, before the one you begot, to beg pardon. The pardon that you asked of me,

I give you. And God be thanked, Who brought you here to us to seek absolution for this deed! I forgive you wholeheartedly.” Then they kissed each other.

The King of Scotland, listening, learned what he never knew before: that his wife was a king’s daughter and had been cast so unfittingly out of her land because of her father, who now bitterly repented of it. And he heard for the first time that to keep herself from defilement, she had resolved to cut off her hand. This information did not distress him; for if, previously, he had entertained doubts about her, with this incident God removed them. Happier than I could say, he stood up, and as everyone made way for him, he came up to the father of his wife. “Sir, be welcome!” he said. “And may God give me His grace until it may please you that I be your good son-in-law! I am indeed your son-in-law, although I knew nothing about it. Truly, it would have done me no harm if I had known it long ago.” The King of Hungary answered: “Sir, may Jesus bless you! But, if you please, explain what you are telling me. If it is true that you are my son-in-law, you are not destined to be among the least of men; for in a short time this lady will be queen of two lands: of Hungary, through her father, and of Armenia, through her mother. And so he will possess a great deal who is to have such a wife. I desire so much to hear about her life, how God has preserved her for me, that there is no one who could say it, or clerk who could write it.”

Then the King of Scotland told him how she had come to Scotland, how his provost had taken her in and had guided her to his court, how he himself had installed her with his mother, how love for her had seized him, how she had conducted herself, how she had kept her secrets, how he had never learned her name, how he had given her the nickname “Manekine” because she lacked one hand,<sup>122</sup> how he had loved her so much that he took her in marriage, and what sort of wedding festivities he had arranged. He mentioned how his mother had hated her and afterward betrayed her, how he had departed for France leaving her pregnant, how she had been delivered, how the announcement that his counselors were to send to him had been written and sealed, how the unwise messenger had both gone off to France and returned by way of the King’s mother (and afterward realized his foolishness when the exchange of letters had come to light); how the Queen had been wrongfully condemned by treachery, how she and her little son had been put to sea in peril, and how she had come to Rome. He passed to an account of how the worthy Senator had kept her and her child, sheltering her for seven years without knowing where she was born. He told of how he himself had returned from France, how he had fallen into great

mourning upon hearing the terrible news of his wife's exile, how he had had his mother walled up, how to seek for his wife he had been willing to endure the hardships that he had had for seven years through so many perils and trials, how he had found her at Rome in the Senator's house, how she was afraid of him lest he do her harm, how through her son he had grasped the truth, how he had recognized his ring, how the Senator had related the tale that put an end to his grief, and how the same man had dressed her in fine clothes, how he had brought her before him only four days ago, how they had been reunited and had forgotten their troubles. All this he narrated to him. And the good Senator carried the lovely child forward in his arms and presented him to his grandfather, saying: "Sire, here is the son who was put into peril when he was very young. But God sent him into my protection, and no account was made of her hand. He is your daughter's son, to whom God has been gracious." The King of Hungary saw the child and took him into his arms. He kissed him and made much of him, full of happiness.

When the King of Hungary heard the news of his daughter, how God had saved her from death and had given her as husband the lord and king of a great land, and when he learned of the suffering and turmoil that the other King had undergone for love of her, and how he had joyfully recovered his loss, and heard that he had had no idea until that very day whose daughter she was, or why she had mutilated herself, yet had never hated him because of it, he was dumbfounded at this marvel. (There was no marvel about it; for her equal never existed.) He was so happy that he did not know what to say or whom to thank more, the King or the Senator. They had both done him so much honor that he could have knelt before them if that had been permitted by the King of Scotland, who had his arms around him. There was an exchange of kisses, of embraces, of rejoicing, beyond what anyone had ever heard of before. So fine was this meeting that it ought well to be remembered; for, as I find in the tale, there was none such either before or since. For as the Kings were becoming acquainted, the seneschals too exchanged kisses. Twice they had put their lady to sea, and each in the same way; now, together, they had found her again. Each of them was delighted to hear the other's account. As for the knights in both parties, they all intermingled and exchanged hearty kisses; for the love of those they served they rejoiced together, calling each other friend and companion.

The Pope as well, who had heard all these words and had seen, close beside him, the meeting of these two great kings, and had heard how this came about, crossed himself, for he considered it a miracle. And he greatly marveled at how, and in that place, so many troubles had ended and been

brought to a good conclusion. For in a moment he saw set at peace many a troubled heart: that of one King mourning his lost daughter, whom he there recognized as queen and lady of great lands; that of the other King grieving for many a bitter season over his wife, lost through treachery; and those of the two seneschals, who had been wretched because of their lady whom they had each in turn put to sea. Nearby he saw the Senator, who for God's love had had the child and his mother cared for, without knowing who she was. And now he witnessed rejoicing among those who had been the most fearful and whose affliction was thus brought to an end. He knew well that if it did not come from God, this reunion would never have come about. He praised God aloud for it, and so did all the Romans who were in the church and were watching this marvel. There were many who crossed themselves, and many who were moved to tears.

While all this rejoicing and festivity was going on, two clerks were at a fountain, where the water flowed clear and pure. It was quite close to the church. These clerks were carrying a large silver pail, with which they meant to get water to fill the church fountains.<sup>123</sup> For at that time it was the custom, wherever the Pope was on Holy Thursday, after those who had confessed their sins had been absolved, that he would bless the fountains. It was this rite that brought the clerks to the fountain, where they went down on their knees to fill their pail. They let it down into the water and drew it up brimful; and in it they saw a hand. They threw the water back, then drew again from the fountain, which was full of good water. But the hand came back into their vessel, and so they threw it back again. Three or four times they emptied their pail, for they thought to obtain water without the hand, but in vain; it kept on returning. The clerks, amazed at this, consulted between themselves about what to do with this hand: take it away with them, or go to the Pope to give a report. They agreed on the latter course; they moved away, leaving the hand in the fountain and the pail at the side. (They had no fear of anyone's taking it from them, for the fountain was enclosed within a high wall.) Losing no time, the clerks approached the Pope and addressed him:

“Sir, the two of us went, as our custom is, to the fountain near St. Peter's and, by Saint Peter! we tell you that there we have seen a great marvel; for we cannot fill our pail with water without having a hand keep getting into it. Four times we took it out and four times it returned, and finally we have left it there. We cannot have the water unless we take the hand also. Tell us what to do.” The Pope promptly instructed them to go straight back to get that hand, with their vessel full of water. “And bring it to me immediately!” The clerks hurried to obey. They let down the pail into the fountain, then

pulled it up; and in it they saw the hand floating on the water. They returned in haste to the Pope; once they reached him they tipped the pail before him so that he saw the hand. At this he began to marvel, seeing it pink and white. If it had just been cut off, it would not have looked so fresh or so living. The Pope's whole heart came alive with joy; he thought indeed that God wished to demonstrate that whoever serves Him sincerely does not waste his service. The two Kings, who still were talking about their meeting, good Queen Joy, whom the two Kings had felicitated so much, the two seneschals also, the barons who were with them, the Senator and the Romans—he made them all sit down wherever they liked. He entreated that none of them would speak while he was holding forth. They soon complied; in a short time there was no noise. Then the Pope began his address.

“Now hear me,” he said, “good people, the high, the middling, the low! Today you have seen marvels and you have heard of them concerning this lady here, who for God's sake so mistreated herself, who marked her body with such a sign, as to cut off her hand. This very day you have learned that this was nine years ago;<sup>124</sup> since then she had many great burdens. Thus God tests His own. She held so firmly the right course that she has come to a good port and has been reunited with her lord; and today she has found her father seeking pardon for the great wrong that he had done her without cause. Furthermore I believe that God will not stop at this, but will give her back much more. For two clerks were going just now for water for the fonts that they were to fill. But whatever power or wit they might exert, they could not fill their pail without this hand, which I see before me, coming into it. Be sure that this is not without a reason. If it pleased Our Lord to honor her so much that she might have her hand again, then everyone might know indeed that it is well to serve such a Master in righteousness, to merit His favor. And so I exhort you not to neglect to pray to the Virgin Mary, all of you on your knees, that she may intercede with her sweet Son. Without anything further, say ‘Ave Maria,’ and therewith be absolved!”

When they had heard the Pope exhort them, they carried out his command; and the two Kings also prayed to the Virgin Mary not to forget the woman who had always adored her, served her, and honored her so much. Joy, at the center of it all, prayed to her wholeheartedly. The good Pope, before touching the hand, gave the general absolution, as was customary on that day. Then he took the hand and held it reverently in the holy fingers with which he was used to elevating the sacrament. He called for the Queen, and the two Kings escorted her to him. The Pope took her left arm, where the hand used to be, and looked at her stump, the end quite covered again

with skin. In reason it was impossible that she might ever have her hand back; but God, who well knew her heart, willed to restore to her all that she had lost. As soon as the hand had touched its former place, God reattached it, He who is a better healer than Nature. Neither plaster nor binding was needed there from that moment, for God works quickly. As strong and as useful, as beautiful, as supple as it was on the day when she had cut it off—just so did God restore it to her. Then He sent a voice from Heaven, which spoke to the Pope and pronounced its message so loudly that both the Kings and Joy and all their company heard clearly what was said. And so they listened and were still.

“Urban,” said the voice, “now hear, and do not be slow to do Jesus’ command. He sends word that as soon as you have completed the service, you are to leave this church; make your way toward the fountain where the hand was found, the hand with which God has healed this woman, afflicted for many a day. When you come to the fountain you will see in it a great fish. Have it caught and then opened before you. In its stomach you will find, in the shape of a glove, the place where the hand has been for many a winter and summer. It is there that the Virgin Mary has preserved the hand of her devotee. You must rejoice greatly at this, for within it is a very beautiful reliquary. The fish arrived at the Phare just as God brought it there; He made it come through a surge of water. He willed it to happen thus in honor of the highest Name.<sup>125</sup> The fish is called a sturgeon. You will keep the two Kings with you, taking them along. And let Joy know well that henceforth she will be fêted, and also, for love of her, will be these men who have shown love to her.” Then it fell silent. Those who had heard it were completely astonished. They thanked God for it wholeheartedly. The Pope, as well, thanked God for this message and praised the miracle. Thereupon he sang the service that is done on that day in holy church; devoutly and with a pure heart he continued it to the end. The two kings were at prayer, and also those who were with them, who all were deeply thankful to God for granting them what they had wished.

When the master had finished the service, he went out of the church. Singing “*Te Deum laudamus*”<sup>126</sup> they came to the fountain and in it saw the fish, which was extraordinarily large. The Pope had it caught and laid out on a plot of grass. There, without further ado, they had it killed and then opened before them. Once this was done, they all smelled so good an odor<sup>127</sup> that everyone was moved. The Pope took the stomach, which had held the hand, fair and unblemished, and within it he found the form in which the hand had reposed.<sup>128</sup> It was made by such mastery that there is no

one who could say what it was made of or how it could have been placed there; but it was very sweet smelling and of many colors. They returned to St. Peter's, carrying it there with great festivity. (It is still to be seen at Rome, if it has not been lost through our sins.) Several of the people there took up the fish and put it in a kitchen. When the Pope had done what he ought with the reliquary and had put off his vestments, he led away the Kings as the voice had told him, as well as Joy, whom he made much of, the Senator and his daughters, the seneschals and all those who were with them—he soon conducted them away, and for love of them all, so many Romans also that his largest palace was filled with good people.

In the palace there was no shortage of good fare. There was such an abundance of it that five hundred marks' worth was given to the poor.<sup>129</sup> (For to them also God gave food in plenty; each one had more than he asked for.) At the banquet the sturgeon was eaten, the one that had been laden with the hand. If I described all the dishes to you, I should stay here all day. The Pope honored his guests and gave them an excellent dinner. When the tables had been cleared away and they had washed their hands, the Pope led them out to enjoy themselves in an orchard. There was much talk about God, talk that was neither simple nor foolish, and many a rehearsal of the great injustice suffered by the Queen, to whom God had restored her loss. After the day had drawn on, the two Kings entreated the Pope and all who were with him to join them at Easter. The Pope said that he would be there gladly and would bring them as much company and festivity as he could. Each of the Kings thanked him for this; then they withdrew and went back to their lodgings.

The Senator had such a large establishment that the King of Hungary moved to his house, and all his knights were able to be accommodated there. The Senator gave them the best welcome he could. That night they all went to the Office of Tenebrae.<sup>130</sup> On the next day they adored the cross<sup>131</sup> on which died that One who through His death destroyed the most cruel death that could ever be imagined. For previously, when that death that everyone must die was past, then they had to die again; to die without deliverance, in darkness, from which no one would ever have emerged if the Son of God, the true Jesus, had not come from Heaven to Earth. For by His death He won the war that the Devil had with mankind, merely through a bite of an apple that Adam, the first man, ate, through which act he estranged from God's love both himself and all his lineage. And this was never put right until such pity came to God that He put on human flesh and willed on that day to suffer pain and death on the cross. And through this holy passage<sup>132</sup> He took away from the Devil his custom of capturing our souls, provided that

we are willing to resist him. (For if someone will not defend himself, it is no wonder if he suffers. How will God help the one who has no care for Him? God has given us the arms with which we can defend our souls; if we wish to protect ourselves with them we need have no fear of perishing. If we make full confession and willingly leave evil deeds behind, repenting those we have already done, attending to alms giving, being full of pity and concord, friendship and compassion, we shall be so well armed that we cannot be wounded by the Enemy who lies in wait for us. I urge and advise everyone to be vigilant, for if anyone lets his guard down, the Devil awaits him on the day he dies. Then the Devil, full of malevolence, will seize him and lead him to such a place that it would be better for him never to have been born.) Therefore they went on that day to adore the cross. Until the Sunday the whole company remained humble and behaved quietly, like good and well-taught people.

On the day of the Resurrection, when the Passion comes to an end, the Kings of Scotland and of Hungary had lavish preparations made. In a beautiful meadow, at one edge of Rome, numerous pavilions were erected. The Kings saw to it that everything necessary for the fête was arranged, and the good Senator caused them to have all the provisions. When the service that is done on that day in holy churches was finished, the two Kings escorted the Pope away. They did not forget the cardinals, nor in all of Rome was there a townsperson who on that occasion was not there with the Kings. Ladies and girls, very lovely, also attended in large numbers. Many good thoughts were expressed, many good deeds rewarded. On that day the two Kings wore their crowns. Good Queen Joy was much fêted, much loved, much honored, and very richly crowned. If I had thought about it for four years, I could not list for you all those who were present. Nothing was held back; there was much expenditure, many a fine bottle well filled with good wine. Out in the meadow, if you had looked in one direction, in fifty places you would have seen the great cauldrons on the fires, filled with several kinds of meat. Off another way, over burning coals, cooked so much roast meat that I do not know the quantity,<sup>133</sup> and shall stop there. One hundred and fifty knights served at the meal. They all spent the day in such happiness that nothing unpleasant crossed their minds. After supper they all left the meadow and separated.

That night the King of Scotland and Joy shared one bed, for they had not yet lain together, although it was a week since he had found her. For God's sake they had abstained from it. On that night they had much delight, befitting those who so loved and desired each other. They had lost each other for

seven years, a loss from which they had had much pain and affliction; now they had come to the port of joy and comfort. They were so happy that I could not tell the half of it.

When Easter was over and the festivities were past, nothing remained to do but depart. Ordering their ships to return to the port, they had them fitted out well and richly. Then they took leave of the Pope, like courteous and well-bred people. The Pope gave them leave and spoke to them about God, exhorting them to follow His commandments, for He had done them great good. They consented wholeheartedly, and never thereafter did they dissent from this. The Senator's two daughters, who had shown so much love to good Queen Joy, never thereafter wished to leave her, not one day of their lives. From then on they were always with her. (And she married them well, giving each of them to such a husband that they had as much of wealth and possessions as they wished. Each was a countess, and a duchess of two duchies.) Yet when they took leave of their father, it was with great sadness. He escorted them all down to the sea. Joy, who could not help loving him, took leave of him weeping, thanking him for the great goodness that he had shown her all the time that she was helpless. And the two Kings thanked him so much that it was difficult for them to separate from him. There was such a throng at the departure that all the dwellers in Rome were there. They escorted them down to the port, for they loved them because of the goodness they knew to be in them. When the visitors had taken leave of them all, like courteous and well-bred people, they and their whole company entered together into one ship, where neither sail nor mast was lacking.<sup>134</sup> Of course Queen Joy did not forget her child, for there was nothing she loved so much except for his father. But this love was not comparable with any other; they had well shown it to each other, the King to her and she to the King, and had suffered much distress because of it. The mariners set the sails; they busied themselves with getting under way. Up came the wind, which moved them onward. As long as the Senator could see them he watched eagerly, he and many others having climbed up to a high point. From there he watched his sorrow, for he was much affected by the separation. "May Jesus Christ guide them!" When he had lost sight of them, he and the others went back to Rome and returned to their homes. And upon the sea were the Kings, who wished to be dear friends. They made their way straight toward Hungary, journeying night and day, making no halt until they arrived. They were glad when they found themselves there.

The news spread rapidly throughout the land that Joy had been recovered and was healed. The people were delighted to hear it. The King of Hungary sent for his great barons and assembled them in his best city, where there was

great celebration and joy. Everyone made an effort to welcome the Scottish King. When they had heard about the marvels that I have reported to you, they were so elated that they did not know what to do. And the King of Hungary caused all of them, well born and lowly, to pay homage to the King of Scotland. He said that he himself was a very old king and wanted to remain in peace among them and so conduct himself that his soul might please that King in whom no goodness is effaced. And so he made the King of Scotland take possession of Hungary, almost forcibly, for the latter and his beloved Joy did not at all want to dispossess their father of his kingdom. But such was his inclination that he begged them until there was no refusal, and so they did as he wished. And all the princes were minded to make the arrangement; hence they all did it without debate. The two Kings, with Joy and all the barons of Hungary, went on a progress from town to town. Wherever the Kings were to come the townspeople gladly decorated the streets with hangings of cloth-of-gold and Indian silk, some white, some indigo. The pavements were strewn with foliage. It would be impossible to describe to you the honor that they showed to their new lord and to their lady, found again, whom God had returned to them. At this they were all so joyful and so zealous in celebrating that in every town, in a hundred places, you would have seen varieties of games, pleasing, honorable, and delightful to watch. Thus for half a year they progressed through Hungary in welcome, in happiness, in comfort, and in rejoicing. And as soon as possible and when preparation had been made, by Joy's will and the agreement of the Kings of Scotland and of Hungary, there was placed in a ship a thousand marks' worth of gold, silver, silk, jewels, and money. Then they sent it all to Rome, to the Senator, the venerable man who had shown himself to be good and well tested. And they in turn proved themselves toward him; for they sent him so much of their wealth that he made his lineage rich and greatly profited his soul (for with it he did much charity). Thus every day he engaged in good works and for a long time behaved like a man worthy of respect.

But I shall relate no more about him, except to say that afterward he had news many times, very good news, of his daughters and of their lady, whom he loved body and soul. Now I shall turn to the two Kings, who were in Hungary, lovely Joy with them. They had news of the Senator through those whom they had sent to him and were joyful on that account, and his daughters' hearts were cheered.

One day as they were seated at table a messenger arrived. He came straight up to the table, where he could see the Queen with the two Kings sitting beside her. Going down on his knees,<sup>135</sup> the messenger spoke like a

sensible man. "Lady," he said, "I greet you in the name of God, who has helped us, and in the name of the barons of Armenia, who have heard news of you that has brought them much joy; for they are informed of your return. This comforts them greatly, because they believed that you were dead and so they have led a bitter life. In the name of your good mother you are to have the whole land. On this account I have come seeking you. Come! They will receive you, and to your lord they will show joy, festivity, homage, and honor. Now, do not put this off, for they very much desire to see you; they are deprived of you against their will." Joy answered him: "Young man, I have understood you well. Go and eat, and in a short while you will have my assent to this matter." So, arising, he did. A number of people showed him to where he was made very comfortable; nothing that pleased him was lacking. The Kings had well heard the messenger's speech. As soon as they had eaten, they and Queen Joy withdrew to council, with all the barons of Hungary beside them, a council that was rather brief. They summoned the messenger to them and said that they would not fail to go to Armenia, and they named a certain day to him. The messenger did not lose any time after hearing such a decision; his thoughts were on returning. But before he left, the Queen had him given as much gold and silver as he liked; then he went on his way. Once back in Armenia he announced news of Joy to those who had sent him and who rejoiced greatly at the message. They caused much preparation to be made against the day when their lady was to come. Each of them exerted himself. But the Kings were still in Hungary (and with them many happy people); with them was the Queen, full of beauty and goodness. I shall tell you what the Queen projected and sought to bring about.

The seneschal who had wide lands in Hungary, the one who had sent Joy out to sea, and also the seneschal of Scotland, who afterward had put her back into the same boat—these two, from their seneschalships, had very great power. Neither of them had a wife, but they had come to love the Senator's two daughters, who were virtuous and elegant. They loved them for these traits and did not hide their feelings so much that the Queen did not perceive it. She was happy about this, and showed it. Far from opposing their wishes, she projected and intervened so much that she brought about these two marriages. And on that occasion she caused to be given to the damsels forever, as their heritage, two duchies, very good ones. (But for all that they did not leave her; they were with her all their lives, and so were the seneschals, like true and loyal men.) Their weddings were very fine. There were miters and crosiers in plenty; dukes, counts, knights, and bishops were there, and a good ten archbishops. There also were damsels and ladies of

Hungary, very lovely, who joined in the celebrations. The brides were much honored by the two Kings, who loved them dearly for the goodness that they knew to be in them and also for the love of the admirable man who had done them all so much good at Rome. (For no tongue could express as much honor as a man of worth knows how to do.)

When the weddings were over and the royal party had visited their great cities and their castles, and everywhere taken their pleasure and received all the Hungarians, they had preparations made again for traveling. They left the land in such hands that no one could win anything there by warfare. Then without more delay they departed. I shall pass over the stages of their journey, except to say that they moved through hills and valleys and long, wide forests until they came into Armenia.<sup>136</sup> There they were well received by the inhabitants, who were informed of their coming and were awaiting their arrival.

The Armenians welcomed with great honor their lady and their new lord; as for John, their fine young lord, they greeted him very fittingly. They were full of joy and zealous to do honor to the princess they had lost and from whom they were to hold their possessions. They had been without a ruler for many a winter and summer, and there was much strife among them. But the Kings were not slow to make peace throughout the country; they put an end to all discord. The love of their new lord led the barons of the land to set aside their quarrels with each other; they conceded the power to rule them to the King of Scotland and, without violating custom, did him homage for their fiefs. There Queen Joy was much fêted, and rightly so, for in her they had a good lady. The people loved her to the point that throughout the towns there was a tremendous noise from the celebrations, so much that it could not be told. The streets were decorated with hangings reaching down to the ground on both sides. If you had been there, everywhere you would have seen cloth-of-gold spread out, and garments of silk and of fur hung from the windows, so that nothing else showed. There you would have seen so many different games that you would have marveled. Everywhere the Kings went, they were greeted with games and festivities.

All that winter they were in such rejoicing, not breaking off until Lent. They spent half the year in Hungary and half the year in Armenia. But then it came into the Scottish King's mind to see the barons whom he had left in Scotland, full of sorrow on his account. He spoke about this to his beloved. She did not dissuade him, but said: "Now let us send a message to them, and let us be there this Easter!" Then they summoned the seneschals who had united in marriage with the two sisters from Rome and who loved each

other like worthy men. They came at their lord's order and listened attentively. The King told them to put to sea and travel to the country from which he had departed in dismay; there they were to announce the news that would be very pleasing to many: "We shall be there at Easter and shall arrive at Berwick. Tell them to await us there." The seneschals were very glad of the commission. They took leave of their lord and their lady and then departed. Taking along with them such people as they chose, they lost no time in setting out, heading straight for the sea. There they made little delay. They had a good wind and a good ship, which carried them smoothly over the water. They were at sea night and day, without a storm or any stay, until they arrived at Berwick, right at the port, with great rejoicing.

The seneschal who was from Scotland had left his country grieving, but he returned in joy. Nobly accoutered, they both mounted their horses and entered Berwick with many companions. They rode up to the castle; and there they promptly sent for the great burghers and the provost. The Scottish seneschal was hardly recognized, for he had not been seen for a long time; it was eight years since he had been in Scotland. The first person to place him was the provost, who ran to embrace and kiss him. But he could not relieve his heart of his fear for his lady, whom he loved more than any other woman, and for his lord as well. He had no relief until he learned the news. Never before had he felt such joy as when heard the tale that would make the town rejoice. The seneschal told them everything: the great trouble and travail they had had in many lands while seeking their lady, and afterward how they had found her at Rome in the home of the worthy man, how they had identified her through her son, and how they had rejoiced together until the Thursday when they went to where they found the Pope. He narrated the confession that was spoken before the crowd, through which it became known how their lady had come there, and why she was mutilated. Then he narrated the great miracle performed by God, Who restored her hand to her. As to the fish and the reliquary, he gave them the whole story, then described the rejoicing that went on all during their stay in Rome. He related how they left the city and took leave of the Romans; how the daughters of the worthy man left Rome for their lady's sake; how they themselves wedded them and what lands were given to them; how they came to Hungary, where their lady had been reared; what rejoicing was made for her, and for the King of Scotland on her account; how the King of Hungary resigned his kingdom, and caused all his people to do homage to the King of Scotland without disorder or force; then how afterward they went from Hungary to Armenia, which belonged to their lady through her mother. He did not

omit the games and festivities that were put on for their lady and for the child and for their King. Then he informed them of how the two Kings were of one mind, always remaining together; how the Scots would soon see them both; how they themselves had been sent ahead to tell what they knew and to set the barons right concerning what they feared; and how, without further delay, their rulers were to come at Easter and hold court at Berwick. He related the truth about all this, without making any mistake, and in so doing he made them all both joyful and amazed. They scarcely believed the substance of what he had told them. If he had not been considered a trustworthy man he would never have been believed; but because of his goodness they did believe him and rejoiced at his report.

In a short time, throughout the country, this news circulated; one person carried it to another and they rejoiced together. Soon it was generally known that she who had been abused and exiled was returning healed of all ills, and also their lord, who had had undeserved hardship on her account, through great treachery. Those who had fainted on account of their lady, when they thought that she had been thrown into the fire, now felt joy greater than they had ever experienced before. They had never known who their lady was, but now they knew. They took pleasure in preparing Berwick. Nothing could distress them except the fact that it was so long until Easter. It seemed as if the hour would never arrive when they would see their rulers approach from the sea to the shore. At Berwick they were all awaiting them and giving thought to having a great festival. The seneschal announced it everywhere, both in Scotland and in Ireland; the Cornish people also hastened to it eagerly. In those three lands there was no bishop, duke, count, or archbishop who did not come with a happy heart. On the shore they had pavilions set up for people to stay in, for the town was not large enough for everyone to lodge in it; there were many on the beach. Thus in happiness, without disarray, they awaited their lady and their King, whom much to their regret they had not seen for a long time. But all displeasure had fled far away; out of joy they made a great deal of noise, and would make even more when they saw the arrival with their own eyes. For it was very difficult for them to believe that such things might be true as each one was telling the other, and as the seneschal had related.

Just as the King, faithful and wise, had said to the messengers, so he did; in Armenia he left good people, well supplied, to guard the kingdom; and to Scotland they would send the gold and silver and other goods that would be needed there. Then the Kings came to the shore, where many a ship and barge was laden with great wealth and so much that I cannot know the

amount. The two Kings cordially and in an orderly way took leave of the Armenians. The good and pure-hearted Queen also took leave of those who were staying behind, saddened by her departure. Then they entered their ships, which were good and sturdy and swift. John was not forgotten there by his mother. If she had left him behind, great sorrow would have overcome her; but she had no such desire, she always took him with her. He was the fairest child in the world, throughout its length and breadth, and she loved him as every mother does her child. They went by sea and had a wind that moved them away rapidly. They voyaged for many nights, days, and hours, until they were perceived by those who were at Berwick. These people all came running to the shore to receive their rulers, who from the ships entered the boats and were rowed to the beach. Here they found many a baron who cried aloud: "Welcome, my lord King! And welcome be my lady, who was lost through treachery! Welcome be our young lord, who was lost with her! Also the King of Hungary, he and all his company, be welcome in this country! Henceforth they will no longer be dismayed, the knights who have been without a lord for many a summer. Now God grants our wish; from now on we are not to grieve."

Thus all the barons, so happy that I could not tell it if I had thought about it long and hard, received their lord with great honor. When all had embraced each other and the horses had been led out of the ships, they mounted without making further delay. No one could describe to you the bridle and the palfrey, the saddle, and the other trappings that Queen Joy had. The ladies with her were also splendidly equipped. They went riding through the crowd of people, who were eager to see her. But now they could behold her more beautiful than ever. When they saw her two hands, they crossed themselves for the miracle and marveled greatly. Thus they went off to the town, where they saw many preparations: so many great linen hangings, lengths of Alexandrine silk, counterpanes, cloth-of-gold, furs, and much treasure, and in the streets so many sweet herbs strewn on the ground.

At these signs of how much his daughter was loved (it was hard for anyone to believe it, but now he saw that the thing was true), the King of Hungary wondered how the lord of such holdings had wished to take her in marriage without knowing who she was or where she came from. He thanked God profoundly for the honor He had done to her. They came up to the castle and dismounted. It was Easter Day, and so they agreed to go, all of them, to the church to hear God's service, and there they received their Savior.<sup>137</sup> Afterward they returned to their lodgings to dress and adorn themselves; then they moved to the Kings' court, which was great and plenary. At

it were people of many ranks, and each man had his wife with him, for they wanted to honor their lady. As to their food and wine I do not wish to be the recorder. On that day the ladies behaved quietly; they did not dance and sing. Because of their Savior, whom they had received, they were obliged to conduct themselves soberly. They were well able to make up for this later, for they intended to stay there for a week; the festival continued that long. None finer was put on ever before, so large, so joyous, or celebrated by so many people, nor was one so festive, so cheered with dance and song, ever put on since. I shall not tell you more about this, for I want to bring my matter to an end.

When the week was past and they were all wearied with celebrating, they took leave and returned to their own regions. And the Kings went off and rode through the country. Joy was always with them, accompanied by many a lady. They progressed in stages, moving from one town to the next. The Queen inquired about the King's mother, and was told that she had died a year ago in the tower where she stayed. This was not at all pleasing to Joy, for she was so full of courtesy that she would have freed her if she had found her alive; but she had to do without her since it could not be otherwise. The old Queen had brought herself down with her own act, and so came to destruction.

When the Kings had seen the country and ordered it to their liking, they went to stay at Dundee, for that was the place in Scotland where Joy liked best to reside. Therefore they would often go there; but when they wished they went elsewhere, as do those who have many dwellings. They continued so for a long time and spent their lives together, the Kings and the Queen together and the seneschals and the Senator's daughters; they all loved each other dearly. And afterward the Queen had several children, according to what I read: they had two daughters and three sons,<sup>138</sup> to whom God was gracious, for the daughters were queens and always devoted to God, and the three males were kings and well carried out the law. As I have said, they conducted themselves rightly, until they came to a good end.

By this romance you may know—you who are sensible—that in every necessity in this fleshly life, one must not despair but always hope in the right: that out of whatever grievously afflicts us God will restore us again. The Enemy is most ingenious and desirous of having us, and so he does all he can to put us into despair, in order to draw us away from prayer and from the hope that God may take away our suffering. If you feel temptation or know some affliction, pay heed to Manekine, who in many trials was so steadfast that, although being twice sorely tempted, never had the heart or the thought to fall into despair, but always hoped in God and in His blessed

Mother, who is not sparing of pity. She behaved so well, prayed so much, that in a brief time God gave her far more than she had prayed for. Therefore I advise everyone to strive always to behave rightly. For such great good can come of it that there is no one who could say it and no clerk who could put it in writing. There is nothing that God hates so much as the despairing fool;<sup>139</sup> for if someone despairs, it seems that he wants to believe that God lacks the power to relieve his suffering. He who doubts this power is foolish indeed, for God can well restore everything, all losses and all afflictions. And all sins too, small and great, God can and will pardon, provided that we want to give Him our heart, and trust in Him, and believe that without Him no good can come in this world. There is indeed no good, if God does not pour it out. It is well to serve such a Master and carry out His will. And so let us pray that He make us such that He may will to give us His grace, and that He guard us from despair so that we may not go to perdition. And as for you (hearers and readers), pray God, who sees all, that He may grant great joy to the one who opted to wear himself down in rhyming *Manekine*. May God give him joy and a good life! Let every one of you say, "Amen!" At this point Philippe ends the romance of *Manekine*.





*JOHN AND BLONDE*

IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT the person who seeks honor attains it, and the one who strives for little comes to little.<sup>1</sup>

This is on my mind because of certain persons who know nothing but idleness and make no effort to better themselves or rise out of poverty. There is a sort of man who stays at home and is barely able to afford salt,<sup>2</sup> whereas if he went abroad he could acquire esteem, friends, and wealth. And whoever misses all this through laziness must be looked down upon by anyone respectable. We have all seen men who, if they had not stirred from their place, would never have been as well thought of as they are and would not have gained so much sense or so many possessions; for everyone shows his ability better in a country other than his own and in so doing comes to great good. When a poor gentleman remains at home for a single hour, he ought to have his eyes put out; he is only a burden to himself and to all his relatives who love him, and the others call him a wretch and avoid his company. Anyone who continues in such a life is slack in gaining respect and unfortunate and pitiable. Let him turn monk to save his soul, or else let him attend to bettering himself! If he says, "I don't know where to go," he should be roundly blamed, for every day we hear that good people are needed overseas or in Morea,<sup>3</sup> or in many other distant countries. The man this tale is about had no inclination to being idle, but went off to a foreign land to win advantage and honor. Honor he sought, to honor he came.<sup>4</sup> Here is how it happened.

In France there was a knight who as long as he bore arms had been very valiant; but with age coming upon him he stayed at home. He was well regarded by his neighbors for his hospitality. His wife was an excellent lady by whom he had six children: two daughters and four sons living.<sup>5</sup> He had land that would have brought him in a good five hundred pounds a year,<sup>6</sup> if the income had been free of debts and mortgages. But in his youth, by engaging in tournaments, he had incurred expenses and was now doing his best to pay them off. His holdings were at Dammartin.<sup>7</sup>

His eldest son was named John; he was bright, well mannered, tall, handsome, and about twenty when the story begins. This John wished to

acquire honor. His aging mother, his indebted father, his sisters, his brothers too—they were all there together. One day it occurred to him that he was wasting his time. There were plenty of people serving his father without him; and so, having an active nature, he formed the project of going off to England. He did not want to dissipate the land that his father was imprudently holding; instead, if he could, he would win a larger estate for himself.

Just as he had thought it out, so he did it. He told his parents about the venture he had in mind. They could not dissuade him from it no matter what they said, much to their distress. John proceeded to make ready for his journey; he was eager to go. One sturdy horse, and just twenty pounds, and one lad to follow him: he would take along so much and no more. If he had wished, he could have had far more, but he said it was enough and too much. Then he spoke to his friends and took leave of them all. He kissed his brothers and sisters and left them weeping for him. At that he departed with his serving lad, called Robinet.<sup>8</sup> He left his father and mother overwhelmed with sorrow and departed from his native region like a man in a hurry. He scarcely stopped before reaching Boulogne. There he followed out his plan, seeking until he found a vessel, a merchants' ship; on this he crossed the "stream,"<sup>9</sup> and so he arrived at Dover. He did not wish to spend more than one night there, but was on horseback at daybreak. He took the road toward London.

As he was riding along, he caught up with an earl who had had some business at the sea and was now traveling to London, where the Parliament of the English was held. John inquired of this man's retinue who he might be and learned that he was the Earl of Oxford, a rich fortified town. Hearing this, John promptly rode up to him and greeted him in his French. And the Earl, who could understand French well (he had been in France to learn it),<sup>10</sup> without any hesitation welcomed him and inquired when he had left France and what brought him to England. John said: "Sir, indeed I shall tell you the truth about myself. I am a poor gentleman who has no master but God. And so I crossed the sea to know whether I could find someone who would accept my service and would treat me according to what he thought of it." "By my faith!" said the Earl, "it is a noble spirit that makes you look for a master. If you like, you will be my man, a squire of my house." "Many thanks, sir, I want nothing else. You show me great courtesy in adding me to your household." "What is your name, my friend?" "Sir, John is the name I was given." "John," said the Earl, "dear friend, I retain you very gladly as squire from now on." John expressed his gratitude.

This is how John was taken into service; and he conducted himself in such a way that before they reached the city all his companions thought well of

him. In London they had a fine, well-furnished lodging, where the Earl stayed as long as the Parliament lasted. The Earl ate with the King; and John, who knew very well what to do, served before him faultlessly. When it came to waiting at a great lord's table no one could have found a servant more polite, more pleasing, or more capable in every way.

When the Parliament broke up the Earl left for Oxford. They all traveled with much enjoyment, making few stops on the way. On arriving they were well received by the Countess, who loved and trusted her husband. And the Earl told her about the sense, the merit, and the goodness of John, his new retainer. This account was very pleasing to the lady. She said: "Sir,<sup>11</sup> if he is as you say, so help me God! I entreat you to put him with our daughter, to serve her, if that would be agreeable to him. For we have no other children, and it is now high time for her to have her own squire who can carve before her."<sup>12</sup> "Truly, lady," the Earl answered, "I think this is good advice. If he is willing to be in her service he will improve his standing with me; and I shall know it shortly."

Thereupon he summoned John, who was nearby, his only thought being to follow his lord closely so as to carry out his wishes. At the call, he approached. "John," said the Earl, "we have decided, the Countess and I, that, if it pleases you, I am to ask you to be in my daughter's service. Be sure that if you use your good sense in attending her, you will gain my favor and that of the Countess. Now do not mind doing this, since I ask it for your own benefit." "Sir," John replied, "I well understand your goodwill. Here I am, ready and eager to obey you; you have done me great honor just by making the request. Now may God grant me to do such service as to earn the good opinion of you both!" The lady said: "That is well said." And the Earl thanked him heartily for it. Then they brought him before their daughter, who did no shame to Nature, and told her that as squire they wished to give her this Frenchman. The young lady readily agreed; and so John changed from his first service. Thereupon the tables were brought out and set upon the trestles;<sup>13</sup> the Earl sat down first and then the others as they liked. And John served by carving for his graceful young lady.

The damsel's name was Blonde. This was very apt, for in all the world no woman was so fair-haired. I hope that you will not mind if I speak of her a little. Her hair seemed to be of fine, shining gold, so long that she could twine it twice around her head. Her ears were lovely, white, and delicate. Her forehead was white, smooth, and unlined, her eyebrows brown, narrow, and shapely. Her nose was perfect. And her eyes! bright, clear, shining; and her glance was so engaging that there is no one, however ill, whose health would

not return if he encountered it. Her cheeks were redder than roses, the skin beside them whiter than new-fallen snow; the colors were so subtly intermingled that you could not tell which one predominated. Nature—or God Himself—had fashioned her mouth, small and well proportioned, with full red lips and small, white, perfect teeth. When she opened her mouth to speak, an odor as sweet as balm came from her breath. Someone who could kiss her just once would never again feel any distress. Her chin was white and slightly cleft. Below this her throat was tender and white, long and rounded, so transparent that when she drank red wine anyone looking closely could see the wine being swallowed. As to her body, I shall gladly describe what I can see of it, for no one should be slothful in praising a good and beautiful woman. The arms of this young lady were long and well placed; her hands were lovely, and so were her fingers, long, delicate, and straight. She was slender in waist and flanks; you could have enclosed her in two gloves. She was somewhat broader in the chest (a feature that did not diminish her beauty). Her small, developing breasts stretched her gown a little, making it all the more becoming; they were firm and youthful. She was tall and straight and slender, well made in feet and legs, neither too plump nor too thin. She was then only eighteen years old.<sup>14</sup> In her talk she was prudent and pleasant. (When she spoke French, though, you could tell that she was not born in Pontoise.) She was sensible, modest, and courteous, so much so that no one seeing her in the morning would incur mischance throughout the day unless by thought alone, such virtue God had given her. To such a mistress John was assigned. (Let him watch out that no harm comes of it! But I believe that he will not be on his guard, not enough to avoid great suffering, as much as his heart will be able to endure.)

Such, and even more beautiful than I am relating, was Blonde, the Earl's daughter. She would sit at the table, waited on by John, whose person was noble and pleasing. He would take great pains to serve well so as to merit the approbation of them all. For he did not serve only his lady, but here and there, up and down: knights, ladies, squires, varlets, boys, and messengers. For each one he wished to do what was wanted, and by doing so he gained everyone's goodwill. He knew just how to notice the moment when he should serve and honor each diner while not neglecting the shapely Blonde. After eating they would wash their hands,<sup>15</sup> then go off to amuse themselves as they pleased, in the forest, on the riverbank,<sup>16</sup> or in other sorts of diversions. John would go to whichever he chose, and then when he liked he would often go to play in the Countess's chambers with the ladies, who wanted him to teach them French. As a courteous and mannerly person, he

would do and say whatever they were pleased to ask of him. He knew a good deal about society games, chess, backgammon, and dice, with which he entertained his young lady, and he showed her how to play many a game. He also helped her to speak better French than when he had come to her, and for that she liked him very much; and he exerted himself to do everything that he believed might please her. For a while he was very much at ease; it seemed to him that everyone thought well of what he did, said, and wished. But for all that, no contempt or pride ran in him. He did not care to impress others, but concentrated on serving better, putting even the envious to silence through his good sense, so that they could not find fault with him. If he had led such a life for a long time his affairs would have gone very well; but Love changed his situation and brought him up shorter than a wolf in a trap. Tristan<sup>17</sup> never suffered from it as this man was to do in a short while.

One day Blonde was sitting at the table; John was to carve before her, as was his custom. But the person who means to leap sometimes takes a fall.<sup>18</sup> John happened to glance at the one whom by now he had been seeing for more than eighteen weeks. But he had never before had such difficulty in tearing his eyes away; his young lady's beauty drew them by force. He was so preoccupied by the struggle that he forgot about carving, until she said to him: "John, carve! You are daydreaming!" Then John recollected himself, and carved, and was much ashamed at what she had said, for never before, while serving, had he needed to be prompted as had happened now, and he wondered what had caused it. After her words he kept his eyes lowered, not daring to raise them again as long as that meal lasted. Yet he would gladly have looked at her more than ever, for he was struck by the bow of Love;<sup>19</sup> he had fallen into such a desire that from it he was to have many great torments.

He did not look at her again; he kept from it until the next day when she was seated at dinner. Then he was attentive to serving her as usual; but the desire from which he suffered made him raise his eyes to her, the cause of his passion. He regarded her so intently that he disregarded everything else. In this he did not know how to guard his good sense, for through this foolish regarding he was like to die without recovery. From this regard he fell into such a reverie that he forgot about carving. Seeing him abstracted like that, Blonde decided to reprove him for it, and so she told him to hurry up and carve; but he did not hear her at once. Then she said again: "John, carve!" Are you asleep here, or are you daydreaming? Please give me something to eat, and don't dream anymore!" At this John heard her and jumped just like a man awakening with a start. He was astonished at what had happened. Much embarrassed, he seized his knife and meant to carve properly; but he

was so distracted by his thoughts that he cut into two of his fingers. The blood spurted from them and he got to his feet.<sup>20</sup> Blonde saw this and was greatly distressed. John asked another squire to carve before his lady,<sup>21</sup> then went off to his chamber, not at all himself. A damsel, sorry that he was hurt, bound up his fingers with a kerchief. Then he lay down. He did not dare return to where Blonde was being served, for fear of losing all his good sense and self-control. His heart swung this way and that.

Now John had a mark of Love; it was his first bit of gain. Pale and lying on his bed, he took to complaining of Love. "Oh, my!" he said. "How is it that I cannot keep my wits about me as I used to do? I see now that I was being foolish when I was twice corrected by my lady, for whom I was taken into service. And, God! Am I in her bad graces because I didn't serve her properly? I believe so. What good does it do me if my heart so dominates my eyes that they cannot keep from staring at her foolishly? Isn't her rank different from mine? Is it Love that has struck me? Love? No, it's Hate that my eyes have bestowed on me. My eyes! I am attacked by them, the eyes that ought to keep faith with me. Through their treason I shall shortly meet my death. For I've set my heart in such a place that, if I were to die for it, I should not let a word escape my mouth. And so I am affected by a poison that is perilous for me, a poison that can draw me so much that it kills me, and yet pleases me, and that I do not want ever to leave me. I'd rather die than renounce the pain I feel. If I must die for my lady, I do believe that God will put my soul in Paradise with the martyrs, for I shall be a martyr of Love. Alas! If only I had had enough self-control to be able to serve her, I ought well to have stopped at that. Am I not with her every day? Don't I have her company in play, in feasting, and in residence? What more do I want? Folly, surely. Fortune has a grudge against me and wants to bring me to such a pass that I lose what comfort I have, wants to make me die in misery. If the Countess or the Earl, or she whom I must serve, notices how it is with me, I shall not deserve their favor. They will consider me a silly dreamer and banish me at the rope's end. And I well know that they will not be able to do otherwise, for never did a man love as foolishly as I do. And I ought well to call myself foolish, loving in a sphere from which no good can come to me. If the King had no wife, he would gladly take my lady, for she will be Countess of Oxford. I shall never have anything worth what she will possess. And even if she had no treasure except for her beauty alone, still a realm would be too small for what she deserves. For I see that God has chosen to give her in one heap what others throughout the world have in moderation and measure. Nature never had anything to do with it; God Himself formed

her. She has the form of all beauty. It was for my misfortune that I saw her form thus formed, for it will be the death of me. Now there is nothing for it but to suffer as long as I can endure life. And when death comes, let it come! I can make no other bargain." This is the to-and-fro that John was in.

When those who were in the hall had eaten and then washed their hands, the ladies rose and went to sit in their chambers. But Blonde went to see John. She found him on his bed; but as soon as he saw her he quickly got to his feet. "John, are you badly hurt?" she said. "How is it with you?" "Truly, lady, yes," he said. "I don't know what happened to me. I have cut myself to the bone. But I don't care about this wound; I believe I have another illness, for I am quite downhearted. I couldn't eat yesterday or today. I feel such an oppression that I don't know what to do." "Indeed, John, I am sorry for it," said courteous Blonde. "Abstain from meat, and ask for whatever you want until you are well cured." "Lady," said John, "many thanks." Then he said to himself: "Lady, you carry away the key to my life and to my health, which has left me." But Blonde did not hear these words, for he kept them close behind his teeth.

Then she, the cause of his suffering, took leave and went from the chamber. Hurting in every limb, he escorted her with his look until she disappeared. And when the wall removed her from his sight, he fell unconscious on the bed. His lad, seeing this, believed him about to die. But by and by, from the bottom of his heart, John drew a sigh. Just then came ladies whom Blonde had sent, to see what they could do for him. They thought to serve him a well-prepared capon with expensive herbs in the broth; but he could not manage it, to their dismay. They promptly told Blonde that John could no longer eat. "Indeed," she said, "I can do nothing more. His illness distresses me very much, for he has served me wonderfully well." And John, mastered by Love, was day and night in such pain that he could no longer stay on his feet; he had to take to his bed altogether. Nothing he saw pleased him. Love assaulted him so cruelly that, now cold, now hot, dreaming at one moment and lamenting at another, he was obliged by Love to toss and turn repeatedly. He ate little, slept little, hoped little for comfort, thought little of his lot, believed he would win little of his undertaking, little believed he would achieve his desire. He could not take wine or food except when his lady ordered him to do so. As long as she was close to him, a bit of joy came to him; and when she went away, his joy turned to grief.

The Earl and the Countess heard reports of his distress and were much troubled. They went to see him and asked him what was the matter. But rather than telling them the truth about his malady, he simply said that his

heart was constricted by some disease or other that oppressed him greatly. The Earl sent for his physician and entreated him to take care of John and set him on the road to recovery. The master answered that he would do what he could to carry out his orders. Then promptly he felt John's pulse, then looked at his urine;<sup>22</sup> but he did not know, or guess, anything about his illness, and so he said that he was at a loss. Thereupon those who were anxious about John went away, and he remained on his bed, where he had little pleasure. He was in this plight for five weeks. He suffered so much that he was nothing but skin and bones; he could scarcely form his words any longer. He expected only death, not that he thought to have any comfort from it.

Blonde, seeing him at such a point, wondered what it could mean that no physician knew how to cure him. One day she remembered the look for which she had considered him a dreamer, the day he had cut his fingers when she checked him in his reverie. After that she noticed that when she came near him he looked at her so gladly that he took notice of nothing else. For this, had she known anything about love, she would have recognized his malady. She did have an inkling that he had formed an attachment to her; but she did not believe that anyone could suffer such distress because of love, and so she became very curious about his affliction. One day she came alone to see him and to sit on the edge of his bed; and with what strength he had he heartily welcomed her. "John," she said, "good friend, tell me what has put you in such a state. I want to know; do tell me. By the faith that you owe me I beg you not to conceal it. Tell me boldly, for I pledge to you loyally that if I can seek out a cure for you, you will not be ill any longer."

When John heard her declare that she would search for a remedy for him if she had the power, a little strength returned to him, for he believed that she could heal him if it pleased her. But he had such fear of failing that he dared not take the leap toward speech, but said: "Many thanks, dear lady! Your words are very sweet to me. But I see no way that I am to be cured of this sickness, and I lack the boldness or the sense to say a word about the medicine that would put an end to this bedridden state of mine. Nevertheless there *is* medicine. If it pleased a certain person that she might wish to save me, she might well bring me out of this illness; but I shall never dare to tell her. I shall die through foolishness." "John, good friend, you will not. You will reveal to me what the matter is. I have never before entreated anything of you; now I entreat this for your own good. Tell me your malady, and I swear to you upon my life that if I know what is afflicting you I shall exert myself to heal you." "Will you, lady?" "Yes, truly. Now speak straightforwardly."

“Lady, I do not dare.” “Yes, you will, indeed. Once and for all, I wish to know it.” “Do you wish that, lady? And so you will know—it is through you that I am stricken.”

No sooner had he said this than he fainted on the spot and remained unconscious for a long time. Now Blonde knew the reason for his illness and distress. She understood that if in her words she showed disdain for what he had told her, he would die rather than recover. And so she began to think how he might be saved. She held him between her lovely hands until he awoke from his faint and began to sigh. He would have approached death if he had waited a little longer for her to give some answer. But she said to him: “Friend! Since it is because of me that you are put in such danger, danger of death, I want to give you comfort. But now be sensible and think about getting better! For as soon as you are cured, know that you will be my good friend.”<sup>23</sup> “Shall I, lady? Are you speaking the truth?” “Yes, friend, be sure of it.” “Indeed, lady, then I shall be cured. No other illness had touched me.” “Then eat, my dear friend! Let your heart be set at rest!” “Lady, I shall do as you wish. Since it pleases you, I shall eat.” Thereupon Blonde went away, but returned quite soon. She had food brought to him, and John took to eating again.

After John had heard the comforting words that had turned death away, in a short time he was on the mend. The Earl was not at all sorry at this; the Countess and the other members of the household were extremely happy. And Blonde, by treating him kindly, speeded his healing. Within eight days<sup>24</sup> he was up, though he had been much affected; the hope of having a sweetheart made him promptly recover. As soon as he could get about he took to carving before his lady; and she comforted him so much (without his obtaining any more from her) that she restored him to full health. The lovely Blonde did all this because she did not want him to lose his life on her account. But when she saw him in health again she said no more about it. She believed that she had brought him to such a state that henceforth he might keep well; and so she dropped the subject, not wanting to be considered foolish. She was not yet touched by love.

When John had served her for a month and saw that she was silent and did not care to speak of love, he was at a loss. He wept, he sighed profoundly, he did not know what to say or to do, or how to understand his situation. “Alas!” he said. “Does my lady forget the promise that she made to me in my illness? Didn’t she say that she would be my sweetheart if I recovered? Yes, indeed, and from that joy recovery came to me. I don’t know whether or not it was a deception, for she is keeping her promise badly.

Perhaps she regrets it, or perhaps she said it so that my health might return, believing that if it did I should be at peace. This is no good; I'm in such a state that I must know, once and for all, whether I'll be able to have her love. It is not right that *she* should ask *me* about it. Perhaps she holds me in contempt because I don't dare to speak of it. I want to go straight to her to ask for what she promised me." With that he went out from his chamber to where he observed her in a meadow, making a chaplet. John came up to her and wished her good day. She answered briefly: May God give him good fortune! With that they both fell silent. John was so abashed before her that he was afraid to utter a word, yet he considered himself a fool. He thought he would ask her, straight out, whether she would keep her promise to him. He opened his mouth to say this, then closed it again, for in this matter all true lovers are cowards. Nevertheless in the end there escaped from his mouth one phrase, full of sighs. "Lady," he said, "a promise—do you remember it?—one that you made to me in my illness, one by which you brought me back to health?" "Yes, John, very well indeed, but I made it for your own good. You were dying through foolishness; now don't go back to that! My intention was to cure you; that is why I restored you to health, for you were out of your right mind. Now keep your wits better! If you take pains to serve me, you may be in a fair way to improve your position. But now do not on any account imagine from now on that I am to give you my love; I'd be lowering myself too much."

What John heard nearly broke his heart. Weeping, he said this much: "Lady, I knew very well that I was in no way suitable for you, and so if it hadn't been for your prompting, no word would have been uttered; I'd rather have died, and that would have been the end of my aspiration. Now I am back at the beginning. I don't at all wish to dispute with you; and as to giving and refusing, as to everything, I offer you great thanks. Truly, I prefer to die for you than to have comfort from any other woman. I wish to say nothing more except that I shall be in worse martyrdom before eight days have passed than I was earlier in twenty-eight. For the relapse is worse than the first affliction." After these words, he departed in tears, and Blonde went off in another direction.

John returned to his chamber. All his limbs were trembling so hard that he had to go straight to bed. He could neither eat nor drink, but grieved and felt sorry for himself. When he was not overheard he kept lamenting, saying: "Alas! Why did she cure me, only to hurt me again? And how did I ever believe that she would tell me the truth? If she had consulted me about it I am sure I should not have advised her to debase herself so far as to bestow

her love in such a place. Death, now come soon! For I see well that I am wasting my time, when the promise that restored my health is broken. She made me a pledge without fulfilling it; this is how a person may comfort a madman. Now there is nothing for it except to die, since living gives me pain. I am quite in despair; I no longer hope for anything good. Ah, me! Eyes, you have betrayed me and attacked me with such a love that I shall know death. Ah, Love! When you wish to consent to the death of your follower, your worth is the less, by Saint Amant!”<sup>25</sup>

Thus John relapsed. His heart was so affected that he cared for nothing. He could not eat; and whatever might happen, Love stormed him so hard that night and day sleep was impossible. The Earl, hearing of this, was displeased, but he could do nothing about it. The Countess gave orders to serve John so well that he would lack nothing. But he was easy to serve, for his eating was very limited. His trouble so mastered him and afflicted him that he became unable to speak. The news that John was dying spread throughout the household. His lad wrung his hands over it, as did the personnel of the house, who were very fond of him. At this point Blonde, in bed, heard John’s lad cry out, lamenting his master. No one ever made greater mourning. Blonde called a maid. “What is it that I hear?” she said. “Lady, it is Robin who is wringing his hands because John is dying. Already he has lost the power of speech.” Hearing this, Blonde was dismayed, for privately she knew very well what his mortal illness was and why he had it. She was aware that she could have given him encouragement, to forestall death; if there had been that much pity in her she would have cured him of this illness. Now she began to be remorseful.

Just as soon as Love felt that Blonde was at all amenable to her, she assembled all her power, great and strong, and then came to assail Blonde from all sides. These are the powers that came with Love.<sup>26</sup> First arrived Pity, which stabbed Blonde to the heart, for it greatly hated that Pride of hers that was causing the death of the one who was true toward Love. Therefore it stuck her so forcefully that it brought down all her Pride, so that it never arose in her again. After Pity came Generosity, which in turn assailed her and stirred her up, shaking and constricting her so much that it planted itself in the very place where Hardness of Heart used to be, before it fled the field. After Generosity came Reason, which held her in a tight grip because of the Unreason she was committing in letting a faithful lover die through her fault. But Reason showed her so many reasons that she no longer agreed with Unreason but wholly sided with Reason. Thus Unreason departed and Reason set itself in its place. Reason was followed by Remonstrance, which

showed the grievousness of killing a man wrongfully; this Remonstrance bit her hard. Finally came Love herself, reproaching Blonde about the unseemliness and ugliness of what had been done to Love's servant. But Love would be avenged for this if she could. Striking Blonde with all her power, she brought down Hatred and False Promise and Quarreling. They fled, driven away by Love, which took their place.

Now Blonde was well unbound from that which had bound her. She was bound with new bonds, by which her pride was brought down. When she felt herself to be thus caught, she could only lament, and said: "John, my very dear friend, I am the one who has brought you to death through great presumption, through pride and vanity. You have been my lover, and I your hater, so that as a result you are to die. Alas! It is useless for me to think of curing you, for the time has passed. I myself have brewed the misery that I shall always have, for it is I who have hurt you. I am your murderer. How empty of reason I am! Alas! How have I killed the one who loved me more than himself? Alas! Truly, I did not imagine when I had restored him by my words that later he would relapse. I see now that I could not better betray him, or myself, for the person who does not keep his promises dishonors himself. I made him a promise and did nothing further; by doing so I sent him back to death. To death? God! Will he die, then? No misadventure such as mine would be, ever happened to a woman, for I believe that I should die after him. It would serve me right; for the spark that touched his heart, the one that will be the end of him, came from me. And the woman or man who kills another is killed in turn through judgment. Thus I am guilty of his death. Evil, changeable wealth, it is you that I must hate above all things! You have contributed to my betrayal; if it were not for you, my heart would not have been too proud to help him. My wealth has harmed both him and me. When my dear friend came to me to ask whether he could have my love, I answered him only with pride. I used to be full of it. But God never wished to suffer pride to last long, and so He has brought down my own and struck my heart with pity. But if pity had seized me sooner it would have been a great courtesy, for I'd still have been able to aid the one who needed it.

"Now I see that women have a custom, a very disagreeable one: when they can possess something good they do not wish to take it, but give it so long a leash that the good thing entirely passes them by; and then when it has gone they are very sorry for not keeping it. So it is with me. For if I had kept John as my faithful lover I should not now be having so much pain. Isn't he good-looking, and a nobleman? Because he was not so noble a man as I am a woman, I have killed him. Truly, I have done him great wrong, for if he

were king of two or three realms and I were as poor a woman as any in this kingdom, I believe that he would make me queen. So it is wrong of me to harbor hatred. Hatred! Do I hate him at all? No, truly, I am his friend. His friend? I have showed it badly, by consenting to his death. Consenting? My very dear friend John, why have I given you so much suffering? Aren't you the most handsome, the most agile, the quickest, the best-serving and most sensible man who ever issued from our lineages? Yes, indeed, that is my opinion—but I come to it too late. Now there is only one thing to do: I must know whether my power can cure you; and if it cannot, in the end I shall want to die for you."

Thus Love mastered Blonde, her frame of mind much changed from what it had been on the previous morning. Weeping, sighing, empty-hearted, she was so oppressed by Love in her bed that she got up quietly and dressed in an ermine cape. In the palace at that hour there was no lady or maid who was not asleep. With no further delay Blonde slipped out of her chamber and entered the one where John was lying. A lamp with a glass shade gave her a little light.

There was no one there but Robin, who rose when he saw his lady coming and greeted her. He had perceived love in John's complaints, and knew that all his suffering came from nothing else. Blonde called him by name and asked him about his master's condition and what his illness could be. "Lady," he said, "you know very well; you have asked me to no purpose. You know the death that is touching him. I fear that God will reproach you for it. Nevertheless I can tell you this: he has never told me of his martyrdom; but I well understand from his sighs that for your love he will be a martyr, for he is already so hard pressed that he is near death." Then he wept, and she turned away, going to John's bed. She sat on the edge of it and put her hand on his forehead and then on his pulse to feel his veins, which were scarcely throbbing any longer. His eyes were closed, his body rigid, his flesh cold in many places. Over his heart there was a little warmth, which kept it alive. When she felt him to be in such a state, such grief stabbed her in the heart that she could barely say: "Friend, I am the one who has brought you to this through my pride; but because I want to make amends for the misdeed that I have done you without reason, I come here to see you at this hour. But speak to me quickly!" John heard her, but had lost the power of speech. His suffering had brought him down so much that he could not answer her immediately. His silence so distressed Blonde that she fell fainting on the bed, her head on John's chest. By this she caused him much affliction; he well understood how it was with her but was unable to utter a single word.

Gladly, if he had been able, he would have spoken to his friend; but he could not do it yet, not yet. Thereby he broke her heart; for when she came to herself, more than five hundred times she called herself a miserable wretch, the most pitiable thing alive. In anguish she grieved, saying: "Alas! Alas! Poor me! What can I say or do, when I see the one who was my faithful lover drawing toward death? Ah! Wicked, disloyal heart! I can blame nothing else but you. You committed great villainy when you refused to retain your faithful friend in your household! You made me very unfaithful when you denied him my love! It was a bad day for me when I told him that he would not have a jot of it. Now, heart, I well know that you would wish this matter might be done over again, but you will not have your wish, no more than he can have his. When he wanted you, you did not want him, and so you gave him anguish. Now you want him, but in vain; you will have nothing of what you want. He is dead through your refusal. You must suffer such a martyrdom for him as he has done for you. So you will, by the faith I owe you! You will die for it, I hope. A curse on Death if it lets you live after him the space of a week! Even this would be a long delay."

Blonde mourned so much that never in all the world did a woman come closer to dying out of love. Before she left off she thrice lost pulse and breath because of her pain, so that I believe she would have died there if it had not been for Robin. He kept fanning her with a kerchief and supporting her head when she was sinking to the floor. (Later, Robin had good land because of this.) John well heard his friend, who grieved unrestrainedly, and understood from her lament that she was not false or insincere. Although he was still so ill, his heart was a little better for it. He gave a sigh and opened his eyes. Blonde, perceiving this, fell silent and drew close to him and gave him a remedy that restored his speech. Sick as he was, she kissed him with her charming mouth. This kiss brought such sweetness to John's heart and strengthened it so greatly that speech returned to him, and he said: "Many thanks, sweet lady. You have put my soul back into my body, my soul that because of you is so stricken that it's a wonder it is not extinguished."

"My very dear friend," Blonde replied, "Will you ever be able to return to health, understanding that all the days of my life I shall want to be your faithful friend?" "Sweet lady, truly I don't know. You have put me to so harsh a test that recovery will be difficult. Nevertheless I think your power so great that, if it pleases you, I believe this illness will leave me. But for pity's sake, if I can recover, do not again send me toward death! Nevertheless, according to your will I wish to rejoice or suffer." "Dear friend, do not fear suffering. From this moment I am yours. By this kiss that I give you I make

of myself a gift to you forever—in the way that you will hear: you will not enjoy my body except for embracing and kissing. That far I am willing to gratify you; but you will gain nothing else until we shall be able to be joined in marriage. You must agree to this.” John was not discouraged by such words, but said: “Many thanks! Lady, many thanks for this! My heart would be much at fault if I asked for more. Unless another man is to have you, I shall have to await the proper moment.” “Dearest friend, have no fear, for I give myself to you so entirely that no other man, ever, by any means will have either my body or my heart. Set your mind at ease.” At this word she kissed him tenderly.<sup>27</sup> This took away much of John’s distress. Her sweet breath comforted him so gently that it drove away Despair and filled him with Sweet Hope. Removing all pain from his heart, Hope lodged close to it a guest called True Comfort. By this sweet guest, Discomfiture, Sad Thought, and Despair were all cast out of John’s heart and True Comfort took their place. After this Blonde said: “My dear, you must take to eating to restore your health.” “Lady, at your order.” Thereupon, quickly Robin and his lady spread out a tablecloth. Blonde gave him a cold chicken accompanied by juice from green grapes. Nor did she let Robin touch it, but with her lovely hands she served him, and so he was well all the sooner. And John, who needed it, took to eating gladly.

When he had consumed as much of the chicken as pleased his beloved, she removed the cloth, and through the night she stayed with him. To bring him quickly back to health she wished to be there until daybreak; but then she had to leave. She said: “John, very dear friend, because of the light that has come in here I must leave you; for if anyone passed this way and perceived how it is with us, we could have difficulties. I agree to concealing our love, for in good concealment is great sense, and we obtain a good advantage in hiding our feelings carefully. For as soon as you are up you will be with me very often. By reason of being in my service you can frequently be in my company and so, at our pleasure, we shall be able to grant to each other what it pleases us to do and no living soul will know it. And when we see our moment we shall go further. Concerning what I have promised you, never fear about it, but now concentrate on getting well and do not be downcast anymore. I shall often come back to see you; I shall keep away as little as I can.” “Lady,” John said, “I willingly accept your wish and your words.”

At that Blonde left him. She kissed him gently at parting, then got up from beside him, leaving him in far less distress than when she arrived. She returned to the bed from which she had been roused by Love, who had troubled her so much. Quite naked she got into bed again<sup>28</sup> and, full of joy, fell

asleep. And John was for his part transported with happiness. Not having slept for eight days, he had been deprived of rest. But now he took to repose, and the comfort that had been restored to him hastened his recovery. When he awoke at terce his meal was ready. He was served by two damsels, both delighted to see that he ate well and seemed a good deal better than usual, for they had believed that when they arrived they would find him dead. Now they saw him comfortable and seemingly in good spirits except for being weak. At this change they were extremely glad and served him eagerly.

The news did not wait; it soon spread throughout the house that John was over his sickness. Then the Earl set forth, and the Countess and her maids, of whom she had many lovely ones. But all the beauties in the world were worth nothing beside that of Blonde, who went off with her mother and added her beauty to that of the group. The whole household went to see John, whom they all liked, in order to know whether it was true that he had recovered. They found him sitting up in bed. Courteously, together, the Earl and the Countess spoke to him. "John," they said, "how is it with you? Do you think that this illness is leaving you?" "Sir, yes," he said, "if it pleases God. The illness has turned away from me; I have been restored to health." All those who cared about him were very happy at this answer, for on the previous evening no one had believed that he would ever again utter a word. Blonde, seeing him on the mend, was much relieved. When they had stayed there for a while they took leave of John and left the chamber. John remained in his bed, where he would not stay much henceforth.

Evening and morning Love showed John the kind of game she plays with her own. He had many bad and many good things from it: the bad ones through fear of failing, the good ones through hope of possessing what Love made him desire so much that he could not live without it. After his beloved's change of heart, healing continued apace, for Blonde many times assured him of what she had promised. She would often return to see him, alone. And by night, for fear of tale bearers who stir up all kinds of trouble, she would come to visit John and cheer and entertain him. She came and went so much that John returned to health, and even better health than he ever had before. Tired of lying abed, he got up and resumed his duties, which he would not exchange for anything. At meals he served before his sweetheart, and gladly. The Earl and all members of the household were happy when they saw that he was himself again; and he served them well, earning their goodwill by it. And he was so good-looking, so well bred, and so affable, that everyone honored and congratulated him. His beloved felt

great joy, seeing that he made himself agreeable to all, both nobles and commoners; this caused the love of him to grow in her heart. Never afterward did she have second thoughts about loving him; she consented fully to her lover's will.

They were both filled with a sense of well-being when they could steal away from the others and be together; no one could believe the sweetness of it. When the others (whose notice they meant to avoid) were asleep in the palace, the lovers did not much miss their own sleep, for then they had both place and time to snatch their moments of happiness. It was then that Love united them; then they would kiss and embrace and speak tenderly to each other. Blonde called him "sweet friend," the name she had given him, and he called her "sweet lady." After these terms of endearment they would kiss each other. They took pleasure in all the games of Love, except one that Faithfulness disdains; this, they postponed until such time as, legitimately, they would achieve what they desired. (Many lovers are betrayed by impatience; they do not restrain themselves until the right moment and so their love goes badly, for at the same time they are ensnared by lust and detected through pregnancy. For anyone who is filled with foolish haste spoils his enjoyment.<sup>29</sup> What these two lovers did, they enjoyed; so pleasant to them were kissing, embracing and touching, talking, loving actions, and the gratification that they had together, arm in arm, that they consoled themselves as to the rest and conducted themselves in hope. When the time and place would come, and if in love there are other games than those I have mentioned, they would discover them.)

Circumstances regulate behavior.<sup>30</sup> Their love was not so safe that they did not need to keep a very careful watch; for if they were detected, they would be cruelly betrayed. If the Earl knew of their situation they would soon have a great deal of trouble; and so they had to be wary so that no one might perceive from their behavior the love that had taken form in their hearts without ever being deformed. It was fitting that they should conceal all signs of love; and so, very wisely, they did. When they had their private moments they did not worry about anyone arriving except for Robin, who always served them faithfully and well. (And no harm came to him for that; he knew well how to conceal their feelings, and from this he afterward had great advantages.) And the lovers, on most nights, had their delight together. They had all the more opportunity for this because everyone knew that John was obliged to serve her. For this reason he could better approach her and speak to her in all circumstances. They often played at backgammon and at other enjoyable games. But when people had gone away and they remained

alone, they rushed to embrace each other and to savor the exchange of kisses. When they could gratify themselves with embracing and kissing, life was sweet for them, and joy softened their hearts. Often they held each other entwined closely in their arms; and then when they brought their faces together it really seemed to each of them that they made an exchange of hearts. With John's heart Love enriched Blonde, who was his true friend. Yet Love did not leave her own heart to her but carried it back to John, who very gladly relinquished his own heart, since he had her own in *his* keeping. And if anyone asks how they could make exchange of their hearts, I shall tell you. I call "their hearts" their wills; and their wills were so grafted onto a common desire that of two hearts they made one will; for he wanted nothing that she did not want, and she wanted nothing that displeased him. They were both of one desire, and thus they could exchange their hearts; and if anyone understood this differently, he would not grasp the truth.

Thus they led a pleasant life, each striving to give the other greater joy. They played at love's rivalry and had much of what afforded them pleasure. For two years they carried on so, without ever being detected. But the life they had was offensive to Fortune, who is cruel toward many people; and she employed all her power, being envious and malevolent, to take away their contentment and plunge them into distress. (But they both kept themselves so firmly in one single will that, in spite of her blows, Fortune could not bring them down.) Now you will hear what befell them and what news came to them.

One day when they were sitting at the table there appeared a messenger who came before the Earl and in French began his tale. "Sir," he said, "I have been searching for a young man who, I have been told, is staying with your daughter. This young man's name is John. I bring him news; it is on this errand that I arrived from the sea at the port. If you please, have him sent for so that I can speak to him." The Earl answered: "Gladly." A squire went and found him serving in front of Blonde.<sup>31</sup> "John," he said, "I come looking for you. A messenger from your land is asking the Earl about you. Come now, and you will hear his tale." Hearing this, John greatly feared losing Blonde. He went to the Earl. When the messenger saw him, he promptly recognized him. "John," he said, "I am sent to you by your father—may God give him greater joy than he had when I left! He was ill when I set out to come here, I tell you truly. His physicians were saying that he was in peril of death. I left your two sisters and your three brothers in much distress. For it is another hard piece of news, and one which I regret, that I bring you: your mother is dead. And so the members of your

family send word that you are to come away immediately, or else it will go badly for you. You are obliged to do homage to the King for the land of Dammartin.<sup>32</sup> You must leave tomorrow morning.”

When John had heard these unwelcome tidings, he went out weeping. Many people took note of the messenger from France. From the top to the bottom of the palace ran the news he had brought; each one told it to the next. It circulated until it reached Blonde, who was sorry on her lover’s account. The Earl was very concerned, and also the Countess, be sure of it, and all the others of the household, for they understood that there was no question henceforth of his remaining. And John, to mourn, went into his chamber. All his limbs ached for anguish, and propping himself on his elbow in bed he gave himself over to lamentation. He grieved deeply for the death of his mother and for his father’s illness; but this was as dewdrops compared with the sorrow for the coming separation from his sweet friend. He was overtaken by such a set of trembling fears of losing her that he did not know how to comfort himself. He said: “Alas! Alas! what can I do? Now joy is at an end, when I must part from the one I cannot live without. Part? Alas! Is it certain? I’m speaking plain nonsense. If I parted from her, I know that within eight days I should die. Before I returned to my country, I’d be dead of grief. Therefore, if I love my life, I must not part from her. And so here I must remain. Remain? I haven’t the power to do it; remaining is out of the question. What would they say, the people here, the Earl and the others of the household, who have heard the news? They would perceive how it is with me; for this they would perhaps put me to death, and my lady would be shamed. Alas! Therefore I shall not stay. It is better for me to die alone than that we both be put to shame. Staying or leaving—I don’t know how to choose the better way, for I’ll be destroyed if I go and ill-treated if I stay. Fortune, you did great wrong when you set me in so high a place only to make me descend so soon. You have turned my gold to ashes. . . .<sup>33</sup> From joy and gladness you have thrust me into such despair that I have no more hope of any good. Joy cannot return to me if my lady does not show me the way. Ah! God, when shall I speak with her? This day is so distressful to me; I cannot talk to her before night, when they will all be asleep in here. Tonight I must ask her advice about my predicament. She must counsel me if she wants me to go on living. There is nothing for it; I must hold out until it is night.”

Into such suffering and lamentation John had fallen in a brief time. But the Earl wanted to comfort him; the Countess came to cheer him up, and also her daughter. John’s grief pierced Blonde’s heart, but she dared not give

any sign of it for fear that someone might guess how it was with her. And her father commiserated with John on his mother's death. He supposed that no other trouble touched him; but John was sickened by a poison. Nevertheless as best he could he had to comfort the others. He perceived from his friend's looks that she was troubled in her heart. If for John the night was slow in coming, Blonde did not believe that the hour would ever come when she could speak to him alone. At last the day passed; the night came. There being nothing else to do, they all went to bed throughout the palace. There remained neither woman nor man who was not sleeping the first sleep except for John and Blonde.

When they were sure that all the others were asleep, they got up, both he and she, without making any disturbance. John came to his young lady, who was familiar with all the arrangements. Wisely: they did not stay indoors, lest someone overhear them, but went into an orchard where there were many lovely pear trees. The weather was mild, as it is in summer. There was a good deal of light, for the clear moon shone on them, a pleasing sight. John and Blonde stopped under the most beautiful pear tree in the world. They sat down, both weeping, for their hearts were full of distress. Mouth to mouth they leaned on their elbows, arms around each other's waists. Before they could speak they had to satisfy each other with five hundred delicious kisses, an occupation that seemed very sweet to them. There did not remain eye or face that the mouth did not trace; but their sweet faces were wet from the tears they were shedding. At last John spoke to Blonde, saying:

"Sweet lady, from you comes the life that sustains my heart, without your will I cannot live nor do I wish to; from your graciousness all health came to me, with such great comfort and joy that I could not begin to tell of it—what can I do or say about the suffering, the martyrdom I have at this parting? You have heard the news that I must go to my own country. Alas! News that disconcerts me so much that I don't know what to do. I must find counsel in you or I am destroyed. For I have indeed lost everything at one stroke if it does not please you to find some means by which I can take comfort again. Remaining here is perilous, and for me leaving is too cruel; I cannot decide either on going or on staying. If counsel does not come from you, my heart must prepare for death."

"My dearest friend," Blonde answered, "it is every bit as cruel to me, the news of this parting, as it is to you, so help me God! For I have given you my heart so entirely that, as long as I live, in no way will another man possess it.<sup>34</sup> This separation that I see we must make is so grievous to me that no one would believe how miserable I am. If you are distressed about me, I am also

about you; for, so dear God help me! If you have given your heart to me, you for your part are my true beloved; and I have showed you signs of this in promises, in words, in acts. And I shall do still more, for because of your love I shall leave everything behind and cross the sea for your sake. I see clearly that our union cannot be possible in any other way. And if you should stay here longer you would shame me and yourself also. Now I shall tell you what I have thought of, a plan for solving our problems and helping us bear our sadness. You will go away to your land to pursue and win your advancement. But I want to fix you a term—one for which I shall shed many tears because it will seem far off to me. And since I do not know what will happen to you, I want to stipulate such a term that you will have the opportunity to do all that you must. Now do not fail, for any hardship, to return here at dusk one year from this night and be sure to bring along a palfrey that does not whinny from fright, and on it a saddle for riding, a lady's saddle. And do remember, when you are about to come to me, that we are to have quick passage to the sea so that we do not stop on the shore; for we'd soon have trouble if we were followed there. And be sure that, just at nightfall, you will find me under this pear tree. But come from outside the town, so that no one may notice this stratagem. At the bottom of the garden is a gate that will be open if I can manage it; by that gate you will be able to get in here. Then there will be no question of staying; I shall go to France with you and never part from you afterward. Be sure to retain all this so that you can be here on that day, for after it I couldn't be certain about this way of proceeding. I still fear a long term. My heart suspects that the Earl will want to give me in marriage; but I love you so much that before the day I have fixed no one will take possession of me. But now think about setting to work as I have said, if you want to deal with love."

"Lady," said John, "many thanks. I understand you very well. Please God, I shall do just as you say; I'll neglect it on no account. Still the term you propose seems to me very far off. If I could be a dove every time I wished, I'd be with you very often<sup>35</sup>—but this cannot be; our next meeting must happen otherwise. My failing to come on the day you have specified would be a bitter torment, for that will be the day of true comfort. Overstaying it would be the death of me." After such words the two lovers kissed each other so sweetly that a hundred times seemed to them only one. They were out there under the moon until they perceived the coming of dawn, and there could be no tarrying. They felt greatly disappointed. "Ah! God!" said John, "what misery! The night has been so short! Now we must think of other things; we must return to the palace." "You have spoken very truly, my

dear; we cannot stay here any longer." Their hearts were tender with sorrow when they came to the point of leave-taking. John said: "Adieu, my dear." His eyes were scarcely smiling, but were filled with tears; and so it was with Blonde. Weeping thus they returned, holding each other by both hands until they came back to the gate through which they had come. Now walking together was out of the question; and so they exchanged kisses and commended each other to God.

Thereupon they separated. They returned to their own beds and lay down for appearance's sake, without any hope of sleeping. They had plenty of other concerns, with what Love represented to them. The day appeared; the sun rose. John, however reluctantly, put on his clothes and boots and got ready. Attentive to serve him, Robin had already put on his saddle. And the Earl, who greatly liked and esteemed John, got up, for he knew of his departure and very much regretted it. Knowing that entreaty was useless, he did well in one regard: he had had two palfreys laden with silver coins, fine and large palfreys, and had them given to John. And then he came to speak to him and make him free of his power. "John," he said, "if you come back from France to England, you will be seneschal of my land, and complete master of my household, for your ways please me very much. I turn over to you whatever is mine and grant you the power to take it." "Sir," said John, "many thanks. I receive such words with goodwill. If it pleases God, in time I shall return and take more of what is yours." "Truly," said the Earl, "this pleases me well!" (He did not understand what it was that John meant by this; but he would come to know it.)

At that John took leave of the Earl. Then, before mounting, he went to take leave of the Countess. If I wished to attend to everything, to relate how he took leave of each one, I shouldn't finish if I spent all day at it. Still I don't want to be silent concerning one person, one who was grieved by John's setting forth. Blonde did not hide her feelings so well that people could not perceive her sadness at his departure; but everyone believed that it was because he was in her service. (And so he was without a doubt, and would be, wherever he might go.) Blonde gave him jewels: belts, clasps, and rings, which he would give to his friends. Then, weeping, he said farewell. His horse awaited him at the steps; there he went and mounted and was off. But his heart remained behind, much grieved at this journey. Robin led away one sumpter, and another was led by the messenger who had told John the unwelcome news. Thereupon they went their way until they emerged from Oxford. Blonde stayed in the palace, much downcast because of John's leave-taking. (She would fear losing him before she

could ever hold him; and he would fear failing before he could ever claim her.) Now for a time we shall leave off telling you of Blonde, and shall speak of John.

After John had left Oxford he passed swiftly through mountains and valleys, and forests long and wide, until he came to Dover. He dismounted at a lodging but did not make a long stay there, for the next day just at daybreak they embarked in a ship. Before noon they arrived at Wissant. Having no reason to remain there, they kept on riding at an amble for some days until one evening they came to Dammartin. John dismounted at the manor house where his father was still lying a-bed. The news that John had arrived was quickly announced. His brothers went to meet him and welcome him heartily. Similarly the two damsels, his sisters, who were very lovely, rejoiced over their brother. But John wept for his father, who lay gravely ill. There was to be no recovery, but he was still capable of speech; and John proved his sense of duty toward him by having him make such legacies that his soul was in true peace.<sup>36</sup> But before he passed away to death he questioned his son about his situation, and John told him something of it. He did indeed inform him that he believed he would gain a large part of what he desired across the sea, in England.

When his father heard this, he gave thanks for it to the true God. Then he charged him with his will, concerning which John acted loyally in the division with his brothers. After this the father lived only briefly before passing from this mortal world. Grief for him wore John out; his sisters and his three brothers also lamented their father. He was buried without delay when the high mass had been sung. The children returned home; all the neighbors comforted them, and also their relatives, who were there; for the family had the highest lineage that was known in that region. They all mourned until they had to attend to other things. (From mourning nothing can be obtained except grief and mischance. The way of the world is such that all die, the one and the other. The one must therefore not mock the other. Long ago it was said, it seems to me: the dead with the dead, the living with the living.<sup>37</sup> As long as each person can live, let him do the best he can, and let him keep himself in such faithfulness that for his soul's sake he may come to a good end!)

Once his father was dead, John had to take hold of himself. On his friends' advice he went off to the King at Paris, for the homage that he had to do him. The King inquired about his situation. From what he learned about it he thought well of John and proclaimed him free of his relief. If John had been minded to serve him, the King would have retained him gladly; but

John's thoughts were on another matter. Nevertheless he exerted himself to place with the King his three brothers, handsome and well behaved. (They served him gladly until he later made them knights and gave them wives and land. Thus everyone should seek his own good.)

After John had seen to all this, with the King's leave he departed from him and also from the Queen, who would gladly have retained his two sisters if he had wished. This, though, did not suit him; he wanted to keep them with him. He also thought that, if he could have his sweet friend at Dammartin, they would keep her company. He returned to Dammartin, but made a very short stay there. Instead, he went riding about the region, going everywhere to see his friends; and to establish good relations he went to keep company with the best. He took them with him to Dammartin and went to great lengths to honor them. Although he had brought back a good deal of money from England, he had soon spent it. He paid his father's debts and satisfied all his creditors. His sisters kept his household so well that there was none such in the region; and he strove as much as he could to have his neighbors' friendship. He did so much by manner and good sense that from the sea to Sens there was no squire better loved or more esteemed for goodness.

But whatever life he led, love still remained in his heart. Don't think that he forgot the day he had fixed with his beloved. All that year there were not three days that did not to him seem a month. Never before had he known so long a year; awaiting its end gave him great distress. But nevertheless with much difficulty he let elapse so many weeks that at last it was time to leave. And so John saw to the readying of a palfrey that ambled so well, in all the world there was nothing like him. One morning something he had ordered arrived from Paris: a sidesaddle with short hangings, padded with cotton, and a rich bridle of silk. No one knew what he meant to do with them except Robin, who knew how matters stood; but he was so discreet about his master's doings that he betrayed him to no one. When John had everything needful he awaited the coming of the day when it would be time to set out. He knew well how long it would take him to get to his beloved. But now we shall leave off telling you about him and shall turn to Blonde, who was innocent of false love.

Here the tale relates that not long after John had departed, so strong a fever took hold of the Countess of Oxford that she passed away from the world. The Earl wore himself out with mourning. Blonde, very much affected, was more overcome than all the others. The Countess was laid in the earth in her proper place, as was suitable for such a lady. After her death the Earl of Gloucester made inquiries about the mind and manners of the lovely and

courteous Blonde, for he regretted not having asked for her long since. This Earl was lord of much land, a third of it in England. He came to the Earl of Oxford and talked to him until a day was fixed for him to be betrothed to Blonde—before John was to return! Lovely Blonde soon learned of this and had much heartache from it, for she had set her intentions elsewhere. And so she was far from pleased by what many people were saying, who in their talk were giving her a man for whom she did not care in the slightest. She did not at all have such a heart as many women in the world have, whose feelings keep shifting as the weathercock turns with the wind. Such women are called “Trust-her-not.” Blonde did not wish to be one of them.

Her father came to her one day and said: “Daughter, soon you will be Countess of Gloucester, if it pleases you to be so. I have set the day of the betrothal; now let us set the wedding day.” He really believed that this news would be agreeable to his daughter. And it was so bitter to her that she answered: “Sir, for God’s sake, let be! I do not wish to marry now. For God’s sake, I ask you for a postponement.” Her father, irritated, told her that she would have a husband, and without any long delay. Thereupon he left without saying anything more; and Blonde remained in grief and distress, for fear of losing John.

“Alas!” she said. “Dear friend, what a miserable state you will be in when you learn that another man will have me! Have me? Indeed, he will not! I am quite disconcerted and at odds with true love when I said just now that someone else would have me. So help me God! That one who wants me would empty the sea before he could have my company. And how can I get out of it? I see my father besotted with the idea; he wants me to take that man in marriage. He left me in indignation because I even asked for a delay. Now I well see that good thinking is called for, if I want to save my true friend from death. Isn’t he to come for me and carry me away from this land with my consent? I’d be killing kill him intentionally if I gave myself to anyone else. If this man here has more money and more land than the one who is to come for me, shall I then let my friend die of grief as his reward? Indeed not! For no treasure is as good as a good body, and there cannot be a happier life than that of lover and sweetheart. Therefore I’d make a bad bargain if I lost a handsomer and better man, and also true love, for wealth. I will not change my situation, not for any coercion that anyone might use against me. I haven’t got the power, and I don’t want to! I suffer at the very thought of it. If John were dressed in sackcloth and this man in the richest fabric that could be made, of gold thread, my friend would still be more handsome. In him I see nothing to blame, no reason why I should not love him. He is

sensible, good-looking, and courteous—and a nobleman, a French one. His French speech is worth more than Gloucester's riches. The joy of holding him in my arms outweighs the county of Gloucestershire. I know this much of John and of his nature: I cannot have a better man. What do I care about riches and possessions? Two kisses of love are worth more than a purse full of coins. We shall have plenty to live on. But how shall I keep free of this other man, until John comes and takes me to his own country? From now until the day that I set for him there remain, I think, only four months in all. If I could bring it about that my friend's fixed day should come before this man secures me, I'd care little about his arrogance once I had crossed the sea. Now there is nothing for it, except that I must make this agreement cleverly."

Blonde was in great distress out of her love of John. In anguish of mind she fretted and complained. But she dissimulated before her father, who one day came back to see her. He had her sit down beside him to know whether he could bring her around to being willing to accept the Earl of Gloucester. "Daughter," he said, "what can this be, that you do not want to take as husband the greatest man in England?" "Sir," she said, "so I shall. Since it pleases you, I shall take him. But I asked for a delay because it is only a short time ago that my lady mother died. This is what makes me sad. This is why I asked you for a postponement, not because I am not ready to do your will. I did it only on account of the festivities, which I wanted to put off; and I entreat you about this again." The father, who was a decent man, saw merit in the reason that his daughter put before him for wanting the postponement. He said: "Daughter, when will you want to be thinking about his betrothing you? Provided that too long a term does not cause problems, I shall put off that day in order to indulge your wish." "Sir," she answered, "in five months." "Indeed, my child, in three. That is still a very long postponement. A person can day-dream at leisure and to no purpose, while he might act to his advantage. And I should commit an offense toward him, if I fixed such a far-off day with him or held him to his word. You must name a closer date; you will not have that long a stay." "Sir, then let it be in four months; that day will be my choice." "Daughter, do you wish it so?" "Yes, sir, I beg of you." "And you will have it. But know well that you would not have a different day for anything. Four months from today by our agreement he will come into this palace to betroth you. The next day you will be wed, without any more delay." "Sir," she said, "I accept, since I can make no other arrangement." Her situation was very much constrained, for the day that John had accepted was that very day precisely, and she could make no further postponement. And the Earl took a messenger and wrote a letter informing the Earl of Gloucester that the day he

had fixed with him for Blonde could not be so soon, but that without any further problem he was to come to the palace in four months; he, the Earl of Oxford, would be ready to keep his pledge to him. After that day he would not request another. Let him come and get her and take her away!

When the letter was sealed he delivered it to the messenger, who did not dawdle but soon arrived at Gloucester. When the other Earl received this news, it was most gratifying to him, for on the day specified he thought to accomplish his desire. (Now he thought he held in his hand something from which he was far removed. It would not go as he believed; John would play a trick on him.) He gave enough money to the messenger to make him rich all his life. The messenger gladly took the money and then set out on the return trip, traveling hard and fast until he was back in Oxford. There he related to his lord how the Earl had greatly rejoiced at what had been communicated to him. On hearing this, the Earl of Oxford was much pleased. But Blonde was scarcely happy, for the time agreed upon was too close. (Now let John be sure not to delay! For much can be lost in a short while. If he tarried too long, he would have a loss that would be plain to his heart, which would be stabbed with great grief. Let him take good care lest he come too late! But I know him to be so sensible that he will avoid this misfortune.)

Time had so run on that John left France, he and Robin; he did not want to take along any other companion. He told his sisters that he would return in good time, that nothing would delay him; but they were to keep the house in such trim that on his return it would be so fine, so comfortable, so noble that it might please everyone. They assured him that they would carry out his instructions wholeheartedly. John kissed them and then departed; he was impatient to see Blonde. Robin led away the fine palfrey. The two of them took to the road and traveled fast until they came to the sea. There they scarcely halted, but crossed it in a ship, not stopping until Dover. Then John spoke to the captain: "Friend, do you want to make some money?" "Yes, indeed, sir, gladly." "You will have," he said, "as many coins as you wish to take from me, provided that you await me on this shore night and day. I shall not be too long; within eight days I'll return here. Take ten pounds that I have here, as compensation for the wait." Pleased, the other man took them, and then promised to do his will.

Now John had assurance. Thereupon he left the captain and rode day and night until he came to London. He dismounted at a lodging that was comfortable and handsome. Robin, useful and quick, put his horses into the stable. John meanwhile emerged from the house; in front of him, across the

street, he saw a great retinue dismounted: squires, men-at-arms, knights, clerks, priests, serving boys, and horse drivers. John was curious about who they were, what they wanted, where they were going. He advanced upon a squire, who knew something of the language of France. "Who may these people be?" he said. "It is," said the other, "the Earl of Gloucester, who comes to busy himself in London. And tomorrow without staying longer he will go off to betroth a woman, the most beautiful in this kingdom. In fact the day for this fell some time ago, but her father canceled it; he informed the Earl that he should wait for four months, and then he should come to his house and take her away, and he would divide his land with him. Now, this Thursday falls the day, and so no long stay here is worth anything. There is only tomorrow between the two days. He might well be so slack that he would lose the beauty of the world." "What is her name?" "Her name is Blonde."

When John heard Blonde named he promptly took to shedding tears. He had been a happy man on going to the squire, but he departed from him very troubled. Sadly he went to his lodging, where he found his lad Robin. He said to him, weeping: "Robin, we have wasted our journey. I have fallen from so high to so low! I am the most miserable person that can either live or die. There has been weighed out for me, at the heaviest, misadventure and mischance. Never before did a wretch have such a fate. Fortune has mocked me, has thrown me quite under her wheel, but without my being able ever to rise again." "Sir, if you don't mind, tell me the cause of this trouble. Distress comes to many a man of worth, and also it often happens that people fear something that is quickly disposed of." "Robin, it's true. Now I'll tell you why I am so heavyhearted." Then and there he told him the squire's news, word for word. When Robin heard about the counterorder that was made early on, he said, "You don't know how to grasp any comfort; you always expect to lose. You heard that the first day chosen was put off for four whole months. You know, I believe my young lady obtained such an alteration for your sake; for it strikes me that your situations fall together quite exactly at a single point. I infer from this that she can't get a longer delay. Now, don't be discouraged and don't put off your journey, for I believe you will find her. My heart tells me that you will have her." "Robin, said John, "many thanks, for you have given me good comfort. But if my beloved has had a change of heart, she has brought death upon me."

Thereupon Robin served their supper. The hour was late. John ate, then went to bed, there being nothing else to do. But that night he watched the other lodging, having no desire for sleep. He sighed the night away.

Uneasiness troubled him a great deal; and he kept remembering Blonde's great beauty and the delight he had had with her. Then he would think himself betrayed and would say: "Wretch, what does it matter what I have had, if I lack it now? The more I hoped, the more cruelly I'd die if I lost her now. Women's hearts are so changeable that they are soon brought around; and so I fear that she has forgotten me. And this would be no wonder, for she is by no means my equal. How could she refuse an earl for a man of whom no one takes any account? People would impute it to madness. What does my ruin matter to her? What does it matter? It *must* matter, if she looks at it properly; for she promised me, I well remember, that she would love me so well that for my sake she would cross the sea. She set a day for me to come and fetch her, and so I came back into this country, for the day comes around this Thursday. But as to that promise—if she doesn't wish to keep it, it will be the death of me, and she will have killed me very unjustly, for she well knows the pain I feel. Truly, now I am doing her wrong, when I believe that she is unfaithful. And it is right for me to be remorseful at the very thought; for my heart is too unstable. I ought not to have believed, on any account, remembering how matters seemed at our separation, that she had withdrawn her love from me. Didn't Robin tell me just now (please God that he was a true seer!) that she must have postponed the betrothal day entirely out of love for me? Yes, and I must believe it, for no lover ought to mistrust his beloved without a real reason. I shall have to make amends to her; then let the penalty be of her choosing! I shall not be in despair until I know the truth; but I'll go off in the company of that man who goes to betroth my beloved. And I'll watch his actions until I come close to the place where the day of my well-being is, the day about which I've had many bitter thoughts."

Thus John kept sleepless vigil through the night. He rose and got ready just as soon as the dawn came; and Robin was already up and had saddled his horses. Similarly the Earl of Gloucester got himself quickly on the road. He did not want to make a long stay there, being very impatient for the hour when he would have his beloved in his possession; therefore he set out early. The throng of his people was very large, and John soon joined them; nevertheless they did not have his friendship. They rode rapidly until they emerged from London. The Earl of Gloucester noticed John (but did not know who he was, never having seen him before), and he had the whim to ask him where he was going, where he came from, and how. Because of John's clothes, which he saw to be French, he gathered that he had been born around Pontoise; and so he wanted to speak French to him, but his language kept turning into English.<sup>38</sup> John greeted him first, and he promptly

answered: "Friend, well be you come! How was your name call?" "Sir," he said, "my name is Walter; I was born near Montdidier." "Walter! Devil! That was foolish name. And where you want to go soon? That lad was he your people, who was mounted on good horse?" "Yes, sir, he is in my service. He keeps that palfrey for me." "Want it you to sell? I buy, if you want to give reasonable. It be very good take money." "Sir, I shall sell it gladly," said John, "for I am a merchant. If you wish to have this one, I shall want to take as much as I desire of your possessions. Otherwise, I shall not sell it, not at any price." "Nay, by crown of God, nay, nay! What the Devil! This will be too dear. In you is good, complete fool. I no more want it, you keep quiet." "Sir," said John, "I can no more." The Earl laughed and joked a great deal about the possessions asked of him. (Nevertheless if he were to hand them over and to give him everything he had, he would still not have obtained the palfrey, for John loved it as well as himself; upon it he hoped to mount Blonde and bring about his own happiness.) With that they dropped the subject and attended to the journey.

Toward prime came a shower that annoyed the Earl greatly, since he was dressed in clothes of green silk, and so was wet through before the rain ended. And never, for protection, did he have sense enough to put on any outer wrap, and there was no one who offered him one. John observed this and laughed; and the Earl, who saw him laughing, entreated him to tell him "By faith he owes all French, for what thing was given laugh." John said: "I shall tell you, without lying by a single word. If I were as rich a man as you are, I'd always carry with me a house in which I could take shelter, and so I shouldn't get dirty or wet, as you are." The Earl laughed at this response and said to his followers: "Companions, have you hear very best foolish French that you can ever look, who wanted me for me to shelter make carry with me my house? Have you hear good rascal?" "Sir," each of them answered him, "know you, all true French are more foolish than a silly sheep." John well heard their words, but he never gave a sign. All the English went mocking him, saying: "In him is very good fool." John was silent, he did not answer a word.

In such raillery they rode along until they approached a river that had to be forded. The Earl was pleased to rush first into the ford. But he did not know the best crossings, and so he strayed so far from the right path that he nearly drowned. He fell into a hole and was brought down from his horse by the water, which surprised him by its current; and he swallowed some of it (and little do I care!). He would have died there if a fisherman had not come along in a boat and been quickly hailed by the Earl's men, for they dared not

go to their lord's rescue because they feared the water. But the fisherman promptly came up to the Earl, who was having a drink. (But he would scarcely get drunk; there was more water than wine there.) The fisherman put him in his boat, much to the Earl's relief. They went in search of the horse, which was floating downstream. With the boat hook they caught it by its reins, then navigated until, with some difficulty, they emerged onto land on the far side. And the Earl's men went looking for the ford until they found it, and crossed over very smoothly.

John and Robin likewise crossed the ford prudently. On the other side they came up to the Earl, much embarrassed because his belt and shirt and tunic were in such a state that they would never be useful to him again. His packhorses, with his other clothes, were well behind him; if he wanted to wait for them without changing to dry clothing, he might well shiver with cold. And so he made one of his knights take off his shirt and tunic, and the Earl quickly put them on. And the knight went wringing out the clothes that had been around the Earl, then put them on without delay. (Thus he had no lack of cool clothing.) Thereupon they remounted and promptly set on their way. The Earl did not say much about what had happened to him. In order to forget his misadventure he took to mocking John again about the house he had spoken of. But his mockery soon came to an end, for John told him something that made him laugh. "Sir," he said, "I wish once again, by your leave, to teach you one of my bits of wisdom." "Yes," answered the Earl, "all time say you what you wants." John said:

"Sir," he said, "know without a doubt that if I could lead such a retinue as you do, owing to your means, never, truly, should I cross such dangerous water without a bridge; I'd take my bridge with me, a good, solid one. Then I'd cross with confidence." All the Englishmen who heard this made great sport of it. The Earl, who believed John to be touched in the head, enjoyed it very much; they all thought him a good fool. And John, hearing himself made fun of, did not answer a word. Mocking him, they rode on until they approached Oxford, for they were in great haste. The company had made a very long day's journey, not having stopped for dinner or for anything else, since the Earl did not dare let pass the hour when he expected to obtain his beloved. On this account he traveled so swiftly all day that before nightfall he saw Oxford, where Blonde's father awaited him. It was beginning to get dark.

When John, who knew the paths, saw himself close to Oxford, he promptly took leave. The Earl strongly reproved him for it, saying that, if he wished, he would enter the Earl's service. John replied that this would not

happen today, for he had to go elsewhere. "And where you want to turn then? Might see it already was night. You come stay with me today. Either you tell me your business or no turn you I give." "Sir," he said, "rather than remain, I shall tell you why I am turning away. Last year, fairly nearby, I noticed a very fine sparrow hawk; I was so eager to have it that I set up a trap for it. I am going to see whether I have caught it. Now I have informed you of my business." At this, all the Englishmen who heard him mocked him and laughed at him very much. And the Earl said: "Good friend, you will be mad, by Saint Badoul! Your setting-up was all rotten; no can last until now either trap or little bird. You keep quiet, come you to watch festivity of the fairest little pig of which man can kiss snout. Tomorrow you can see her wed to me, if you wants to go." "Sir," he said, "without further delay I shall go ahead to see to my trap. If it pleases God, I shall arrive at the wedding in time, before she is given to you." The Earl said, "Go you then fast! I no more keep you from wasting time." Thereupon John left the throng that was stupidly mocking him.

But he who laughs at another has the laughter turn back upon himself.<sup>39</sup> So it was with the Earl. For, as I find it in the tale, he was so devoid of sense that he was confident of very soon having Blonde. She, though, had only one heart, and had given it to someone else. This was evident; for Blonde, true and loving, had been in much distress of mind for many a week. She was very fearful of losing her beloved, on whom she had set her heart. But when it came to the last moment, when she knew that the Earl was coming and that her father had invited and assembled all his relatives, then her heart was in the balance. Yet she still had a little hope because she saw that it was time for her lover to appear, and so she stole away from the ladies who were crowding the palace. She filled a little case with jewels, not wanting to carry away any other trousseau. Taking the case, she went off alone, straight to the pear tree where they had taken leave of each other and fixed the day of John's return. But he was not yet there, and this was greatly troubling to Blonde. She went to open the little gate through which he was to come and listened attentively for sounds of his arrival. But John still did not appear, and so she was very much afraid. She returned under the pear tree, sad and dismayed. She sat down, deeply pensive, and debated with herself.

"Alas!" said poor Blonde. "Love, you have so overcome me, and now you make me wait about here and perhaps waste my time! I do say that I am wasting my time, if the one my heart hopes and weeps for does not come within this hour. Alas! If he delays a little too long, I know that he will have lost me. For when that Gloucester man comes, there will be no place, high

or low, where I shall not be hunted for. Then I'll be harshly scolded by my father and called a fool when I'm found alone here. Even that wouldn't matter to me if he were willing to leave it at that; but he will make me take another leap that could not possibly please me: to take as husband a man other than the one I love. To take? He won't do it against my wishes! Yes, he will, and too bad for me! Too bad for me? Now I'm talking nonsense. If it's as bad as that for me, let me say when it comes to the critical moment: 'Sir, I don't want you!' The priest who would marry me upon such words would be a great fool.<sup>40</sup> But it would be madness to say them. I can do no more. Ah! God! If only my beloved would come soon, cautiously and secretly, just as I told him last year, I'd be free of this misery. Could he for some reason have forgotten me and given his love to someone else? Yes, perhaps; I fear this also because I am too far away from him. What! Would he then not come at all? Shall I, loverless, be a lover? That would really be a betrayal. Now I am being foolish. Wasn't he about to die for me? Ah! I must not believe it of him, that his love might ever be false. Then why does he delay? I believe that it must trouble him, but he may well be prevented by illness or imprisonment. God keep him from that, by His name! For my heart so gives itself to him that without him I do not believe I shall ever have joy. If he comes, I'll go away with him; if he does not come, for love of him I shall say that I do not want any husband. This cannot please my father, but I can do nothing about it. There is too great ardor and too great power in love."

As Blonde was fretting she pricked up her ears and heard the one she longed for so much riding up the path. And John was hurrying along; he for his part had been in great fear of losing Blonde, such fear that he was all atremble as he headed toward the pear tree. Under it he saw his beloved, who never before was so happy as when she saw him coming. John did not say much, but dismounted and greeted her. "My sweet heart, found again!" "My very dear friend," Blonde answered, "above everyone else in the world, you are welcome here!" Then they brought their faces close together and kissed each other; and this greatly eased their hearts. But they had no inclination to wait very long. John went to get the palfrey that Robin had brought up, all saddled and bridled. He set his beloved upon it, then mounted without further delay. He took in his arms the little case, the richest from there to Baghdad; it was all full of rings and clasps set with many precious stones.

Thereupon they emerged from the garden, moving off as quickly as they could. They came to the fields and were on their way. Don't suppose that they even considered going by the highway. In order to avoid trouble they followed the most obscure paths. John well knew all the wooded areas, for he

had traversed them many a time; now the knowledge was useful to him. If they had taken the open road, they would have been pursued. They acted more prudently. That night they rode so far before daybreak that they would have been very hard to find. But during the day they did not dare to ride; they stayed in the woods. There, Robin was of great service to them; he would go off seeking food for them in the villages along the woods, and then he would return to wherever he had left them, either in the forest or in a hedged enclosure. He fetched oats for the horses, and to the two true lovers he brought cakes, white bread, and chicken pies. This certainly did not go to waste. John always carried wine with him in two kegs. With these supplies, they would spread out an embroidered cloth on the green grass; then they would eat under the branches. And their horses would graze on the grass they found, fine and thick; they were so well looked after by Robin that, as far as he was able, they lacked for nothing. After the lovers had eaten all they wanted of the pies, they would go off enjoying themselves, caressing each other. As to embracing and kissing, neither held back; all day long they kissed and embraced and spoke to each other tenderly. Their love was sweetened by the verdure and by the sound of the thrushes and the nightingales and the other birds of the woods, which in their Latin would sing to them evening and morning.<sup>41</sup> This was far from displeasing the true lovers, who delighted in hearing them. With the other joys of love they would have no trouble in spending the day. And Robin was on guard lest anyone come that way and notice them, for they would promptly be betrayed. When nightfall was approaching, the lovers would remount and would ride toward the sea, which they greatly desired to cross. (But if God does not take pains on their behalf, they will have a hard time of it before they are in the ship; for the Earl of Gloucester will scarcely have a soft heart when he learns that Blonde is out of the palace.)

Now the tale relates that when the two Earls, of Gloucester and of Oxford, came together they made much of one another. The whole company, the arrivals and those who were already there, greeted each other. Then they all entered the hall, which was large and handsome and well swept. Many a table was set up there, ready for them. But if he could, the Earl of Gloucester wanted to see his beloved before starting to eat. He asked her father to send for her, and so he promptly did. He called two knights. "Go," he said, "and bring my fair and courteous daughter."<sup>42</sup> Off they went, finding this no hardship. They came into the chambers where the ladies were and asked for Blonde, so as to escort her to her father. This was not bitter news to the ladies; indeed they were glad at it. (But by and by they would be

dismayed.) They were still not aware that Blonde was out of their keeping. Not seeing her with them, they sent her maids into the alcoves to look for her. There the maids went without losing a moment and searched for her here and there, but none of them found her.

The two Earls, awaiting her, were busy talking of other things. They believed that she was staying so long because she was adorning her lovely self with fine and costly garments. The Earls seated themselves, and Gloucester began telling about the behavior of (the unknown) John. And so he gave an account, saying:<sup>43</sup> “Sir Earl, never before be fool so good like a French who comed today with me, and saided strange things. It sprinkled well in morning, so that well was wet finally my gown that I has put on. For this he saided to me: if he was so rich, he will make carry a house for him to shelter. And more he saided to me too. I wanted buy sorrel palfrey, which was toward him led, fine rein, fine saddled. When he be asked for to sell, he saided to me he will want to take his will of wealth that I have; but I made him answered: Nay! He be much laughed for such words. But, by crown of God, more fool will he be afterward of another business. When I rode for great care that I had to approach this one,<sup>44</sup> I rode ahead first, until in a river I plunged me; but in a great hole steps my horse, and will have fallen; nearly I will have drank too much. A fisher got me to the bank right other side of the river beyond, and my spotted palfrey. Then came my people all sorry for what will have come to me. All my clothing was soon take off; took drier from a knight, who began to dry mine. Then I had mounted without more stay. Then talked the good French fool to me, and saided such strange thing: if he will be of wealth my equal, all time, when he will want to travel, he will bring bridge for himself, then will be crossed over without fear. Then we all laughed him and had very good time, then I goes off at amble without stop. All laughed at this fool French, but in time shall I have laughed more. When he comed near this village, parting from me he asked; but I wanted not to give it if he saided not to me his going. So he saided to me a good foolishness: that it was a year all complete that he had set up in an orchard a fine trap for a sparrow hawk, and he will go see if it will be caught. Know you well that then I was laughed, and I saided to him this: ‘Good friend, your set-up was all rotten. But come you with me to play, and you will see wed beautiful little pig.’ Never he wanted to come, but had left himself great speed. I shall not know more what became of him. Now you knows how all happened.”

While Gloucester was relating all this to the other Earl, the knights were on their way back, having had Blonde sought for here and there, high and low; but no one was able to find her. Many a lady was grieved at this. They

all considered themselves tricked; much disconcerted, they said over and over: "Alas! How badly we have kept her, the one who is now required of us! What can have become of her? In here there is not a shadow's space where she has not been looked for. Where can she be hidden? She must be playing hide-and-seek with us for fear of this marriage." So they kept saying, the young girls, the ladies, and the damsels. The two knights, much troubled, promptly repaired to the place where the Earls were sitting. "Sir," said the better speaker, "if you wish to delay eating until Blonde comes, I fear that you will become very hungry. No one knows where she may be. In all the chambers there is no place where the ladies have not looked for her, and they are very much dismayed on her account. Every chamber has been searched; they have looked for her and called her everywhere, and yet they have no information. She has lost her wits."

When the Earls heard this news, it was scarcely to their liking. The one of Gloucester was so grieved that he could not have been more so. And the one of Oxford was sensible; he had well understood the messages with which John had befuddled the other man. He had lived in the world a long time and saw into this matter clearly; and so he began to explain to his guest: "Sir Earl, this matter is scarcely good for your purposes, for I believe that my daughter's heart is empty of love for you and that she loves someone else. And I think she is going off with that very man you have seen. He has deceived you cleverly. My guess is that it is a squire, John, who was in her service a good while. He is sensible and clean-living, courteous and well formed. He took leave of me because of news that reached him, at which he scarcely rejoiced: news about his father being ill, and about his mother having died. For this reason he returned to France, where he was brought up. Now I believe that he came back to seek for Blonde. He has made the finest gain in this world, if he can cross the sea again. Now I see that love is a powerful thing, when my daughter exchanges you thus for a foreign lad. Truly, I never had an inkling of their love; but now I know it, of that you can be sure. For it was at her request I set the first day, that was put off; and I believe that she had already fixed this very day with her friend. She was badly guarded, since she has thus slipped away. And nevertheless it is very hard to keep watch over a woman. May a bad flame burn me if anyone alive can manage to do it, once she is stirred up with love! John made fun of you this morning; you did not understand his Latin.<sup>45</sup> When you haggled over the palfrey, you mocked him severely for saying that he would like to take for it however much of your possessions as he wished. By this you ought to have understood that he had no desire to sell it. He was right, for on it he is

taking away my daughter and is even now rejoicing about it. Afterward, as for the shower that came up and that would of course wet the silk clothes you had on, he did not value you at a straw because, when you saw the rain, you did not put anything over yourself: a horse-cloth or cape or something else to cover your gown. Therefore he said to you that if he were as rich as he thought you to be, in order to shelter himself from rain he would have a house carried along; that was to say a horse-cloth or a cape; but all you did was laugh.

“Later, when you had fallen into the river as you related to me just now, you ought not to be much pitied; for it was through your own foolishness. John did allude to this, but he reproved you very subtly for it when he went on talking about the bridge that he would cause to be brought with him, so that he could cross a stream without trouble. This was doubtless to say that a rich man ought not to enter a river or a difficult crossing without someone’s having gone before him. He should send ahead some of his people, and afterward he can direct his own mount toward where the best place turns out to be; thus he can cross in the easiest way. Through his good sense he spoke such words to you, and he was treated as a fool. Then when he left you, and you gave him the choice of coming along with you or informing you of his business, he promptly told you the truth; for he had set a trap for my daughter a good year ago. For this reason he told you that last year he had set up a trap for a sparrow hawk and that he was going off to see whether he had caught it. The trap signifies the love he has for his beloved, for whom he was to come on the day he had fixed with her. My daughter is the sparrow hawk. He is no fool, that squire; he told it all to you very cleverly. For as a man sets a bird to catch another bird, just so must one set one’s love to have another’s love. He would have very little sense, the man who loved no one, if he wished to be loved by someone. Now I see clearly that he loved my daughter and she loved him, and she feared me so much that she has slipped away from us and joined her lover.

“My dear Earl, I am extremely sorry because of the agreement I had with you; but I can do nothing else. If you can manage to get her back, then catch her and lead her away with you. And if the one who has taken her away can have crossed the sea before you can recover her, I shall never seek to reprove him, for he is sensible, and a nobleman, and will never lack for assets. But now let us eat; and if you like, you set out in the morning. If you left now, you would not know where to go. For, be sure of it, they are going by the side roads and the most diverse ways, so as not to be noticed. Cunningly, they have deceived you. If you cannot catch up with them, it will be necessary to

give up this wedding. I say no more. He who has her, let him have her! If you have her, I am not sorry; and if he has her, it must be accepted, since it cannot be otherwise."

Now the Earl of Gloucester grasped how matters stood. He was so inflamed by anger that for a good while he could not answer, but at last he replied: "Alas! Unhappy! I have lost all, my sweet beloved, fair little pig! But I will follow her so quick that I will catch her in the sea. I will make watched all the ports so they will be able to be caught. Then I will make hanged on two stakes the bad robber French who has sent my heart so sad. Then I will make Blonde to repent of pain that she made me feel. Must make great penitence for my sadness, for my heaviness. Before she can make up with me, must be that she see the rope close around neck her friend; then I will be well venged on her. Then in strong prison I will put him until he will well have paid his great foolish and his misdeed. I will well know how to venge me for act." (Now may God and His commandments be the guard of those true lovers! For they are in very real danger; if they are taken prisoner, they will be badly treated.)

Thereupon the Earls took their seats, for appearance's sake, without eating. In the palace that night there was not a knight, man-at-arms, lady, or damsel who could empty a plate. They were so upset, all the women and men, that there was not a sound in the hall. Some out of grief, some out of fear, they all were silent. The tables were taken away fairly soon; afterward there was no long talk, but throughout the palace they went to bed. But whoever might sleep, there was no question of sleeping for the man of Gloucester; he was as sad as could be. All night long he had strange fantasies, debating within himself about what kind of death and in what torment he would want to make John die—and he had not yet got hold of him! It was said long ago, and I do not doubt it, that if someone seeks another's harm, the harm turns back upon him.<sup>46</sup> Those who are threatened live on, it is said:<sup>47</sup> it would not be right that threatened people should die. (If John had managed to have weapons with him,<sup>48</sup> he would have been very hard to capture, for he was taking away with him such a treasure as he would not soon surrender unless he were dead or in prison.)

To return to my story: before daylight the Earl, eager to go looking for Blonde, got up without delay. He had his knights awakened. If only you had seen saddles being put on those warhorses, and the girths tightened! Their horses were as well cinched as if they were going boar hunting. As soon as they could the knights got ready, mounted, and were off. In that company there were a good hundred wicked and senseless men; they repeatedly

threatened John with hanging. (Now may God defend him and his beloved Blonde and confound all their enemies, who were following them fast toward the sea!) From Oxford there was no movement on the part of Blonde's father or his people, for to him this chase was neither handsome nor noble. He was so full of courtesy that in his heart he did not wish that John should be discovered and taken prisoner, for the young man had proved himself well. He had a good opinion of him; and because he had crossed the sea again, the Earl knew that it was through the force of love. The ladies who had come for the festivities went away without losing time. They left Oxford in dismay. Thus the court broke up. This was a celebration in reverse: there was more weeping than laughter.

As for those who had set out to shame John if they caught sight of him, they never slackened in their pursuit. They went so far by roads and by fields, as best they could, that of two days' travel they made one; at night they rode by moonlight. They hurried along until they reached the sea, where they set guard on all the ports. At each port they put four spies, who night and day watched for the lovers. And in preparation for bringing John down, if he tried to defend himself, they had great axes to split him open. To make sure that John might know nothing of this, and might not notice anything, the Earl and his knights went to lodge in Dover. He trusted in his spies, stationed in all the ports, outfitted in good doublets, and armed with sharp axes. (God keep the lovers from harm! They will have to pass by them in peril.) Now I must leave the Earl's story for a little, and tell about the lovers.

These two kept on riding by night and staying still by day, until they approached so close to Dover that not a league remained. They halted in a great and ancient forest because daylight had come. John, who was uneasy for fear of losing his beloved more than he was for his own life, had sense enough to keep watch. He soon called to Robin and said: "Good friend Robin, now quickly go your way, cautiously, by hidden paths. I shall so whiten your face with an herb I know well, that no one would recognize you for anything. Then you will go in haste to speak to the captain who is waiting for us and tell him that he is to lose no time in preparing his ship and his things so that we may, this very night, climb aboard a little before midnight and then cross the sea. And be on the lookout to notice anyone awaiting us for our harm. I do think that, if the Earl is able, we must pass through his hands. He may well be in such a hurry that perhaps he has got ahead of us, for we have made some detours by riding along winding roads. This is why I want you to pay attention to whether anyone is keeping watch for us. If you see anything that makes you uneasy, arrange matters so that you get

armor for me to arm myself with, then go back to ambling along and come back here at nightfall. And keep a close watch on yourself, so that no one knows what you are about, for otherwise we'd soon have trouble. If God granted that we should get across the Channel, we'd fear them very little." "Sir," said Robin, "have no fear. I'll do all this. But disguise me, for I want to be off. It worries me to stay here so long."

Thereupon in the woods John picked the root of an herb, and with the pommel of his sword he crushed it and mixed it with water. Then he so besmeared Robin with the juice that in the whole world, up or down, there lived no man who would not believe that he was suffering from a high fever. His face was paler than dull wax, and all wrinkled. Breaking off the branch of an apple tree, he made himself a staff to lean on. Now he might go wherever he wanted, without ever being recognized. Then he took leave, and went away. It seemed to him that he was late in setting out; the sun had already risen.

John and Blonde remained in the woods. That morning they labored in a very lovely place in the forest until they made a shelter out of fine green branches and flowers, because of the heat, and strewed it with lily of the valley. Then John said, "My dear, now I propose that we eat inside our bower on the blossoms and the rushes. We still have two pies; they will not go to waste." "My very dear one, I agree." Then they kissed each other on mouth, forehead, nose, and face, in sign of agreement, and sat down on the rushes. They spread a white cloth, finely embroidered, upon the lily of the valley. On their heads they had green garlands. John opened the pies and offered some to his beloved. She ate and he served her, but for all that he did not neglect to eat as well. Their two hearts were so held by one leash that she wanted nothing that he did not want; he did not want anything that distressed her. Their dinner was interrupted by what was more pleasing to them: that is, by delicious kisses; such an occupation was very sweet to them. They both talked about love; and the hobbled horses grazed, down in the grassy area. When the lovers had eaten the pies and drunk some of the wine, of which they had had a good quantity, they folded up their cloth again. Then they headed off, lightly dressed, hand in hand, to enjoy themselves in the woods and to hear the song of the nightingales. If I thought about it all of today and tomorrow, I could not relate the pleasure and joy that Love taught them to have. Anyone who disdains Love scarcely has a good heart, whatever torment may come from it, since for all its ills Love makes compensation to true lovers who act rightly, so that in the end they come to such happiness that all troubles are forgotten. So indeed it appeared to these two who were alone in the forest, and all that they

did have pleased them so much that they desired nothing except to escape those who would separate them if they could; nothing else weighed upon them. (If they had reached France, they would have had love's joy, perfect and everlasting.) When they had enjoyed themselves a little they returned to their bower, where it was pleasant and cool. There too they continued to take pleasure in kissing and embracing, sweetly conversing. (But I make no recital of anything more, so as not to spoil my story. There are few now who would abstain once they had come to such a dish; for nowadays there is more of evil, little and less of true love.) Now we shall turn to speaking of Robin, who was on the road toward the sea.

Once Robin had left the spot where his master had whitened his face, he kept going until he came to Dover, from which he saw the sea. As soon as he entered the town he encountered four knights whom he had seen with the Earl. He was clever enough to recognize them. Leaning upon his staff, he went along the streets; he saw clearly that John was being watched for. He moved without hurrying. At a slow pace, face lowered, he went on until he left the town and entered the port. He appeared to be a man in poor health; it looked as though he had been ill much longer than a year and a half. Near the port in an angle of the rocks he saw the Earl and his armed men. He had to pass near them if he wanted to get to the captain. Therefore he limped heavily with one foot; one eye open, the other squinting, his head low and his back high, he said to the Earl: "God save you!" He pretended to speak with difficulty. "Sir," he said, "for thirty weeks I have been ill with quotidian fever; I still have it two days out of three. I am a poor man from France. I no longer have money of any sort with which I may return to my country, but I shall die here in misery if you, for the holy Paternoster, do not give me something." The Earl looked at him as did his followers; it seemed to none of them as if he could live four days longer. The Earl handed him twelve sterling coins, and each of his knights gave him six silver pennies. (In this matter Robin was no fool; he gained a good forty sous. Although he detested them heartily, he took their money. With his mouth he thanked them in God's name, but such generosity touched him very little; he would have liked their misadventure better than their benevolence.)

Thereupon he took leave and went away, not stopping before he reached the shore. Squinting with one eye, he came up to the captain who was awaiting them. "Sir," he said to the captain, "I should like to entreat you to take me across this sea, for I am downhearted on this side of it."<sup>49</sup> Not for one day have I ever been well here. You may set whatever price you like, for I have money, some of which I'll gladly give you." "Friend," answered the captain,

"I don't yet know when the people I promised to wait for will come. I don't mean to attend to others before I know whether the man who paid me in advance will want to have my ship. He urged me to stay for him, and so I'll wait at least as long as I promised."

When Robin had heard the captain and was sure that he could trust him, he said: "There is a lot of goodness in a worthy man. You are to know that I'm the lad who crossed to this shore along with the man who entreated you to wait for him. He has sent me here to learn whether you were keeping your promise and were still waiting." "Now you have said something outrageous," said the captain, "by my faith! He had no one with him but a lad who was called Robinet. He was leading a palfrey alongside him. He was far more hale and hearty than you are. And so it was foolish of you to say that, for you are not the same person; it looks as if you are going to die before you see the third day." "Yes, I'm the same one," said Robin, "good master. You must know how things stand with us. My master has many enemies, and they are watching for us, be sure of it. And to keep us from being noticed or recognized he tinted me like this with an herb that he picked in a wood. He sends me to you, and entreats you, as a man he trusts, that the ship be furnished and ready to go across immediately, a little before midnight. On the horse I was leading before he is now escorting a young lady whom he doesn't want everyone to see. And he sends you this word through me: if you take him across in good faith, you will have so much money that you will never be poor. For once you transported him, he would have little fear of his enemies. He believes in you because of the promise that was made in his agreement with you. Now kindly help us in good faith, for we need it badly. Down this port I see certain people who want him dead."

This news was highly pleasing to the captain. For the promise of money, he received Robin very well, saying that he would indeed help them and would not fail them on any account. Robin thanked him for this. Then the captain took him into his ship covertly and showed him that nothing was lacking for the crossing. In the vessel there were good, solid pieces of armor; Robin chose some of these and put them aside. Now he awaited only the coming of evening, so that he might steal away from people and rejoin John. The captain made him comfortable; on that day Robin lacked nothing by way of drink and food. He inquired where the Earl of Gloucester stayed at night; and the captain told him promptly: "In the town up above. If someone gave a shout here, it would be heard in his lodging; and yet it's a good league by road from here up to there.<sup>50</sup> Down here in the port he leaves four spies equipped with armor; and in the morning, before daybreak, the Earl and his

men return. Also, through great effort, he causes watch to be kept in all the other ports. No ship can move without the spies wanting to know beforehand who are the people who are going overseas. They have inquired of me myself what I was waiting for so long here. And I told them immediately, like someone who wasn't on his guard: for a squire, whom I am very impatient about; but he paid me his money and entreated me to wait. Since they heard this the spies have never gone away, but lie—it's a great nuisance—so close by every night that no one comes here without their knowing it, and they greatly threaten someone or other. I well believe, by what I hear, that it is John they are threatening, and so I very much fear that they may give him trouble. He can come here only by passing through them, and they are wicked and cruel. And there is something else: each one carries a horn at his neck. As soon as the Earl hears the horns sounded, he will come running in this direction. And so John is in great danger if he comes, for he is a dead man if the Earl gets his hands on him. But, so God keep me from harm! he didn't waste the money he courteously entrusted to me; on this occasion courtesy will be repaid. When evening comes on, I'll engage the spies in talk. Then you will slip off behind us, and afterward you will tell John that, if he comes here tonight, he won't find me unprepared. As far as armor is concerned, say that I'll never fail him for anything. If no more than those four come here, we'll bring down their pride." When Robin heard this his heart was joyful. He told the captain so much and so acquainted him with his master's good character that the other man was very willing to be on his side.

Generosity is good, and so is courtesy; they have been helpful to many people. Just as the captain had advised, so Robin did. He rested in the ship, not daring to go out during the day. And when evening came, the Earl and his men quietly returned to their lodging. The four spies remained behind at the Earl's order, to do shame to Blonde. In the middle of the port, close by the ship that they suspected, they concealed themselves in a little hollow. The captain, from on board his ship, perceived them clearly and pointed them out to Robin. "Now there is no more need for delay, Robin," he said. "It's high time you went back to your master; and I am going off to be with those men until you have gone past." Robin said: "Now use your wits."

At that, the captain left. He came up to those who were keeping watch, taking along a keg of strong and inebriating wine produced on the Rhine. "Sirs, may Jesus aid you!" said the captain. "If you please, my heart is much troubled that you have already lain here for three nights and haven't drunk with me. I'm bringing you a keg of wine; now let's finish it off!" The watchers heard these words gladly, for they were willing drinkers. Even if there had

been two barrels, not a cupful would have escaped. And from the pinewood ship Robin departed all laden with good, solid armor. While the others were busy talking, he took to slipping around behind them. Here God aided Robin, for the spies had no eyes to notice him, absorbed in drinking as they were. But he was seen by the captain, whose heart was filled with joy when he saw him pass by. He kept the spies distracted until he knew what business they were on and why they were intent on keeping watch. And when he had learned everything from them he promptly took his leave. With their goodwill he departed and entered his boat, where there were many oars.<sup>51</sup> Then he called his oarsmen around him and said: "Men, have no doubts or fears for anything that you hear tonight, but equip yourselves with weapons, all of you. Guard the ship, if I am not in it, so that you let no one enter. A worthy man has great need of me, and I shall want to help him." "Sir," they said, "we'll gladly do whatever is called for."

Following these orders, the sailors quietly made their preparations throughout the ship. Each man armed his head and body and took in his hand a halberd, cutting and well sharpened. The ship would be well defended if anyone came forward to attack it, for there were no good-for-nothings aboard. There were twenty men, young and strong, who would always guard the ship, along with the stouthearted captain. But at this point I say no more about them. I want to tell about Robin, very glad to have got past the spies, whom he had feared.

After Robin had escaped, he did not pause on his way until returning to the lovers, who had been very anxious because he was away so long. Now here he was, so laden with canvas and iron that he said: "Here's an infernal game, carrying such a big load on foot!" John immediately unloaded him, then said: "Now, never mind, Robin. If we get to Dammartin, such efforts will be rewarded. But tell me about the news you have heard. Is there anyone in the port on watch for us to do us harm?" "Yes, indeed," Robin answered. "The Earl and all his men are in lodging so close to the sea that they can easily hear the speech of four spies who are in the port, armed to put you to death. But there is this in your favor: the captain will help you, the one to whom you gave the ten pounds. You never used money better." Then he told him how he was joyfully received by the captain, once he was recognized. There followed the account of how he had deceived the Earl and all his retainers, so that he got six sterling coins from each man in the troop. He concluded by relating how, thanks to the good captain, he had come back. "Because he gave them something to drink," he said, "he held their attention so much that I've come back to you, for they didn't notice

me.” When Blonde heard the news, her body went atremble with fright, for now she knew without a doubt that her beloved would have a fight. Therefore she said to him: “My dearest friend, you have put yourself into peril for me, and I am very sorry for it. I have great fear of your death, for from what I understand, we have our enemy in the port. My dearest friend, let’s not go! If you should lose your life there, my heart would break with grief. It wouldn’t live for another day.” “My sweet friend,” said John, “don’t be afraid! Since I have a ship, and armor, the way is quite safe for me. If we remained on this side, we’d be detected in the end, and I’d never have of you the most joyous joy, the one from which I’ve been abstaining until I can marry you. Set your mind at rest, and be sure of this, once and for all: I have no fear of all my enemies. But help me to arm quickly; for if I do not take you out of this country in spite of them, I’ll think little of myself. In need one knows one’s worth.<sup>52</sup> A man who takes his beloved with him must not dread any hardship. Come, my armor! I wish to arm myself; I suffer with the contempt I have for them.”

Blonde, not daring to contradict him, readied his armor. First he put on shoulder pads stuffed with silk. On his head he put a basinet, strong, well attached, new, and handsome. After that he donned a hauberk; there was no better one from there to Merc. Around his waist Blonde bound a sash that she herself had woven; then she laced on his head a rolled-up piece of fabric, of Welsh work, not sparing her lovely hands in serving him. It was as though she had spent her life at such tasks, she knew so well how to undertake them. He must not be fainthearted, the man who is waited on by such a servant. On top of his hauberk he put on a doublet; there could be none better. Over that he belted on his sword, which was sharpened and cutting. Then he embraced his beloved, kissed her, and said: “Now be quite easy, sweet friend, and fear nothing; for I assure you of this: if we find anyone who wishes us harm and if I do not wet my sword in his body, I never hope on any day to have joy of your love.” “My dear friend,” answered Blonde, “Now may the King of the world keep us!” By then Robin had armed himself with a doublet of double thickness; he had an iron cap on his head and at his belt a steel knife. Then he untied the horses and brought them before John.

John helped his beloved up on her horse, then he mounted without delay. With that they speedily set out. The moon was shining, so that they saw fairly clearly around them. They went along at a rapid amble until coming to the port. Blonde and Robin kept close to John, who was between them. They went on until they saw those who were awaiting them for no good purpose. When the spies heard them coming they quickly jumped to their

feet. One of the four seized Blonde by the rein and said to her: "Lady, you will stop here, by my soul! The man who took you in charge was a fool; he'll die a bad death tonight." John said to him: "You're lying! If you don't feel my sword, I'll never value myself in the slightest." Thereupon he drew it and dealt that man such a blow on the head that the blade did not stop before reaching his chin. Then he said: "Back, scoundrel! It was villainous to lay a hand on my beloved!" When the other three saw that one stark dead, they attacked John vigorously; and John so avoided their blows that he made two of them miss him. The third one gave such a blow that he took off a piece from the bottom of the fine-mailed hauberk. He would have cut off his knee if John had not had on an iron knee cap. The ax went into the ground just like a devil from Hell. John's heart constricted. He struck the man so angrily with his sharp sword that on the spot he brought down both arm and ax. When the ruffian saw that he had lost one of his arms, he fled from the skirmish. Seizing his horn, he sounded it with such force that he made himself heard up in the lodging where the Earl was. When the Earl, not yet asleep, heard the horn call, he realized that John was at the port; he shouted for his weapons. Then they all armed themselves without losing time.

Meanwhile at the port John had much to do. Of the two spies who were still fit for combat, Robin, knife in hand, came at one and struck him in such a way as to bring him down dead—but so quietly that after the blow he did not cry out, for he was stabbed in the heart. At the same time the sea captain heard the horn and grasped that John was under attack. He quickly emerged from his ship and came running to the horn blower; with the halberd he was gripping he made the man's head fly off. "Scoundrel," he said, "now you can sound your horn! However it may go with John, I think no good will ever come to you!"

When the fourth man, who was still alive, saw all his companions killed, he ran off, and in fleeing he sounded a short note with the horn at his neck. But now John thought it would be foolish not to make that man pay dearly for his horn blowing. He began to spur his horse and pursued him as fast as he could. He soon caught him up and so struck him on the head that his sword went through the middle of the brain and down to the teeth, so that the man dropped dead on his face. Then John sped back toward his beloved. And the captain came up to them, greeted them, and said: "John, I've come here to help you. You have done well to start with; but now come away without waiting! Come! It won't be long before the Earl and his men arrive, for they have surely heard the horn calls." John thanked him much for the aid he had from him; so, profoundly, did Blonde. Then they swiftly set on their way.

Before they could get to the ship, the Earl of Gloucester came spurring along on Morel, his fiery warhorse; there was no better racer in the country. Farther than a man could shoot with a bow, the Earl put himself in front of all his men, sword in hand, shield at neck. John, seeing him, thought him foolish to separate himself from his followers. "I believe," he said, "he imagined that I'd flee in fright when I saw him come galloping like that. May I never enjoy love if I don't go at him in this encounter!" At these words he wheeled his horse around and turned his sword in front of him. He set the pommel on his saddlebow, with the well-sharpened point forward. Then at full speed he cut across against the other man, who had a shield. But John had neither helm nor shield, or such a horse as the Earl had, although his nag was good.<sup>53</sup> At this point Blonde felt great fear. If she had had all the wealth in the world, she would gladly have given it provided that it would go well with her beloved. The two warriors on the beach quickly reached each other. Neither of them was fainthearted about striking. The Earl hit John first; the whole doublet was not so useful to him that the sword did not pass through. It broke through his stout hauberk and sliced down his side so that it took off some of his skin; if the weapon had been well sharpened, that would have been the end of John. And John had fixed his sword so straight that—through the top of the shield and through the hauberk the Earl had on, and right through all his other wrappings—he pierced him with it, a hand's span beyond the shoulder. Such was the force of the blow that, over the rear saddlebow and over his horse's rump, the Earl was thrown to the ground. His helm struck the earth so hard that it was nearly crushed in upon him. He was badly hurt. And John took the good Morel, which ran faster than a swallow flies, and promptly leapt into the saddle. Now he was far more secure than if he had been surrounded by good walls. He made up his mind that on no account would anyone come to harm him without being killed. Just then along came Robin; he was holding the Earl's sword, which he had found on the beach. He would have cut off the Earl's head, but for his men, who came up quickly. Robin mounted his master's horse. When Blonde saw the Earl in such a state, badly wounded on the beach, she said: "Sir Earl, you will not obtain the love you have looked for. A better man than you has sought it out. You were a fool when you jousting with my friend. So it goes. It's good that things have gone badly for you; for seldom has a rich earl and knight been seen deigning to joust with a squire. I am very glad that my friend has got himself on your horse." The Earl heard Blonde very well, but answered her not a word; pain kept him from saying anything. And John, angry, promptly returned to him with the good captain beside him; and Robin was coming up behind.

The Earl would have been close to death if his men had not approached at full speed. They were much alarmed when they saw their Earl in such a state, in distress and shame. To rescue him, both the foolish and the wise came spurring. The best-mounted man got there first; but the one who lagged behind was wiser than the one in front, for John was ten times fiercer on account of his beloved. Seeing her near him, and fearing to lose her, he was as ferocious as a lion. He pricked Morel with his spurs. He so assailed the first man with his sword that he cut off his head, and struck the second on the hand so that he made it fly far away. He killed the third and knocked down the fourth. Just as beasts in a clearing flee for fear of the wolf, these men quit the spot where John was on the attack, because of the great blows with which he was slicing their flesh and bones. The captain caught a warhorse and mounted with the stirrup. From those who were no longer alive he and Robin had taken spurs and used them. They came rushing toward the skirmish in the spot where they saw John, who that night was hard pressed because the Earl's men were increasing in numbers; more and more of them kept coming. There were a good hundred of their enemies, prepared and furnished with arms; and John was only one of three. The situation was very dangerous. Twenty of the Earl's men guarded their master, who did not remount because of his injury. The blood coming from his wound was running down his body, to the great dismay of his men. And John was fighting with the others; he threw down flat many a dead man. He was much aided by the captain, who had a halberd in his hand; with two blows he killed two of them. And Robin, on his master's horse, received many a blow on his neck and his head that night. Yet if the enemies had not feared John more than they did those two, they would soon have put them to death. But they so dreaded his blows because of the heads he had cut off that they did not dare encounter him. From a distance they kept throwing lances at him,<sup>54</sup> which made numerous holes in his hauberk and even wounded him in his body, drawing blood in four places. But these were not mortal wounds; he was little concerned about them. With the spurs he put Morel to a run; he dashed to where he saw the greatest throng just as the wolf does at beasts when he is starving. And they fled from him in all directions.

While they were battling thus, twenty of them made their way toward Blonde, whom they saw alone in the middle of the plain. One of them took her by the rein, and the others by dint of much noise were driving off her palfrey. They went away at full speed toward the town. When she saw herself captured, she was more dismayed than she had ever been. She cried aloud: "Holy Mary! Beloved, now you have lost me!" Hearing his sweetheart, John

well understood that she was in danger. He seized a lance, then gave free rein to Morel, which took great strides. John raced until reaching the men who meant to lead off his beloved. He shouted at them: "You will not take her away, wicked traitors, slanderers!" With the lance he struck the first one, piercing his body so that, dying, he did not cry out, but promptly fell to the ground. Then John drew his pointed sword and with it cleft the second man to the teeth, so that he fell facedown to the ground. With the third blow he killed the third. Meanwhile Robin and the captain came up, both spurring after him. Before they joined him he had already brought down four men. And each of his two supporters as they approached made one enemy lie on the shore. John scarcely rested; to the one who was holding his beloved by the rein he gave such a stroke with his sword that he cut through his thigh. The other man let go of the rein, willy-nilly, falling stunned to the beach. Then John said in reproach: "Vassal, it is a mistake to believe that any true lover near or far could fail his beloved in need. It was an evil hour when you laid a hand on her; you have your proper reward for it." All the others who saw such blows fled and left Blonde. And John came back to his beloved and told her not to be dismayed. She answered: "I am, though; here are too many of those I hate. By the love we have together, I beg that we get to the ship as soon as possible." When he heard himself entreated in the name of love there was no more respite; they went off toward the ship without delay. But after John followed some sixty men, threatening him with death.

Just at the moment when they came to the water, the sixty pressed them so hard that John was made to suffer much pain and distress. For Robin and the captain were loading their warhorses onto the ship and were putting Blonde aboard also; and John was defending himself quite alone. He received and gave many strokes, cutting off heads and arms. But when the lovely one was in the ship, the captain, very happy, shouted to his boatmen: "Now, quick, men, we must run to aid John; he is fighting alone on the beach." They had wanted to come long since, they answered, "but in order to have the ship guarded you made us stay here." At that they jumped out of the boat and quickly came to John, whom they saw doing such exploits as were never seen before. Just as when a wild boar, set upon by dogs, holds out until he slays most of them, so John on the beach exposed himself to danger against his enemies. He killed so many that I believe God did it all, did it because He did not wish their love to come to an end, for it was faithful and good and God rewards all that is good. That night John killed twenty of his opponents, by count, as I find in the tale, not including those whom the others killed or wounded.

Now the boatmen came up, all gripping halberds with cutting steel points. Among them were the good captain and Robin. When they were all at the melee, there were twenty-three of them, and they caused much consternation. So vigorously did they attack, those on this side, that their enemies fell back. There was an exchange of many blows; horses were killed and knights brought to the ground, some dead, others wounded. Many pommels, many hands were cut off. Back as far as where the four spies had been concealed at the beginning, our men drove them. This was all to the good for Robin, for there he had hidden the little case when he saw the first skirmish. He had covered it with sand, but now he uncovered it. Then he said softly to John: "Sir, return toward the ship. My lady has remained alone, terrified for your sake." John said to him: "You speak truly. I do not want to stay here any longer." Thereupon they returned at a walk. But their enemies were so weary and so crushed by the fighting that they greatly hoped it would end. They would hunt the lovers no more this year; they were too much afraid of John's strokes. He was coming at a slow pace toward the sea and keeping in the very rear to defend the boatmen if anyone should attack from behind. He was still on Morel, whose hide was pierced, to my knowledge,<sup>55</sup> in thirty places.<sup>56</sup> That night he had been very serviceable to John, enabling him to do much damage to his enemies. Thereupon, in good order, they entered the ship one after the other. The fight had lasted so long that it was already full morning.

When Blonde saw the return of the one for whom she had felt such anxiety, she was quite reassured, but was much amazed that he had no mortal wound; she saw that he was spattered all over with blood, his own and others'. She removed his armor quickly; then very gently she washed his face with water, and with warm wine bathed his wounds, of which he had ten all told. (But he would soon be healed, for they were by no means mortal.) When he had bindings on his wounds, he borrowed a set of clothes from the captain, for he had left his own in the woods. Robin took off his body protection also; then they removed the whitening from his face, for he still had it stained from the day before. And the sailors set their sails to the wind and busied themselves so that they could depart quickly and smoothly. The wind swelled the sails and carried them all away rapidly. Now they no longer gave a rap for those they had left on the beach, who felt nothing but vexation.

The Earl was filled with anger so great that no one could express it when he saw that he had lost Blonde and that his men were dead or overthrown and he himself was injured. He had the living load up the dead and carry them into the church. He caused masses to be sung for them and afterward

had them buried. For his own healing and that of the other wounded he sent for physicians. He had the wound in his shoulder probed and dressed, which it needed badly. Then he had himself carried in a litter back to his part of the country, for no one advised him to pursue John into France. His men said: "When so much we have lost this side, we would very soon lose on the other. They are debbils and demons fight on side French. May debbils go to them! Let you your little pig marry. You find plenty little pig; not have more toward this one desire." "You says well," said the Earl. "Nay! Demons they are, and I have nothing to do with." (In the same way Reynard got no blackberries; when he had failed in every way and saw that he would not have any, then he said that he did not care about them.<sup>57</sup> The Earl of Gloucester behaved just the same: when he saw that there was no help for it, he said that he didn't care.) Hurting and beaten and dismayed, he kept his mind on traveling, until they came back into their own territory. Thus the Earl lost Blonde. I'll say no more about him but shall turn to the lovers, who were in the ship, joyful to have escaped alive from the assaults of their enemies.

Now the tale relates that in good time they came to the beach of Boulogne. The two lovers disembarked, and once in the town they entered the best lodging they knew. The good captain, who had been of such service to them, stayed there with them. They thanked him, telling him over and over that they would reward him well. And because of their injuries they sent for a physician in Boulogne. This man, after examining and probing their wounds, said that there was no danger. He bound on such dressings that in the course of the four days that John stayed in Boulogne, he was quite healed and well able to ride. Then there was no question of delaying. He paid the physician what was desired, and he assured the captain that he would promptly send back to him four large measures of coins. The captain thanked him for this very much.

One morning as the sky brightened John had got ready. He had not put on an old set of clothes, for he had bought a new one. Blonde, for her part, quickly got on her horse. When all three of them had mounted they set out on their way; now there was nothing to trouble them. The captain remained behind, and his boatmen with him. The two lovers hastened along so much that they took lodging right at Hesdin, a fine fortified town in Artois. John, always mannerly, served his beloved very well, and they lacked for nothing. The next day, beginning at first light, they traveled on, sleeping that night at Corbie, a noble walled town. On the following day, early and speedily, they took the straight road until in the evening they came to Clermont, where they were made comfortable. They had so much joy and pleasure in keep-

ing each other company, in embracing and kissing, that I couldn't tell the tenth part of it if I had given it long thought. They had meat and fish in plenty and good wine at their pleasure. As soon as the night had passed and they saw the day break, John commanded Robin to go ahead swiftly to Dammartin to tell the news to his sisters and to get the house ready.

With such words they mounted. John won his host's goodwill by paying him handsomely. They emerged from Clermont without delaying; and at that point Robin left them. (He was well mounted on Liart, and John was still riding Morel.) Robin made good speed until he came to Dammartin and did not slow down until he found the two sisters, who rejoiced when Robin had given them an account of the good sense, the beauty, the goodness of Blonde, whom John was bringing with him. At this news the girls were happier than ever before. They had the apartments swept and cleaned, from top to bottom. Then they invited relatives and cousins, and also their near neighbors, as John had ordered. (He himself had sent for all three of his brothers, who were at Paris with the King, asking them to come tomorrow, before daybreak.) Robin was neither slow nor stingy, but sent for fish and meat, and wines of Auxerre and Orléanais, which are good to drink in all months. ...<sup>58</sup> Afterward he went to attend to other matters. He knew well how to manage everything; he had tables set up on trestles, sent for bread from the baker, sought out pantler and butler, just as he had seen it done at court. After that he hastened to the kitchen, where there were plenty of servants who had sharpened the cooks' knives for the preparation of roasts. Meanwhile people started arriving, according to how close they lived; and they all kept asking Robin for news. He told them enough to bring them much joy, for they were pleased at John's good fortune. And what were John's sisters doing? They were adorning and dressing themselves; as quickly as they could they prepared to receive Blonde with honor; and they had promptly ordered from a cloth merchant thirty lengths of silk, and tailors with them, to make sets of clothes without delay. And so, all joyful, with gay hearts, they awaited John and his beloved, who did not hasten too much on their way because they wanted to find everything in readiness when they arrived. So they would; everything was now ready.

Toward vespers the townspeople came out eagerly to meet and welcome them. Those who were on horseback soon encountered John and his beloved and loudly wished them welcome. Each of them kept saying: "May the King of this world give joy to John and to Blonde! We very much love and cherish the man who brings into this country a young lady of such beauty; the whole realm will be enhanced by it." So they all were saying, men

and women. And Blonde kept replying to the groups: May God give them good adventure! Thus at a gentle pace they went along, greeting and talking, until they came to the house. More than thirty knights reached out their arms to help the beauty dismount easily. John's two sisters arrived and promptly welcomed him, their hearts full of rejoicing. The meeting of them all was so fine that it ought well to be remembered.

Thereupon they entered the hall, which was handsome and clean and well swept. Many tables were set up there. Blonde was taken away by John's two sisters, who were at pains to serve her, into the chambers to change her clothes. She put on a set that was very noble, made of fine cloth, richly dyed; then she returned to the hall, which was full of knights and men-at-arms. There was much talk among them of the beauty they saw in Blonde; they were all saying that there was no equal to it in all the world. Thereupon they sat down to supper. If anyone wished to describe their dishes, he would make too long a pause. John served and honored them all; he well knew how to go about it, since he had learned all forms of honor. He gave them so much wine and so many dishes that he had never before served so many. When they had finished supper, it was dark. Afterward they danced carols all night until day was about to break; then they went to rest until it was broad daylight.

Now John needed to wait no longer before taking his beloved in marriage. His brothers came from Paris early in the morning, and by so doing added to the general joy. Their hearts were far from saddened when they greeted Blonde and saw her to be so beautiful. By then the altar had been prepared for the singing of the mass. I don't know who went to tell the minstrels about this celebration, but to my knowledge more than thirty of them soon put in an appearance. There were more than a hundred knights and a good two hundred fair ladies, as well as young girls and damsels; and there would have been still more if the celebration had been postponed. But John did not dare delay it further; he still feared some impediment.

Blonde was soon ready. She had a well-cut gown of cloth-of-gold, with a mantle over her shoulders. Its clasps were easily worth ten marks. Her beautiful hair was loose, softly caught in a braid. Whoever dressed it so was not at all negligent; it had been brought down to her waist and was more beautiful than I described it when I first spoke about her. I don't wish to give another account, except to say that her beauty brightened every place where she came. Her hair was bound by a cirlet of shining gold. On her breast she had a brooch, one of those she had brought with her; the King did not have a richer one. She had a belt and an alms purse; as long as the world endures,

the equal of the set would never be found. It was worked with gold and precious stones and pearls as large as peas. Whoever made it spent more than a month at it; to my knowledge it was worth a hundred pounds. Then the priest appeared at the high end of the chapel.<sup>59</sup> He called John and Blonde by name, then asked them, each in turn, whether they wished to be lawfully joined. If it were not usual to speak so, each of those two would have thought the priest a fool for asking that question, for there was nothing that could please them so much, nothing for which they had such desire; and so they promptly answered that they wished it wholeheartedly. Saying this gave them no trouble. Thereupon each of them took the vow of this alliance.

They were married; they went off to the church and heard the service. After the mass they returned and dressed for dinner. The knights stopped Blonde and led her away to be seated at table. As for their dishes suffice it to say that they had a fine meal. Afterward there were viols, bagpipes, harps, and flutes, which made sweeter melodies than had ever been heard before. Then they all hastened to the round dances, where many verses were sung. Considering the number of people John had there, he behaved well and nobly on that day. (In time, if he could, he would have more, for he wanted to be made a knight at the hand of King Louis: no small matter.) A wedding feast so hastily arranged was never better ordered; all who were present had what they wished, and nothing troubled them. There was rejoicing all day long; many a song was sung. When vespers came, they had supper, then went back to dancing until well into the night. At last the dancing broke up; they drank and went off to bed—which John much desired to do. The priest blessed their bed; then with great delight John's two sisters bedded the one in whose heart love was always fresh. John did not make a long delay, but carefully watched for his moment.

When John had seen to everything and done what pleased them all, and knew that Blonde had retired, don't think that this was disagreeable to him. With a joyful heart he came into the chamber, which he emptied of the others without giving offense. No lady or maiden remained there except the one whom John greatly desired. He hurried to undress, then slipped into bed beside his beloved and took her in his arms. Now came the union that they had desired so many times. Now they had the final step of love from which they had always abstained. No self-control was needed any longer; in every way they knew perfect joy and had their will entirely. Now nothing caused their hearts to suffer. As much as they had desired the game of love, which they had kept back, so much more they now had delight. Blonde gave herself so entirely to John that she lost the name of maiden. She did not care

about that in the slightest, for she had preserved it until the right moment. And John often came close to her, often embraced and kissed her, had no more memory of discomfort, no longer remembered any pain. Love served them such sweet dishes that in a short while they were masters of the game that they had never known before, for Love and Nature taught them. They were not inclined to hasten too much. To begin early and play slowly and after one game take the next: Love well knew how to teach them this. From Love they had well-matched play; they would not make such bids that it mattered to them which one would win. They held themselves entwined in each other's arms, mouths kissing, hearts joined; at this they were no longer apprentices. Each had such joy of the other that I couldn't relate it, and couldn't be believed except by lovers who have known the torments of love and then the joys; they will not disbelieve me. No one can understand a tale of love who doesn't know what it means; but everyone may well know that the more a person longs to have something—and it happens to come to pass as wished—the more it is treasured by the desirer when he has it. Therefore, whoever has heard this tale, if he has well understood the ills, the great pains and travails and fears had by those two who have now come to enjoyment, he must well know that they have great delight. They rejoiced together so much that they did not remember to sleep until the day came. Then they got up promptly. . . .<sup>60</sup> John's sisters helped Blonde to rise and prepared her very well. Then they went to hear mass, which pleased them much.

When mass had been sung the midday meal was ready; and so they all sat down, ladies and knights together. Along the tables they had plenty of delectable wines and foods. After dinner they went to dance, and danced until nones. Then the guests had to attend to other things. Having taken leave of Blonde and of John, whom they loved dearly, they went away to their own homes. John retained ten knights and his brothers, who were very dear to him. These men would keep him company and honor his beloved and stay with them and join his household.

Now John was with Blonde and was the happiest man in the world; there was nothing to worry him. And Blonde, whose heart was void of all malice and full of goodness, was for her part so happy that she lacked for nothing. In the daytime they had fine company; and at night they had so sweet a time that there is no one who could tell it and no clerk who could write it. There was nothing that troubled them anymore except the longing for peace with the good Earl of Oxford. They would want to strive hard for this. On another matter, a great desire of John's was to be a knight. When he had stayed eight days with his beloved, John said that if it pleased her he wanted

to go speak to the King. "For I want to request him from my heart to send a message to your father in England, exhorting him for God's sake to be reconciled with you and also with me. If he is entreated by the King about this, I believe that he is so good and worthy a man that we shall soon have his pardon. Afterward, however much it costs me, I shall pray the King to come at Pentecost to do me honor and to join the festivity. On that day I'll want to have a great celebration, for he will make me a knight and also my brothers, who are so dear to me."

Blonde granted this request willingly. Thereupon, having taken leave, John set out. He went off to Paris, where he found King Louis.<sup>61</sup> He dismounted at his own lodging, then passed along to the court. He did not appear there poorly: he had ten knights with him, and also his brothers. He went straight to the King and promptly greeted him, and the King graciously said: "John, welcome! I am happy at your good fortune. I have been told the news: you have married your beloved, after at first being in her service." "Sire, you were told the truth, upon my soul! Through her great graciousness she has brought me out of the distress that would have caused my death if she had not taken pity on me. But I come to you as to the lord to whom I owe faith and honor, and I pray that you send to Oxford and entreat my lord, if he bears us ill will, for pity's sake to set it aside. If I have acted badly toward him, I did it in self-defense. I had to act as I did, or else lose my life. On the other hand, he was most generous when I left him; and he also gave me leave, if I should ever return, to help myself boldly from what he possessed. I wished to thank him for this, and so I immediately answered: if it pleased God, I should come back and take more of what was his. In this I have kept my word to him, for it has so happened that I've brought his daughter away to France, with great difficulty, and taken her in marriage. Otherwise I'd have died, for all my comfort lies in her. Now I beg you to request of him that, if he is angry with me for this deed, he overcome his resentment and give us his grace and his love. After this, I request that at Pentecost, when many great celebrations take place, you will be so good as to come to Dammartin. On that day I'll want to hold a festival. Furthermore, I ask this much: that you make me a knight, and also knight my three brothers here, who are very eager for it. Gracious King, may this affair please you!"

The King answered: "John, my friend, God has placed so much goodness in you that I am not sorry at your honor. I wish to grant your request; and further for your advantage I give you in perpetuity, upon homage, the town of which you bear the name; you will have Dammartin of my gift. Now it is my will that you be count of it. You will also have Plailly, which will be

profitable, and Montméliant in addition; it is worth six thousand pounds and more. The land I have here named will be written in the letter that will go to England; my seal will attest to the Earl that you are lord of Dammartin. He must no longer be angry with you for taking away his daughter, for she has bestowed herself well." Hearing this, John was so happy that he knelt at his feet; he would have kissed his shoe,<sup>62</sup> but the King raised him up. The King promptly took his homage for the land specified, and afterward gave him seizin of it with a glove by which he gave it over.<sup>63</sup> John did not fail to thank the King for this. (The good sense that God had put in him made him have friends among good people.) The King promptly called the man who carried his seal and ordered him to seal such letters as John would desire: a charter of the county that the King had granted him, and a letter of entreaty to the father of John's beloved. This was done, since the King had said it: soon written and sealed. Then he called two knights who were among his counselors and told them that they were to go off to England and carry his letters to Oxford. They were to assure the Earl that his daughter had come to a good port in France, for she was held dear by worthy people and also was Countess of Dammartin. "Tell him that he is to rejoice, for his daughter is well situated." The knights, to whom this task was agreeable, said that they would carry out this order willingly; they were happy at John's honor. As for the names of those who were sent abroad, the one was called Sir Guy, the other Sir William. There were not two men in the kingdom who could convey a message better. They prepared for their journey that evening, for in the morning they would set out.

At this point the wise and courteous King went to have supper. John, who had all the qualities required, served before him at the table; and his brothers, who still were part of the King's household, also served up and down. They all had a great profusion of good wines, good meat, good fish. After supper until nightfall they went for enjoyment along the Seine. John needed no instruction; he knew well, that night, how to be companionable with the knights William and Guy, who would go as messengers for him. When the hour came they went to bed.

In the morning William and Guy lost no time; they woke up, put on their boots, and got ready. Their boys and squires promptly loaded their packhorses. And John and his companions had already climbed into the saddle, for he wanted to go along part of the way to keep them company. Then they set out, emerging from Paris early and riding through Saint-Denis; they did not stop before Luzarches, where their dinner was waiting. For they had sent ahead one of their cooks, practiced in this, who had

prepared everything for them; they had a meal to their liking. After dining they set out on their way. And John still escorted them until they emerged from Luzarches.

As soon as they were outside the town, the two knights out of kindness urged John to turn back. John replied that since it pleased them, he would leave them at that point. Thereupon he called Robin, who had a well-saddled horse, and told him to go with the knights as far as the sea and to say to the faithful captain that he was to take them across without harm and bring them back again. On their return, the captain was without fail to come with them to Dammartin at Pentecost. Robin answered that he would indeed tell him all this and would gladly go with the knights. Thereupon John took leave. But before that he urged them repeatedly: let them say to his lord,<sup>64</sup> on his behalf, that he begged mercy of him, in God's name. They said that they would indeed tell him this.

Thereupon they separated; off went the two knights toward the sea, and John set out for where love drew him. They all took the road to Dammartin, but John sent his brothers ahead to prepare the keep of which the King had made him a gift. They hastened so much that they came to Blonde at a gallop and related everything to her: the love, the honor, and the graciousness that the King had shown to John. They caused her much pleasure when they told her that she would be Countess of Dammartin without a promise,<sup>65</sup> that the King had sent to England in order to procure peace for her, and that at Pentecost he himself would come and make all the brothers knights. When Blonde had heard this welcome news, very softly she thanked God for it, for she well knew that He had aided her. She had such joy in her heart that it cast out all distress. And John's brothers went on to the castle and greeted the man who was there representing the King.<sup>66</sup> Courteously they gave him a letter in the King's name. The castellan took it and saw inside it that the King ordered him to yield to John of Dammartin the whole town and the castle. And so he did, and was pleased to do so. The news soon spread and became generally known that the town was given to John. This was very agreeable to all, for by all he was loved. In time he would be called lord.

Then John came to the castle, which was handsome, clean, and large. His beloved ran to meet him when she saw him come into the courtyard. And John entwined her in his arms and kissed her more than thirty times. Afterward they entered the hall, which was clean and tidy. The supper had been prepared by the cooks, who had made haste. After supper until night they enjoyed themselves, then went to bed when it was time. And that night John related to his beloved news that was pleasing and good to her. They had

so much to talk about and so much love to work out that, if there had been three nights in one, they would not have been weary of playing. They were much gratified by the play that Love represented to them. Toward daybreak, in great contentment, they fell asleep in each other's arms and slept until terce. Then they got up, dressed, and went to the church to hear God's service. They had great faith in God and greatly profited from it, for God increased their love every day and multiplied their honors. (The person who holds to Him is wise, for there is no good that does not come from God.)

When they had heard mass John did not want to put things off; he conveyed to relatives and cousins and also all his neighbors that at Pentecost they were to come to him to do him honor, and with them their daughters and wives. He sent for so many knights and ladies that, when they all came, there would be great joy and much noise. Afterward John, wishing all to be arranged properly, took thought for those who would serve at his feast. He prepared his cooks, butlers, provisioners, and pantlers. As a well-informed man, he knew how to assign their duties. He made himself esteemed by his good sense. Before Pentecost came, the countryside made him many presents: one person, fat oxen; another, pigs. From many sides great deliveries were made; and John supplied both fowl and venison, so much that there was abundance. Having had great preparations made, John no longer awaited anything but the day of Pentecost, which was near. But here I leave off telling about him; I must say something about the two knights who were going off across the sea to England to seek peace for John and Blonde.

According to the story, on the day's journey after John had separated from them, they rode as far as Clermont and stayed there that night. The next day they lay at Corbie, a well-situated town, and at Hesdin on the third day, but did not remain there long. They hurried on their mission so much that on the fourth day they came to Boulogne, dismounting at the lodging where John had stayed. But Robin went on to the sea; he searched here and there until he caught sight of the captain who had been of great assistance to them. He was very happy to find him, and the captain quickly recognized him. In his master's name Robin greeted him, then conveyed John's request: that he be present at the knighting ceremony and that he transport with his ship the two messenger knights. "Gladly," said the captain, pleased with the order. At that they went to where the knights were taking their ease in their lodging. Robin said to them: "Here is the man who will convey you without any trouble." The knights were very pleased that it was all arranged so soon. By then the food was ready, and they had supper; then they went to bed. At daybreak they all got up without dallying. The messengers and their equipment

smoothly went off to the ship. Then Robin asked leave of them. They gave it, courteously entreating him to be sure to tell their master not to be uneasy about the message. Robin said that he would indeed tell him so. Then he prepared to ride, and set out. He lost no time, evening or morning, until he reached Dammartin. To his lord he gave his report of the messengers, and of the captain, who would not fail to return with them. John and Blonde were very glad at this news.

As for the messengers, they entered the high sea in the vessel, which quickly took them across. Truth to tell, they dined at Dover, just at midday. The captain remained at the seashore, saying that he would await their return. Thereupon the messengers went off. Through plains and through high woods full of shadows they rode as far as London, arriving in two days. But they made no long stay there. They lay one night in the town; the next day, when they saw the light, they remounted their horses and rode so far through hills and valleys that they spent the night at six leagues from Oxford. In the morning, refreshed, they were soon back on their road. Before terce they entered the town and asked of a townsman, who could speak French, whether the Earl was in his castle. The townsman said: "Yes, indeed." At that they moved on until they came to the castle. Their stirrups were quickly held by squires who gathered down below.<sup>67</sup> Because the arrivals seemed to them to be French, the English squires thought they would hear news. The French knights' palfreys were stabled by their squires and their attendants; the table was soon pointed out to these men.<sup>68</sup> And the messengers, side by side, went in to the great palace. They found the Earl talking of his daughter to a friend of his.

In came the two messengers. Sir William took it upon himself to speak. "Sir," he said, "in the name of Him Who is the Lord Omnipotent, greeting is sent you by Louis, who is called lord of France, and by one by whom you are beloved, your son-in-law, and by your daughter, who honors our land through having entered it. For by the witness of the region, she has so much beauty and virtue that it could not be related; and John is so courteous that he has not his equal in Artois.<sup>69</sup> The King knows there to be so much goodness in them both that he does not wish to suffer on any account that you be at odds with them. If John has, without your consent, taken away the one who loves him, by rights he must not be blamed for it; this was done by the power of ardent love. Now they send the request that out of friendship you have pity on the two of them. And the King of France informs you that he has bestowed on them the gift of the county of Dammartin. By the faith that I owe to God and Saint Martin, I saw John take seizin of it and do homage.

And furthermore I give you to know this: the good King cherishes John so much that he will knight him at Pentecost, which is not long from now, and his three brothers as well. Now he and the King entreat that you may be so gracious as not to harbor resentment against those who desire to act rightly. And to make you more certain, here in my hand are the letters that my lord sends to you.”

The Earl took them, spread them out, and perused them, knowing how to read. He saw them to be just as the knights had related, and was lifted up in joy. He responded: “Sirs, you have a very courteous king. He imparts seemliness and very great nobleness, and I shall do his will. Since my daughter is married, separating her from her husband would be cruel. Deep love has made them do this. They had to leave the country in much peril, as I understand. John had great difficulties at the seashore and gave a good account of himself, according to the reports; for with two others he overcame a hundred.<sup>70</sup> He himself, alone, in one night killed more than eighteen men. It seems to me that his good sense and his prowess should be counted in his favor. I have never, after hearing of it, borne anger against him. And even if today I still bore it, I should pardon him for the sake of your King, who has so noble a heart that he has made a countess of my daughter. So help me God! I am not at all displeased. Out of joy I wish to go with you. I shall go to John’s knighting and shall never afterward part from the two of them, but all my life hereafter will be spent in their company. There will be no discord; always we shall have a common purse. Be welcome, both of you! You are retained with me until the preparations are made for the journey I am to undertake. We shall keep to the program so punctually that we’ll all be there at Pentecost.” Thereupon he called two squires. “Conduct these knights to the chamber next to the chapel,” he said, “and make sure to serve them well.” They obeyed his command. The knights went happily away to the chamber to take their boots off; and the Earl immediately had two goblets carried to them, none so rich from there to Baghdad; in each there were ten gold marks. Afterward he also sent them complete sets of clothing, of scarlet cloth, and good, expensive furs. In these garments they dressed themselves, and then emerged from their chamber. They returned to the palace and to the Earl, who was ruled by nobleness. They thanked him very much indeed for what he had sent them.

By this time dinner was ready, and so they sat down. But if someone wanted to list and describe what was served, it would make for too long a tale; they had many delectable dishes before the tables were taken away. For three days the messengers stayed in great ease. During this time the Earl was

intent on having his journey prepared, for he wished to stay no longer at home. He sent for as many as thirty knights, who would go with him. Valuable horses, fine sumpters laden with silk and with money—he wanted, if possible, to have a good eighty of them, half sumpters, the other half riding horses. God! So much cloth-of-gold, so many silken stuffs, so much sterling money, and so many prepared ermine skins he had bundled up and packed, there would have to be talk forever afterward of the fine presents that he would make. When everything was ready, he said to the messengers: When they wished they would all set out on the road. This was very pleasing to them, and they answered that it was high time to move. The Earl, not knowing the date or the hour of his return, was exceedingly prudent and left his land in such hands that no one might win anything there through warfare. Then, with great cheer, he departed from Oxford one morning, having with him thirty knights and more than sixty squires. The knights did not at all ride like peasants; their bridles and saddles were all alike. On account of the dust, they had matching goat-hair cloaks lined with red silk. It seemed indeed as if they were going to a feast, for they entertained themselves while riding, one by telling fine tales and another by singing songs.

I shall not relate their daily travels. They went by hills and valleys until they came down to the sea. There they did not stay long, for the captain had already made arrangements for them. He had picked out a good ship there, and into it he supervised the loading of sumpters and warhorses, nags, pal-freys, and money. In his own ship, which was very solid, he embarked the Earl of Oxford and all his company. The captain was delighted when the messengers related to him the response that they had had from the Earl, who had set out to give John honor and joy. The captain was very glad of it; going eagerly to the Earl, he gave him an account of the amazing feat through which John had crossed over. At this the Earl greatly marveled. "Surely, he must have been very weary," he answered. "He suffered much hardship in order to take my daughter across the sea. And because you aided him and saved their lives, I give you fifty silver marks." This was very pleasing to the captain.

Exchanging such words, they sailed until arriving at Boulogne, where they emerged from the ship onto the shore. Without any damage they had their horses brought out and the other equipment with them. Promptly the cooks went into the town to take lodging and engaged one so fine that there was nothing to be compared with it. Then came the Earl and all his people, in a splendid procession; many a man left his task to see them pass through the city. And the Earl dismounted at the lodging, more than a hundred

people being there when he got down, and with him the two knights, Sir William and Sir Guy. These two stayed close to him, for they were much in the Earl's favor; both for John's sake and for the King's, he honored them as much as himself. By the time their boots had been pulled off, the tables were ready, and so the company had supper with great pleasure. After this, while their beds were being made up, they listened to minstrels playing viols, for they never stayed anywhere without such folk; they had a half dozen, who gave them much delight. They enjoyed themselves until nightfall, and then went to bed.

That night they were very comfortable. In the morning they arose early and soon were on the road again. And they had the captain mount a palfrey that the Earl had given him, a very good one. (In a place he chose, he had already put the money that had been promised to him at sea. Never since that day was he anything but rich; nor was he ever again a captain except when he wanted to transport his rightful lords, the Earl or John. Afterward, all the days of his life, he was in their home and part of their household.) Having seen to his own affairs, the captain too set out; before dinner he caught up with the Earl, who, however, was not riding slowly. On that day they all dined at Montreuil, and then went on as far as Hesdin. The next day at daybreak they all remounted promptly. Then the two messengers came up to the Earl with this information: "Sir," said Sir William, "You have entered the kingdom where you will make many people happy.<sup>71</sup> From here to Clermont there are, as you know, only two days' easy riding, and then there remain only twenty more leagues to where the feast will be held. On Friday, with no stopping, you will arrive at Clermont by nightfall, and the next day will be the eve of Pentecost. And I tell you this much: that on that day, before noon, you will be able to see John and Blonde, who will be the happiest people in the world when they learn of your coming. It cannot be known too soon, a piece of news that can give joy. And so we entreat you to let us hurry ahead along this road to cheer your daughter and John, for they will be very joyful when they hear that you are approaching."

The Earl answered that this pleased him very much. And so the two knights took leave immediately and went spurring off. With them went the captain, who would have been sorry to remain behind; and squires to serve them went along as well. On that day's journey they exerted themselves so much and went so far, by hills and valleys (they did not spare their horses), that of two days' journeys they made one. Before the moon rose that night they came to lodging at Clermont, the castle of which is on a hill. That night they rested there, and the next day arose early and rode on. They rode at such a

rapid amble that they came to Dammartin a good while before terce. At the castle they got down at the mounting block and started up the steps.

John and Blonde were coming back from the church, where they had heard the service of that High King in whom there is no fault. John recognized the messengers immediately; he rushed toward them and embraced them. He spoke courteously to them and asked: "What news?" They answered: "Fine and good. The Earl of Oxford is on his way here. You will easily have his pardon, for he loves you more than anything born; he considers his daughter well bestowed. He is coming to see you in great state. The Count of Blois has nothing so valuable as the treasure that he is bringing. His retinue is scarcely common; in it there are thirty knights and more than sixty squires, so many palfreys and so many sumpters and so much rich and expensive accoutrement that the abundance of it is overwhelming, so that we cannot reckon it up. And toward us he has been generous; he has given us ten gold marks and fine clothes and adornments; our relations never had anything like them. And so be happy; he will not delay, but will arrive tomorrow before midday." "John," said the captain, "for my part I must thank you very much, for he has given me fifty marks. He has well rewarded me for the good deeds I did you when crossing over to this side. Now be glad, for he is coming here."

John and Blonde listened to what the messengers related; now their joy was doubled. They were so happy that I couldn't tell it. They made much of the knights, and of the captain too, whom they loved. Now Blonde was reassured, since she was reconciled with her father. The news quickly spread through the town that their lady's father was coming. One person said to the other: "Now we must have the town cleaned up."

Then you should have seen the unfolding of linen cloths and the covering of streets with them, so closely that no one saw the clouds,<sup>72</sup> and along the sides, from the windows, the hanging of so many counterpanes at the houses, so much cloth-of-gold and so much scarlet cloth, not lined with matting but with squirrel fur and ermine! Around Dammartin there was not a girl, boy, townsman, or townswoman whose heart did not rejoice when they saw their town looking so fine. "This festival is not a halfhearted thing," said those who saw the preparations, for John's people were making great efforts to get ready. Near the tower in an orchard they set up many pavilions. Others busied themselves as was needed. God! How Robin applied himself in preparing his own affairs, how he put his whole heart into having everything go well! (Such a lad is rare nowadays; they would rather go to the tavern or to the brothel than put their hearts into serving faithfully, and few are

now known to be deserving. Robin did not at all wish to be like such folk, but served, and from this there came to him nothing but advantages. This is how a sensible person raises himself up.)

All that day they were active at Dammartin. The next day at dawn they recommenced their labors and worked through a great part of the morning; they had done everything before terce. As soon as that hour was past, the people who were to come crowded in from all sides. If anyone then had heard horses whinnying, carts unhitching, ladies dismounting, lodgings being occupied everywhere, and minstrels assembling, he would have been amazed. With the knights who were there John went to meet the King, and Blonde went along on a well-behaved palfrey. They encountered the King outside the town and greeted him very appropriately. Lovely Blonde, the most sensible woman in the world, made him from her heart so happy a face that she did indeed seem to the King without equal in the world; he marveled at her beauty.

When John had made much of the King, and had heard that the Queen was approaching with a great train, he and Blonde broke away from the King and went to meet her. She had many maidens with her, and in her suite there were more than twenty carts. Then up came Blonde. Seeing her coming, the Queen had her conveyance stopped and had Blonde get in with her. I couldn't relate to you how agreeable the meeting of these women was; they were very soon of one mind. And John here and there went from train to train greeting ladies and knights. Those who had made their way to the Earl in England came up to the King without pausing to rest and promptly delivered to him the answer that the Earl had given, adding that he would arrive before midday. The King was very glad of it. He quickly called John and said that he would go to meet him, all the others accompanying him. John thanked him for this very much. At that they left the town. And the Queen, learning of it, felt great joy on account of Blonde's father. She had all her carts turn around, for she wanted to go to meet him. If then anyone had seen, along the files, the turning of horses and palfreys on which knights were sitting, he would have said, I promise you, that there were two thousand knights, besides the people of the town who had all come out. By her lady's leave Blonde then remounted her palfrey. More than thirty ladies, by count, mounted to keep her company. While riding they sang songs, and the knights responded. Thus they went along at a walk toward the man who was not delaying, for it seemed to him that the hour of arriving at Dammartin would never come. He had left Clermont early and had ridden through the morning. A little before terce had passed he perceived the great trains that

were all advancing to meet him. They were making the plains resound with their rejoicing. Seeing them all, the Earl said to his people that never before had he beheld so fine a throng. His own people heartily agreed with his words. The Earl knew that they were all coming his way to give him joy.

They rode until one train joined the other. The King soon learned who the Earl was, and the Earl was promptly informed of who was the King, and also the Queen. There was nothing but greetings and friendship. On both sides they dismounted, including the King and those who were with him. They made the Earl very welcome. "Good Sir Earl," said the King, "you have acted most courteously in coming into our country. For fear of you your daughter and son-in-law were dismayed, they who now are not the least among our nobility; for because of their sense and goodness I have given them a county. If they have acted badly toward you, the power of love made them do it. They both ask your pardon." Thereupon the Earl's daughter and John fell to their knees before the Earl; with clasped hands they begged his forgiveness. "Sir, for the sake of God!" said Blonde, "I'd never have known joy in this world if my beloved had died through me. Before he had comfort from me, he *was* going to die, as you well know. Love has pursued us so long that our hearts are united. We shall have cast out all care if we can succeed in keeping your goodwill."

"Sir, for the sake of God!" said John, "If it pleases you to take amends for any wrong that I have done to you, I am at your mercy. For if you put me to death, you could not do worse than the separation of me and my beloved would have done. I was forced to do all this; otherwise I'd have had to die. When you placed me in her service you put me in peril of death. But through her nobleness she has rescued me from all distress. If we had your goodwill, we'd not ask anything further. And so I beg you to bear a good heart toward us, and dispense with anything else." The Earl answered: "Now, rise! It troubles me greatly to see you so long on your knees. If it were for nothing except the sake of the King, who entreats me for this reconciliation, I should not refuse it. From my heart I put aside all anger and turn over to you all that I have." At that he lifted them up and kissed them, thereby greatly easing their hearts. As to John's two sisters and his three brothers, if I had this whole year to do it I couldn't relate the manner or the graciousness or the cheer they showed among themselves. The Queen, too, brought love and compassion, turning all anger into concord.

Thereupon they mounted their horses again and rode until they entered the town. More than ten thousand townswomen, wearing their best, had come out to greet the trains of the King, their lord, and the Queen. There you would have heard many trumpets and little horns, many drums, many

great Saracen horns, many zithers and bagpipes. It is no wonder if people were amazed at the hangings, the instruments, the other preparations, the trumpets that announced the procession, the dances that the lads put on. So many instruments were sounding that the whole town reverberated. All the streets were strewn with green grass. In such recreation and joy they kept on their way until at the castle they dismounted at the mounting block. More than four hundred men reached out their hands to hold the stirrups of their lord. Then you would have seen the halls fill up. The ladies went to the chambers and alcoves to change their clothes, and the knights went to the palace. The dinner was already prepared in the pavilions. Then they stayed no longer; the trumpeters sounded the water for washing, and there the knights assembled. The King came to the pavilions, holding Blonde by the fingers, and the Queen held the Earl's. After them, too many to count, were coming knights, ladies and maidens, priests, clerks, townspeople, and damsels.

The King took the Earl with him to wash their hands, thereby doing him honor. After them, the ladies and knights washed their hands. The King had the Earl eat at his table, and Blonde beside him. As to the Queen, without giving offence she called those who best pleased her. Afterward, generally, they all sat down; never, at one dinner, have I seen so many. Then the dishes were brought in. There were more than twelve pairs of them; I wish to make no further mention of the matter. John and his brothers served; they served everywhere, everywhere were attentive that no one lacked for anything. The diners had lost interest before the tablecloths had been removed and they had washed their hands. After this, the minstrels rushed to play the viols. And John, in order to be made a knight, went off to get into a little water,<sup>73</sup> and so did his brothers and twenty others. Whoever wished was to become a knight; so it pleased the King and the Earl. There were twenty-four by count.

After bathing they put on overgarments on top of the gowns of white linen. The Earl laced on John's sleeves,<sup>74</sup> then put a mantle over his shoulders; and Blonde busied herself very well in dressing his brothers. At night they went to keep vigil, as was proper, in the holy church, which was decorated with many a good and beautiful hanging. All night long a minstrel played his viol before the future knights so that the hours might not be tedious for them. The King and all the other people who were pleased to do so lay down in fine and well-made beds. And those who wished kept company that night with the squires who were to be knighted. Very expensive was the light that burned all night before them. The Earl did not move from among them, nor did his daughter; until daylight they remained with John. And John thanked God much for the honor that He had done him. The

more John's power increased, the more he humbled himself. As soon as the night was over and they perceived the dawn, they had a mass sung and then went off to rest. They slept until after sunrise. Then they promptly got up, as did the King and all the knights. It was time to hear mass. And Blonde, who caused rejoicing in those who laid their eyes on her, for they could have nothing better to look at, on that day dressed herself so well and was adorned with such great beauty that just like the sun when it rises in the crimson morning and brightens the dark air, so did the beautiful and wise lady illuminate the places around her. I could say so much about her, about her loveliness and goodness, that I'd relate nothing more.

It must not be displeasing to anyone if I bring my tale to a close. All the men and women went to the service that was done that day in holy church. When the mass had been sung, John's sword was buckled on by the King, who made him a knight. And afterward he struck him a blow on the neck, and so he immediately did to his brothers.<sup>75</sup> I have never yet told you their names but now I shall, for it is appropriate. The firstborn after John was always wise and prudent, strong, agile, and clever, and his name was Sir Robert.<sup>76</sup> The next one, not so tall, was named Sir Tristan. The youngest was strong and aggressive; his name was Sir Manessier. All these were knighted by the wise and courteous King, who for love of them knighted more than twenty others. He gave them everything that was suitable. Then they returned to the pavilions, for it was dinnertime. And so after washing they seated themselves for a sumptuous dinner made for them. Of meats there were so many dishes that I cannot tell the number; the multitude of pigs, oxen, game, fowls, and fish was overwhelming. There they all saw dishes in great plenty, and good wines, as much as they liked.

Sir John sat beside the King on that day, and his brothers with him; and with the Queen sat Blonde, the loveliest woman in the world. The servants hurried about; at each course the trumpets sounded. There were ladies serving; they were adorned with cloth-of-gold and went singing before each course. Everywhere there was such joy that it seemed to everyone that no man alive ever saw anything like it. But this was still nothing. When they had eaten, such music began that none more beautiful was ever heard; the pavilions resounded with the instruments that were there. When they had listened to them for a time, the ladies hurried off to dance. There was many a lady in finery, many a song sung; there, with a great bustle, much apparel was changed. Never was there so fine a dance. When it ended, it was time for vespers, and they went to hear them. Afterward they came back to have supper. From then until night they again had joy and pleasure. If anyone had seen the wax torches

throughout the pavilions, row on row, he would not have thought, by the look of things, that wax was sold by weight; it seemed instead that it was given away. Although the night was dark, they saw around them very clearly. It was close to dawn when they broke off dancing, but at last they separated; they could not go on forever. They all went to lie down until it was day.

That night John made a lady of her who before was a damsel.<sup>77</sup> They were on the way to all pleasures; always they were in growing joy. However reluctant they were, they had to get up in the morning because of those who wanted to take leave. Sir John exerted himself in entreating them to stay, but it could not be; everyone wanted to return home. By dint of great effort he kept the King and the Queen with him. And to those who were leaving, the Count<sup>78</sup> gave jewels of many kinds according to their merit and rank; for this, each one much esteemed and liked him. They kept the King with them for four days. Their stay was most pleasant: they went to the rivers with falcons and to the forests for game. The good Earl of Oxford was invited by the King to enjoy himself in his forests and in his castles; of all this he wished him to make free. The Earl thanked him for this, and added that never in his life would he parted from his son-in-law. He was well on in years; he would be with him, when he wished, in France, and in England when he liked. Sir John was very happy when he learned of this. And, God! What great joy Blonde had in seeing that her father agreed to whatever they would wish to do; nothing could please her so much.

On the fifth day in the morning King Louis and his people left Dammartin. This was far from pleasing to the Count and the Earl, for if they could they would very gladly have retained him. For three leagues' distance they escorted him. Off with him went the new knights who were the Count's brothers, for they had been of the King's household as long as they were squires. (So they continued as knights, until he rewarded them well, giving them wives and land; from this they were rich and powerful and always helpful toward their brother.) The Count and the Earl, and Blonde with them, took leave of the best king who ever was; he gave it to them and freely conferred his power upon them. Thereupon they separated and returned to Dammartin, while the King went off to Corbeil. I wish to speak about him no more, but to return to the two lovers, who had the leisure to remain in festival, in amusement, and in joy. They had no enemies.

The Count and the Earl were at Dammartin; they were of one dwelling and one purse. What was pleasing and agreeable to the one, the other would promptly present to him. They led a good and honest life and were at pains to honor God. Similarly, lovely Blonde was free of all vices, having no

inclination towards evil-doing. Always she kept in a good way of life with her beloved, who was faithful, full of goodness, and devoid of evil. At the end of the year he married his two sisters to two great lords: the elder to the Count of Saint-Pol (who was wise and prudent), and to a brother of his the younger sister was married richly. Robin and his good captain—he wanted to marry them also. At Dammartin there were two townswomen who were rich and well-mannered, were worthy to be chatelaines; they were full sisters and had much land and movable property. John brought about the marriage of these two: of the elder to Robin the clever, and of the younger to the captain. Out of his own wealth he gave these two men many coins; and they were masters of his household, for they never wearied of serving him. Then of lovely Blonde the Count had four children, the loveliest in the world (from whom later great advantage and great honor came to their lineage).

When John and Blonde had been at Dammartin for two full years, they went away to see their land of Oxford in England. There they were received with joy. The Earl of Oxford lived with his daughter a good ten years like a man of worth and with a joyous heart. After his death for a good thirty years John was Earl of Oxford and Count of Dammartin in Goële. He had two counties and a lovely wife. They did much good between the two of them. They never knew what it was like to be alone; they always had a fine household and one well-instructed according to God's law. They relieved poor nuns, they married poor women, to good men wanting to seek honor they gave both money and land. They greatly honored Holy Church. Never in any way would they commit acts of villainy or arrogance. They were always of one mind. God granted them so many good things that their love did not fade, but grew and multiplied. They loved each other so much with a good heart that never, for any cause, did the one do to the other anything painful. And if some distress came upon them, one of them so comforted the other that the distress was borne lightly. On good terms with the Kings of whom they held land, they behaved faithfully toward them. They were loved by the common people, whom they treated as they ought. They were compassionate to the poor, giving them abundantly of their possessions. When they would come to stay in France they would make the whole country happy; and similarly in England. So they continued for a long while, until God, who will be without end, caused them to come to a good end.

By this romance all those who want to reach out toward honor and avoid shame can understand that everyone should practice self-control and exert body and heart so as to come to high esteem. I mean that each one should

seek honor—not through dishonest dealing but by controlling himself with his good sense, and serving with good breeding, and acting loyally, and being courteous and gentle, and knowing how to behave with all people, and speaking good words. For there are some persons who commit folly deliberately—or else a bad disposition draws them on until they engage in slander. A man who follows such a way of living is bad company. Whoever has such a tongue, may the evil fire burn him! For it stings worse than a lizard. Furthermore, whoever wants to rise high must so master body and heart as to be capable of keeping silent until speaking is appropriate. And also he must have good manners. And if it happens that he has a master, he must learn his character, for so do all sensible men. If he sees that his master is good and discerning, let him follow him to the end. And if he sees him to be unprincipled, then, I tell you this for truth, he should sensibly withdraw from him and keep away from his affairs.

Nor, for the sake of employment, let anyone neglect what he is most obliged to do: this is to fear and love God and to hate evil. A person who would neglect God for anyone would make too foolish a servant. For no one by any means can come to good if God does not grant it. It is well to hold fast to all loves that can lead to a good end. And if something of value is acquired, we should keep close in our hearts the will to spend wisely. For everyone, truly, should understand that nothing in the world is a heritage by right. If the wise person acquires something, afterward he should dispose of it well. Otherwise let him not lay a finger on anything that may belong to this world; for because of it he might fall into such ways that he would be cast into Hell, where he would have suffering without end. John through his astuteness won his beloved, and possessions in great plenty; but from the earth they took away nothing except what they gave away for God's sake. They acted as they should, for they never wearied of doing good. Now let the wise person take note of this, for he who sails well comes to a good port. It is wrong to be too idle. Now let everyone be astute in spending well and acquiring well, so that the Enemy may not put us away!

He prays badly who forgets himself.<sup>79</sup> Therefore I shall not forget to entreat that you kindly pray God to guard Philippe de Remi and give him a share of Paradise. For he was the one who wore himself down until he completed this tale. Here ends the story of John and Blonde. Never were there truer lovers in the world, nor will there be, as I hope. I know no more of it, to tell the truth.





## “THE TALE OF FOOLISH GENEROSITY”

THIS IS A BIT OF ADVICE to everyone inclined to thoughtless generosity: no one can keep it up and do well in the end.<sup>1</sup> I don't condemn making gifts, or rewarding good deeds; but it takes moderation and judgment to earn good people's respect without losing everything you own. Squanderers care about nothing, whatever may happen to their possessions. Those who set the same value on everybody witlessly throw away what they have. Many well-off people commit this mistake, and in a short while they are much abused; for those who got something out of them, far from showing gratitude, desert them. This is summed up in the saying “So much you have, so much you're worth, so much I love you.”<sup>2</sup> The prudent person is not like that, but reflects on how much God has lent him of His possessions. Then, having considered wisely, he makes more of the poor man than of the rich. For I think anyone a fool if, having the means, he does not generously share with the needy. To the thoughtlessly openhanded person, though, it makes no difference if he gives to the poor or to the rich.

And there are people who often lose what they have because they scarcely have a notion of the pain and exertion that a workingman must experience before he can acquire something worth having. No one can know the value of possessions, without grasping the efforts of the person who acquires them.<sup>3</sup> By way of example I shall tell a story from which you who wish to comprehend it may learn this: the one who suffers hardship, afterward knows better how to enjoy comfort. Now listen—but let no one heckle!<sup>4</sup> Philippe begins his tale.

At four leagues<sup>5</sup> from the sea there lived a goodman<sup>6</sup> and his wife. This man made his living by going to the shore to fetch salt. He had put in a long day's traveling when he would return with his load.<sup>7</sup> Before marrying he got along nicely, for he would sell his salt so well that he never lost anything by it and was well fleshed, well fed, well shod and clothed—to the point where he did not know how well off he was. He wanted a wife, and went about the matter until he had one. Once the wedding was over he resumed his trips; he went to the sea, brought back salt, and exhorted his wife to sell it and take the money. She told him not to undervalue her good sense, but go again for salt; for if she could, she would sell it so cleverly that he would gain a third thereby.

The goodman was very glad to hear this. Cheerfully he went off again for salt that day, and the next, and every day, taking no rest. By day he traveled for his trade; but at night he had still more exertions to make. For his wife, who remained comfortably indoors and felt little of his weariness, would draw close to him and awaken and caress him, and so stir him and fire him up, however little he might feel like it, that he would stay awake until midnight to do what pleased her. And toward daybreak, when he wanted to sleep, she would say: "Up, my dear! I often see you sleep too long. By the faith I owe the Heavenly King, you ought to be two leagues away by now. You won't be back today by nightfall if you don't go faster than at a walk."

So he would have to rise early and go off for the salt, in spite of his fatigue. And his wife had a pleasant time at home, never leaving off singing. She did nothing but spend money and sing, and paid little attention to selling her salt. Her neighbors and women friends, who soon saw from her behavior how imprudent she was, went to her one after the other, beginning with the old woman who was best acquainted with dishonesty. This one went at her errand in a roundabout fashion, saying: "God keep you, my neighbor! Where's the man of the house?" "He's on his way toward the sea," answered his wife. "Surely, we can't help being very fond of him," said the flatterer. "I've never found him standoffish. Many a time, when he returned, he would willingly give me some salt. And you who are good and beautiful, see my little basket here; it would not hold a halfpenny's worth if it were filled to the brim. And so I beg you to give me some. You'll be rewarded for it." She answered: "Very gladly, as much as you need. Tell my neighbors, both men and women, and the widows and the young girls too, tell them to come and get it. I'll never be so short of supplies that I won't happily give them some. I don't want them to be in need of it. Come back when this runs out." "Mistress, farewell! This saying will do you good."

Then the old woman departed and went around telling all her neighbors in turn of the amiability that the salter's wife had showed to her. The women who needed salt were pleased to hear that the young woman was so obliging. "...,"<sup>8</sup> said Mehaut, Richaut, and Hersent. "But we must go about it cleverly. It would not be a good idea, it seems to me, if we all went together. Let one of us go tomorrow, and another the next, until the third day." They did as they had said; they worked at diminishing the salt supply. They spoke to the salter's wife such plentiful words, few wise ones, many foolish, that her stores ran down.

By and by the goodman, the one who did the fetching and carrying, noticed that his supply gave out more often than before and that he had less

money than he was used to having. He was much troubled by not being able to account for the loss, until one day he saw Bertha coming out of his house. The goodman addressed her and asked what she had gone there for. “Good friend, I didn’t go there for anything except to see Hermesent, your wife, whom I like very much, and she gave me some of her leavening,” said she who well knew how to lie, “because I have to knead dough.” Hearing this, the goodman thought that she was lying in her own defense, and so he opened the fold of her skirt and saw, quite plainly, a plateful of his salt.<sup>9</sup> Now concealment was useless; he well knew how his salt disappeared. He left Bertha, who went off much disconcerted.

The salter, while regretting his loss, did not lose his head but considered how he might give his wife a sense of responsibility so that she would not be so openhanded. He turned the matter over in his mind until he came to a decision: he would not tell his wife what he had in view, but would make her go to the sea with him. He would in short order have her fetch salt, a whole load of it, so as to teach her a lesson. “She’ll learn, tomorrow, whether I fly when I have my load on my head!” Thereupon he left off his thinking and went into his house. His wife spoke up: “Husband,”<sup>10</sup> she said, “we are out of salt. You didn’t load on much, so God save me! when you came away, the day before yesterday. But you’ll be forgiven, provided that you bring more when you come back from there tomorrow.” “Wife,” said he, “gladly. But you would need to come with me and bring back a measure of it. There’s nothing to it but enjoyment; you’ll see the fields turning green and hear the lark sing, and it will cheer you up.” “Husband,” she said, “I agree. It will make things easier for you, I think, and I’m bored with staying in. I’ll start tomorrow when it’s daylight.” They left it at that and went to bed shortly after supper.

As soon as day broke each of them got up promptly. They dressed and went toward the sea, carrying two old baskets. The wife found the outward trip very pleasurable; the cliff rang with her singing. The goodman showed no sign of his plan, but thought that when she came back he would be well avenged on her. They both kept on going until they came to the sea. There they took up and loaded so much salt that their baskets were filled to the brim; then they turned back. Today you will hear how Mistress Hermesent behaved.

When her burden became heavy, she had second thoughts about having come along. She began to be short of breath and to lag behind. Her husband was going on ahead, taking note of what was happening. He urged her to go at a good pace. She quickly responded, “Husband, I tell you for sure, it’s not yet

midday. Let's rest a little!" The goodman said, "Come, come! You're too quick to rest; I don't believe we've gone a quarter of our way." Hearing this, the wife did not rejoice much. She took small pleasure in that burden she was carrying. If her husband had not been with her she would very soon have got rid of it; but she did not dare, on account of him. Instead, she hid her distress because she used to blame him when he would say that he was aching all over; and so she put up with it as best she could. There is much truth in "needs must."<sup>11</sup> She underwent this penance until she began to give out. She leaned against the side of a ditch and then set down what she was carrying. Seeing this, her husband stopped and took his own burden from his head. "Wife," he said, "how goes it? Many a time, it seems to me, you've blamed me for bringing back a small quantity. Shall I have your leave henceforth to load on as little as I like, on condition that I take with my own salt a little of yours?" "Husband," said she, "I take a vow: I'll never blame you for that again, for such burdens are much too heavy." Thereupon the goodman relieved her of a full third or more of her load and added it to his own. And nevertheless he made a great point of their soon going on, for he wanted her to get little rest.

They both loaded up once more and went on. They had not gone a league when she began to tire again. "Now I must swallow the pride I used to have," she thought. "Surely I was out of my senses when I trusted my neighbors. Please God that their spines might pain them as much as mine will hurt today, for the load I must bear! They'd better not come back urging me to give them salt for nothing! By the faith I owe to God Who does not lie, they'd be wasting their time. Ah, how weak I feel! When my husband would complain, my heart, which was so proud, would care little about his heavy labor. So help me God! He's avenged himself on me better than if he had beaten me."<sup>12</sup> I'll not be taken in any more. Let no one come again to the house to get a half pound of salt without bringing me the money for it! There are many wretched people who foolishly throw away what they ought to keep for their own use."

At that she stopped, unable to go on. She simply had to rest. Why should I go stretching out my tale or narrating her rest stops? If someone recounted them all, it would make for tedious listening. They halted so many times that when they entered their house it was nearly midnight. Don't think that *Hermesent* was sorry when she got there. She fell naked into bed, unable to hold herself up. The goodman was filled with rejoicing and nothing else. He had supper, and then retired. The next morning, when he saw it getting light, he said to his wife: "Get up! It's been day for a good while. Let's go for salt!" "Not this week!" "My dear, people must experience discomfort in

order to have something, in this world. For having possessions often brings wealth, joy, and power, which poverty wouldn't do. Poverty makes shame for many a soul.”<sup>13</sup> Such a tale did not much please his wife; she answered: “Husband, by my faith, I cannot go. I'm sorry. But, for God's sake, leave me at home, and I'll sell your salt better, believe me, than I ever did before. I hadn't realized the hard work of fetching it. If you will excuse me from going to the sea again, I'll always be nice to you from now on. I ache so much from going there that I understand your effort and your hard work better than I used to. But, if it pleases God, I'll sell so much this summer, up and down, that we'll buy a horse that will carry your burden.” “Wife,” he said, “I'll say no more. Since you have made an agreement with me, I shall watch how you get on.”

At that he left; she remained. She was in bed until late morning. Then when she had rested enough she arose, toward midday. In her house there were already some four people awaiting her, wanting salt. She said to them: “Do you want salt?” The women said: “We don't want anything else. We know very well that you went there yesterday; now we'll have some, without stinting.”<sup>14</sup> And the salter's wife answered them: “By the faith I owe to the King of the world, never by your false words will you serve me such sauces as you've done for a long time. Not a penny's or a halfpenny's worth will you have if I don't get the money. There's something strange about you people: you think we get it for nothing when we go to the sea to fetch it. We don't! This became very clear to me yesterday. Many times I had to stop for rest. People don't have things just as they want. My whole body still aches. For anyone who has a coin, a coin's worth will be measured out straightaway. If someone doesn't have a coin, let that person leave a pledge. By God Who made me in His own image, in no other way will you carry away any salt. You won't make a fool of me anymore!”

When the neighbor women heard this, there were some who took some salt; and the one without money or pledge carried away none. Thereupon they left the place. Before two days had passed the salter's wife had got over her unwise openhandedness and had taken to good trading. Whatever her husband would bring back she would sell, so well and so dearly that before two summers had passed they had bought two horses, and the goodman set up a cart. From then on he could engage in taking salt around the region. Far from being disconcerted by this, he did so much that he prospered greatly. Thus he corrected his wife and cured her of foolish generosity. Afterward they did so much, and were so enterprising, that they were rich and at ease, and respected by their neighbors.

By this tale you may know that a foolishly generous person loses what he has; and such generosity often dwells in an idle heart, full of laziness. For a lazy person does not want to acquire anything, and imprudent people throw away what they have. Scripture says,<sup>15</sup> it seems to me, that if anyone has to do with sloth, there is a real danger of going astray and being brought to misery. It also says that we are to acquire freely, as if to live, and to live as if soon to die; for we do not know when the hour of death is to come for each of us. Therefore I urge everyone to live wisely and to give fittingly. Now let us pray that God grant us to have such good dealings with all people that after our death, by His grace, we may look Him in the face. Amen! May God give us Paradise! With this my whole tale is told.

## NOTES



### THE ROMANCE OF MANEKINE

1. Philippe candidly informs us that this is his first literary venture. Yet its evocation of listeners rather than readers, its call for silence, and its appeal to the goodwill of the postulated audience show familiarity with the conventional beginnings of both epic and romance; these preambles often include the claim that the subject matter antedates the work in hand, that the latter is a true account meant both to please and to edify, and that the writer is under a moral obligation to tell it.

2. Hungary, the locus of about one-eighth of the action, is vague in both location and topography. The land was known in thirteenth-century France because it lay on a major pilgrimage/crusade route to the Holy Land and was the country of which Marguerite de France, daughter of King Louis VII, became queen in 1186. It also figured in oral tales, chansons de geste, romances, and saints' lives. (See Sargent-Baur, *Philippe de Remi, le Roman de la Manekine*, 106–8.)

3. Titles of courtesy are normal in courtly literature, whether at the beginning of a speech, at its conclusion, or even sometimes within it. Their absence is unusual and often eloquent (see, e.g., some speeches addressed to the Scottish Queen Mother; see n. 84, below, and some remarks of hers as well), 33–34.

4. This is the motif of the “rash boon,” found in Chrétien de Troyes and other writers preceding Philippe. This boon involved one character requesting a gift or act of another without specifying what it might be; alternatively one person might promise another something that could eventually be asked for.

5. Fidelity to his oath will later turn out to be of major importance.

6. The rites are those of absolution (following confession), extreme unction, and communion with viaticum, then, as now, given to dying Catholics.

7. These are “weepers,” a frequent feature of French royal tombs in the thirteenth century. (See Erlande-Brandenburg, *Le Roi est mort*, 116.)

8. The others will also divide to form three groups, hence the six ships of p. 23.

9. Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost were high feasts of the Church and times for rulers to hold court.

10. Dinner: the midday meal.

11. Lit., tow (the tough inner fibers of flax or hemp).

12. Marriage of close kin was prohibited by canon law (and the appeal to the Pope for a dispensation is not narrated here, although it features in the 1371 dramatization of the romance in the Parisian *Miracle de la fille du roi de Hongrie*). Here the secular and ecclesiastical authorities make common cause.

13. In the Middle Ages kingship was (in principle) contractual between a ruler and the high nobility.

14. Candlemas (February 2), the fortieth day after the Nativity, celebrates the presentation of Jesus in the Temple and also the purification of Mary.

15. Joy's modesty when caught in the innocent act of combing her hair anticipates her far stronger reaction to the notion of becoming her father's wife.

16. Helen, wife of King Menelaus of Sparta, supplied a frequent point of comparison for female beauty. Her abduction by the Trojan prince Paris caused the war between the Greeks and the Trojans and resulted in the destruction of Troy, as related in Homer's *Iliad*.

17. A recollection and also a refusal of traditional antifeminism. The next few lines reflect a proverb, to be recalled twice more in the romance as "Tex ne peche qui encourt" (Sometimes the innocent are made to pay). See Morawski, *Proverbes français*, no. 2034, and Schulze-Busacker, *Proverbes et expressions proverbiales*, no. 859. Hereafter these works are cited as Morawski and Schulze-Busacker.

18. What follows is a *psychomachia*: a contest between different aspects of the psyche, expressed as external forces. Here the strife is between personified Love and Reason, and is a medieval commonplace. See the *Romance of the Rose* of the thirteenth-century writers Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun.

19. Another commonplace: Love striking the lover through the eyes into the heart.

20. Formal greeting and leave-taking of superiors, equals, and even family members were marks of courtesy among royalty and nobility. Their absence was abnormal, and rude.

21. This is the only proper noun in the Hungary of the romance. Philippe might have heard of the Tisza, a tributary of the Danube and the longest river in the country.

22. The long sleeves of women's usual clothing would hide the gravity of such an injury; only the bandage would be visible. The King does not wait for an answer.

23. In underground ("maximum security") prisons the prisoners were let down and brought up by ropes.

24. Or: come out? These lines are unclear in the manuscript.

25. Hungary did have a coast on the Adriatic in the thirteenth century.

26. Fortune and her wheel supply a frequent motif in medieval literature.

27. This is modeled on the "epic credo" or "prière du plus grand péril." Joy's formal (and grammatically confused) confession of faith combines the identity of Father and Son, the prophecy of Christ's coming thought to have been made by David (see Psalm 2 and also Acts 2:29–36), and the Harrowing of Hell—all familiar ideas in Philippe's time.

28. Presumably Berwick-on-Tweed. The activities described are seemingly a vestige of a pre-Christian Celtic festival called Beltane, absorbed into the Christian calendar, that marked the beginning of the warm season and was celebrated with bonfires and dances.

29. Philippe does not concern himself with language barriers; we are to suppose that all the characters can communicate as if they were all fluent in the same language, whichever it may be. Note, by way of contrast, the much more realistic handling of language in *John and Blonde*.

30. The name is later justified but not defined. Jehan Wauquelin, in his prose reworking two centuries later, will explain the nickname as derived from the Latin feminine adjective *manca* (maimed). See Suchier, *Oeuvres poétiques de Philippe de Remi*, 1:285.

31. The following definition of Love and her effects perhaps owes something to the well-known Latin treatise *De amore* (in English, *The Art of Courtly Love*), of Andreas Capellanus (twelfth century).

32. A proverb; see n. 17, above.

33. What follows is a description of ideal feminine beauty according to the medieval ideal, but seen through the mind's eye of the hero.

34. That is, her hair.

35. Momentarily the character becomes the narrator. We note that all this inner monologue is spoken aloud, as will be the following one of Manekine.

36. Reading a name as an omen is found in, e.g., the *Cligés* of Chrétien de Troyes (drawn on by Philippe), in which Soredamors takes her own name as signifying that she is destined to love.

37. The manuscript reads *vn an* (one year) at the rhyme and garbles the following rhyme word; the sense requires *vii ans* (seven years). See Sargent-Baur, *Philippe de Remi, le Roman de la Manekine*, 100–108 and "La Structure temporelle," 131–47.

38. This Scottish king rules over all the Celtic parts of the British Isles.

39. An intimate gesture. The King of Scotland proceeds rapidly through four of the five conventional stages of love (sight, speech, touch, kiss, and at last the act of love).

40. Free consent before witnesses, followed by solemn vows in the presence of a priest, then mass, and finally consummation: every step of legitimate marriage is recorded. The wedding takes place in the palace chapel (as will that in *John and Blonde*).

41. This is the Pentecost of that year, some three months after Joy's arrival and two weeks after the wedding. Pentecost can fall between May 10 and June 13. (If Philippe was thinking of the liturgical calendar of 1228, Pentecost then fell on May 16.)

42. One would expect blossoms, not fruit; but *fruit* is at the rhyme.

43. These are conventional names for peasant girls and boys.

44. Meat (along with poultry and fish), with bread and wine, constituted the standard courtly repast in medieval literature.

45. Precious stones were thought to give light and to have other powers.

46. The service for the Sunday of Pentecost.

47. Each magnate has his own squire carver; members of the lesser nobility are served in groups.

48. Hand washing in proffered basins was *de rigueur*, before and after meals.

49. Perth is some twenty miles from Dundee; if a league is taken as about three miles, the distance given is correct.

50. It was normal for hosts to present gifts to departing guests.

51. The Queen Mother had a right to dower property she had brought to her marriage.

52. Evolint/Evolinc/Enluic/Eluic: this town has been identified as York, Innerwick, and Alnick; none is satisfactory, on logistical or linguistic grounds.

53. We note that the heroine is literate.

54. Northern France had from the 1120s been known for tournaments.

55. A proverb; see Morawski and Schulze-Busacker, no. 2297.

56. Another "rash boon."

57. The king contemplates a separation of several months, whether he means to be back by the beginning of Lent or to leave for home then. Lent begins variably; but even if it started as early as possible (i.e., on February 4), the king clearly knows when Lent will begin and is aware that the child may well be born in his absence.

58. This passage appears garbled: the King takes leave for his journey and sets out twice, and there are changes of pronoun subject (singular to plural and back to singular). "When the King ..." seems to begin a new section, with a reprise of what has gone before. (This may be an echo of the breaks in epic narration.) The information about the tourney site repeats data supplied earlier.

59. Damme in the Middle Ages was the port of Bruges.

60. Coming into someone else's area of authority, the King of Scotland, following protocol, informs the local ruler of his arrival. The Count of Flanders, inferior in rank, hastens to greet the kingly visitor.

61. All this itinerary, like subsequent ones placed in this territory, is geographically correct; the author is on familiar ground.

62. The area between Resson and Gournay, the site of spectacular tournaments in 1169–83, was only a few kilometers from Philippe de Remi's family domain.

63. Traveling royalty and nobility were given hospitality by their equals, or by abbots or bishops; others found lodging with townspeople as best they could.

64. This was a way for participants in a coming tourney to advertise their presence.

65. That is, he paid their expenses.

66. The King of Scotland's arms combine the Scottish and English royal arms.

67. Catching valuable horses, and taking prisoners for ransom, contributed to the economics of tourneying for knights and the lesser nobility.

68. Perhaps an echo of Wace, who often opposes gain and loss in a game, e.g., in *Brut*, lines 10561–62.

69. This seems to evoke scavenging on the field.

70. If the saddle girth broke under the force of a blow, saddle and rider would revolve under the horse.

71. Or: were on the winning side? See the following paragraph.

72. The court was wherever the King was.
73. Epernay: southeast of Reims/Gournay and not far from Rheims.
74. Oral proclamation was the usual means of disseminating news of public interest.
75. The seneschal, like his lord, is literate in French and Latin. (We shall see that the Queen Mother, like the messenger, cannot read.)
76. Such a sleeping arrangement is normally a sign of special favor.
77. Creil is a town some thirty kilometers southwest of Philippe's home. The cathedral city of Senlis is a few kilometers to the southeast.
78. Tourneying ceased in Lent (an aspect of the Truce of God). Here it seems that the king is to leave northern France, not arrive in Scotland, at the beginning of Lent (but see his letter, below).
79. The sea is not "narrow" here unless a ship were to head for the nearest English coast and then follow it northward toward Scotland.
80. After the usual month of rest and care that was her due, the new mother would rise and go to church, to be met at the door by the priest, then led into the church for sprinkling with holy water and for prayers and a blessing. (Her baby would already have been baptized.) Churching was a form of purification and of reintegration into society. (See von Arx in Bibliography, 4.)
81. To touch or *a fortiori* to kiss someone's foot was an act of great abasement.
82. This recalls, now from a woman's point of view, the statement of the King of Hungary concerning women.
83. The Scottish nobles also expect their king to leave France for home at the start of Lent. (The Creil-Berwick journey will take him, as earlier it did the messenger, a little more than a week.)
84. The absence of a formal salutation is eloquent.
85. Lit., "on her neck"; there is a similar expression in "The Tale of Foolish Generosity."
86. A proverb: in Morawski, no. 788, and Schulze-Busacker, 789.
87. Another proverb, in Morawski and Schulze-Busacker, no. 1320 (identical wording in *Erec et Enide* by Chrétien de Troyes, line 2939).
88. Phare (Far): the Fiumicino, a branch of the Tiber flowing through Rome to the Tyrrhenian Sea.
89. Philippe has the fishermen address each other as *signeur* (my lords), as do the Senator and Manekine.
90. The language problem no longer troubles the author.
91. In the thirteenth century there was at Rome at a given time only one senator, named by the pope.
92. On the forty weekdays of Lent, abstinence from meat was obligatory.
93. Standard costume for upper-class laypeople of both sexes consisted of *chemise* (shirt or shift), *cotte* or *cotele* (short or long tunic/gown), *surcot* (overdress) and *mantel* (cloak). Women's clothes reached to the ground, men's to the ankle. (Male servants and peasants wore knee-length clothing, as in *Jehan et Blonde* does Robin in the MS, BNF fr. 1588, f. 57 and f. 75v.)
94. There is a mistaken break here, the last two lines of the fisherman's speech being announced with a large initial and moved to the following section.
95. A line is missing.
96. Babies were often sent out to wet nurses and kept in their houses; here the nurse comes (no doubt regularly) to where the baby is.
97. This amounts to being the housekeeper, a position of much responsibility in a great establishment.
98. An echo of the young Joy's devotions.
99. This was normal boarding procedure: from shallow beach, by boat, to ship waiting in deep water.
100. "Crossed sails" is obscure.
101. Here and elsewhere the King calls his wife his joy, not suspecting that Joy (Joïe) is her true name. (In Old French the name and the common noun are not identical, *Joïe* having three syllables and *joie* two.)
102. What follows is a troped Ave Maria, the first few Latin verses of the familiar prayer ("Hail [Mary], full of grace; the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of

your womb”), expanded by a French commentary. The prayer is a conflation of two passages in Saint Luke’s gospel: “Ave gratia plena; Dominus tecum; benedicta tu in mulieribus” (the angel Gabriel’s greeting, Luke 1:28) and “Benedicta tu inter mulieres, et benedictus fructus ventris tui” (Elizabeth’s words, Luke 1:42). The thirteenth century was a high point of Marian devotion.

103. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary.
104. The French and Latin syntax do not quite fit.
105. The legend of Theophilus, who sold his soul to the Devil in exchange for ecclesiastical promotion but was saved by Mary’s intervention, was popular in medieval European drama and art.
106. Part of the ceremony of homage, the ritual of becoming someone’s “man.”
107. A line is missing in the manuscript.
108. Another missing line.
109. Tabletops were set up on trestles at mealtimes, then cleared away.
110. Even this seven-year-old knows the use of titles in direct address.
111. It is still Lent, and meat is proscribed.
112. The French *femme* (O.F. *fame*) can mean both “woman” and “wife,” hence the ambiguity.
113. A crossbow could shoot between 150 and 300 yards. Six average shots would carry something like three-quarters of a mile.
114. MS: *senescax* (seneschal).
115. Abstinence even from legitimate sexual relations was a form of special penance. Still, mutual consent was necessary.
116. Ordinary outer clothing was usually of wool; wearing it next to the skin was another form of penance (like wearing a hair shirt).
117. This counterbalances the easy pledge of the Hungarian barons to go to Rome and get the Pope’s approval of the incestuous marriage.
118. Philippe introduces this as a proverb; the closest analogy in Morawski is no. 1861: “Qui bon seigneur sert, bon loyer en atent” (He who serves a good master expects a good reward).
119. Two wounds are evoked: the physical maiming and the break in familial ties.
120. By the first part of the thirteenth century there had been three popes named Urban; no specific one is called up here.
121. He has not seen her for nine years; and she would be wearing concealing clothes, including wimple and veil, with only her face exposed.
122. See n. 30, above.
123. The fonts were used for baptisms, frequently performed on the Saturday before Easter Sunday.
124. Two years after leaving Hungary, then seven after leaving Scotland. See n. 37, above.
125. The reference is less than clear. There may be a cryptic allusion to the Greek *ichthus* (fish), taken as composed of the initial letters of *iesus christos theou uios soter* (Jesus Christ Son of God Savior).
126. An ancient hymn to God and Christ, used at matins and for special times of thanksgiving.
127. Sweet odors were associated with sanctity.
128. This shape recalls the hand reliquaries found in many medieval churches.
129. It was customary to distribute the leftovers of feasts to the poor.
130. Tenebrae: the office for the night of Holy Thursday.
131. Adoration of the Cross: part of the Good Friday observance.
132. A résumé of the Harrowing of Hell (mentioned briefly in n. 27, above).
133. Boiling and roasting were the two principal ways of cooking meat and fish.
134. This is the last (and now negative) recall of Joy’s two voyages into exile.
135. Kneeling was the normal posture for someone delivering a message.
136. Philippe’s Armenia is even vaguer in location and geography (it has, e.g., a seacoast) than his Hungary.
137. That is, they took Communion.
138. Little John will have three brothers and two sisters—like the hero of *John and Blonde*.
139. This is perhaps a reminiscence of Psalm 13:1: “Dixit insipiens in corde suo: Non est Deus” (The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God).

## JOHN AND BLONDE

1. Philippe quotes a proverb, numbered 1959 in Morawski and Schulze-Busacker: "Qui honor chace honor ataint" (The person who hunts honor attains it). The author will return to this moral at the end, with a personal application.
2. On this necessary and valuable commodity (which required much hard labor), see "The Tale of Foolish Generosity."
3. "Overseas" may refer to the Holy Land. Morea: a crusader principality in the Peloponnese.
4. This may be a reminiscence of Wace, *Le Roman de Rou*, lines 6396–98: "fol m'en revinc, fol i alai; / fol i alai, fol m'en revinc, / folie quis, pour fol me tinc" ("a fool I returned, a fool I went; / a fool I went, a fool I returned, / I sought folly, I think myself a fool").
5. Such is also the tally of the children of Joy and the King of Scotland in *Manekine*.
6. This is income from land not owned personally but held in fief of a suzerain and capable of producing income from subtenants.
7. Dammartin-en-Goële, northeast of Paris, in the present département de Seine-et-Marne and some fifty kilometers south of Philippe's family home.
8. Also called Robin; both names are diminutives of Robert.
9. The "stream" is the English Channel.
10. French was the second language of many cultivated laypeople in England (and elsewhere) in the thirteenth century. The Earl's French is better than his daughter's, for he learned it in France. (See also *Manekine*, where French appears to be spoken wherever the heroine travels.) See Short, "On Bilingualism in Anglo-Norman England," 471 n. 16.
11. For titles of courtesy even used within the family, see *Manekine*, n. 3.
12. John is to be a squire carver, cutting meat for his mistress at the table.
13. See *Manekine*, n. 109.
14. Blonde answers to the medieval ideal of feminine beauty; the only unusual detail is the transparency of her throat. The description preludes to the hero's falling in love. See Colby, *The Portrait in Twelfth-Century French Literature*, 25–72.
15. See *Manekine*, n. 48.
16. What is evoked is hunting game animals or hawking for river fowl.
17. The reference to Tristan as lover is conventional.
18. The statement has a proverbial ring, but is not attested.
19. Love was often personified as an archer, striking through the eyes into the heart. See *Manekine*, n. 19.
20. Table attendants served on their knees.
21. Here *dame* is used to denote a social superior (though unmarried).
22. These were standard diagnostic procedures.
23. In Old French, *amis/amie* if not modified (by, e.g., *biaus/bele*, *cher/chere*, or *doux/douce*) can cover relationships of acquaintances, friends, and lovers; conveying the nuances in English is a delicate matter. In some passages in this text, *amie/amis* clearly means more than "friend."
24. "Eight days" (*jour . viii.*) often means a week, as in modern French; but given the later association with twenty-eight, "eight" may be retained.
25. Saint Amand: seventh-century apostle to Flanders and bishop of Maastricht and not usually associated with lovers (but useful for the rhyme).
26. The ensuing allegorical war of opposing personified qualities (*psychomachia*) includes several examples of *annominatio*, especially on Raison/Desraison.
27. This solemn agreement, sealed with a kiss, evokes the ceremony of feudal homage.
28. Sleeping in the nude was normal, and the mention of it is curious.
29. Similar proverbs are in Morawski and Schulze-Busacker, no. 1208: "Mauvèse ha[s]te n'est preuz" (Bad haste is no profit) and no. 1244: "Mieus vaut bonne attente que malvaise haste" (A good wait is better than bad haste).

30. This line sounds proverbial and is listed verbatim in Schulze-Busacker as no. 225 (but is the only example given).
31. It is odd that Blonde is apparently seated at a distance from her parents and that John is sitting rather than kneeling before her.
32. As the eldest son, and heir, John must renew the homage made by his father for his fief. This usually involved the payment of a "relief." Dammartin is a royal tenancy.
33. A line is missing.
34. Blonde uses the feudal term *saizine* (seisin), denoting formal possession.
35. A borrowing from Chrétien de Troyes, *Yvain*, 2581–84.
36. This appears to refer to an endowment for prayers, masses, or both to be said for him.
37. A proverb, no. 1098 in Morawski and Schulze-Busacker. (Verbatim in Chrétien, *Perceval*: "Les mors as mors, les vis as vis," line 3930.)
38. For Gloucester's French, see Suchier, *Oeuvres poétiques de Philippe de Remi*, 2:415–20. For the cultural and social implications of his *Franglais*, see Short, "On Bilingualism in Anglo-Norman England" (for the twelfth century), Rothwell, "The Role of French in Medieval Britain" and Schulze-Busacker, "French Conceptions of Foreigners and Foreign Languages" (for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries). John's riddles, incomprehensible to Gloucester, are later recounted by him and explicated by the Earl of Oxford. Gloucester makes every sort of mistake possible: genders, agreements, verb endings, passive/active voices, syntax, idioms, vocabulary, (e.g., using one word for another: *porcel* [little pig], for *puelle* [young girl], *musel* for *bouche* [mouth], *bouser* for *épouser* [to wed], etc.).
39. If this is a proverb, it is not attested.
40. Free consent ("free" at least in principle) was a prerequisite for Christian marriage.
41. This is a reminiscence of two passages in romances by Chrétien de Troyes: *Cligés*, 6330–32 and *Perceval*, 71–72.
42. The ensuing search for the reluctant bride-to-be recalls that in *Manekine* [665f., 718f.].
43. Again, in *Franglais*. Why an English earl should speak French to another English earl is never explained.
44. Gloucester says *celui* (this man).
45. "Latin" stands in for "French," imperfectly understood by Gloucester.
46. The form suggests a proverb (not attested).
47. A proverb, Morawski and Schulze-Busacker, no. 1218: "Menacié vivent, decolé muerent" (The threatened live, the beheaded die).
48. John has brought only his sword, and no armor.
49. I.e., this side of the Channel.
50. This is accurate, but the reader needs to visualize the terrain. The upper town with its (now ruinous) castle was on a cliff above the port and the adjoining settlement. The straight-line (or shouting) distance from beach to cliff top is not great, but that by zigzag road is appreciably longer.
51. A ship had to anchor offshore and be approached by rowboat.
52. A proverb?
53. The author distinguishes between two kinds of mounts: John's ordinary riding horse and the warhorse of the Earl of Gloucester.
54. The scribe wrote *espees*, perhaps in place of another word, e.g., *espies* (lances). To throw swords would be a most unusual (and ineffectual) tactic. The detail may derive from the *Chanson de Roland*, lines 2074–75 and 2155–56.
55. Seemingly, the author was there.
56. A specific recall of the *Chanson de Roland*, lines 2160–61.
57. A reference to a well-known fable of Reynard the Fox.
58. A line is missing in the manuscript.
59. This is the house chapel (see *Manekine*, n. 40). Here the semiprivate wedding is followed by mass in the town church.
60. A line is missing.

61. In the thirteenth century there were two French kings of this name: Louis VIII (r. 1223–26) and Louis IX (r. 1226–70).
62. See *Manekine*, n. 81.
63. Formal homage involved the swearing of fealty on the part of the vassal and the acceptance of it by the suzerain as signified by the bestowal of a glove.
64. The Earl of Oxford.
65. Although a foreigner, Blonde is excused from making her own homage to the King.
66. The position of the castle in relation to John's family home is unclear. They must be two separate buildings, but perhaps close together.
67. Holding the offside stirrup while the rider dismounted on the near (left) side was a mark of courtesy (it also kept the saddle from turning).
68. The men in the retinue of the two French knights are invited to dinner by their English counterparts.
69. This odd reference to Artois (in the far north of France) probably results from the need for a rhyme (with *courtois*).
70. This datum does not agree with the earlier narrative of the battle. The discrepancy may result from the oral reports that have reached Oxford, mentioned by the Earl two lines later.
71. Here the English cortege leaves the county of Flanders for the Kingdom of France.
72. The strips of cloth are stretched between the eaves of the facing houses, thus forming temporary tents over the street.
73. This is the ritual bath preliminary to the knighting ceremony. It is followed by a nightlong vigil.
74. Outer garments often had separate sleeves, attached by laces.
75. This was a symbolic and ceremonial blow (the "accolade").
76. Perhaps the name honors Count Robert of Artois, Philippe's employer (see p. 1).
77. An obscure statement [6035–36].
78. Presumably it is John, by now a count, who does this; it would be normal for him as host to make gifts to departing guests. The fact that in French, Old or modern, there exists the single word *conte*, which in this text is applied both to a French count and an English earl, makes for confusion; hence I opt for "Count and Earl" where the Old French reads "*as .ii. contes*" and "*li dui conte*."
79. Proverb; in Morawski and Schulze-Busacker, no. 1178: "Mal prie qui s'oublie" (He prays badly who forgets himself).

### “THE TALE OF FOOLISH GENEROSITY”

1. Going against a topos frequently found in courtly literature, in which lavish and ostentatious largesse is much praised, Philippe begins with a warning against it.
2. A proverb (and verbatim in Wace, *Brut*, line 1742); the ultimate source may be the biblical Book of Proverbs 19:4: "Divitiae addunt amicos plurimos" (Wealth maketh many friends). See Morawski and Schulze-Busacker, no. 2283; Morawski, no. 2281 is similar: "Tant a home tant est prisé" (So much one has, so much one is esteemed).
3. This sounds proverbial, but is not attested.
4. The same injunction appears in the prologue of *Manekine*.
5. This is a distance of about twelve miles.
6. O.F. *preudom* usually denotes a (noble)man of worth; so in *Manekine* and *John and Blonde*. The hero of this tale not being noble, I use the archaic "goodman."
7. The Old French word is *colee*, usually a shoulder load and often carried with some sort of yoke; but it later transpires that both the salter and his wife carry the loads on their heads.
8. A line is missing in the manuscript.
9. In the absence of small containers, medieval people sometimes carried loose substances in their clothing.

10. In the Old French the couple regularly use *sire* and *dame* to each other. I have opted for “husband” and “wife.”

11. A proverb; Morawski and Schulze-Busacker, no. 761: “Forte chose est en ‘faire l’estuet’” (There is a great deal in “needs must”).

12. Wife-beating as a result of domestic disputes is a convention of the *fabliau*, a genre that Philippe treats here with considerable independence.

13. This suggests a proverb, but is not attested.

14. The tone of the village women has become demanding and strident.

15. The Bible contains many warnings against idleness and offers many recommendations of good stewardship; see, e.g., Proverbs 19:15, 21:25, and 31:27. (Most of chap. 31 describes and celebrates the prudent and hardworking married woman.) On so living as to be prepared for dying, see especially Luke 12:15–40 (concerning possessions, alms giving, and the unpredictability of the hour of death).



## GLOSSARY OF MEDIEVAL TERMS



ALMS PURSE:	A small. purse. suspended from the belt, worn by both sexes.
AMBLE:	A four-beat gait of a riding horse, faster than a walk and smoother than a trot.
BASINET:	A metal head-protector, ovoid in shape.
BUTLER:	A servant responsible for the wine service at a meal.
CANONICAL HOURS:	The hours of the Divine Office, extended from monastic to general use. The first office was that of matins (around midnight) followed by lauds, then by prime around daybreak, and thereafter at roughly three-hour intervals by terce, sext (midday), nones, vespers, and compline.
CAROL:	A round dance accompanied by singing.
CASTLE:	A walled and fortified town, or the fortified stronghold within it.
CHAPLET:	A wreath of flowers or leaves, worn by both men and women.
CHATELAINE:	The lady of a castle.
DAMSEL:	An unmarried girl of the noble class.
DINNER:	The midday meal.
DOUBLET:	A close-fitting man's garment with sleeves, reaching to the hips and usually made of thick and sturdy material.
GOWN:	A long garment with sleeves.
HALBERD:	A staff tipped with a short, broad blade.
HAUBERK:	A mail shirt covering the trunk and upper legs.
HOMAGE:	A ritual by which a man (and sometimes a woman) swore loyalty and service to an overlord and became his or her vassal. The vassal-to-be, kneeling, placed his or her joined hands between the hands of the lord-to-be when taking the oath. The relationship was often sealed with a kiss and with a glove symbolizing the transfer of authority over a specified area (fief).
KNEE COP:	A convex metal shield covering the knee.
LADY:	A married noblewoman.
LEAGUE:	A measure of distance (about three miles).
MARK:	A large unit of money.

NONES:	See CANONICAL HOURS.
PALFREY:	A riding horse used by men and women.
PANTLER:	A servant in charge of the bread for a meal.
PATERNOSTER:	The Lord's Prayer.
PRIME:	See CANONICAL HOURS.
PROVOST:	An official appointed to keep order in a town (rather like a chief of police).
QUOTIDIAN FEVER:	One that recurs daily.
RELIEF:	The customary payment by vassal to lord on the conferral of a fief, even one previously held by the vassal's parent.
SCARLET:	Fine, dyed, and hence expensive cloth (not necessarily red).
SEIZIN:	Possession, as of a fief. See HOMAGE.
SENECHAL:	The chief administrator of a lord's household and estates.
SOU:	A coin of middling value.
SQUIRE:	A young nobleman in a knight's service and in training for knighthood.
SUMPTER:	A packhorse.
TERCE:	See CANONICAL HOURS.
TUNIC:	A garment worn over the chemise or shirt and under the overdress or mantle. A woman's tunic (or gown) came down to the ground, a man's to the ankle.
VASSAL:	The "man" of an overlord, obliged to give him military service. In the context of armed conflict, it is conventionally used as a challenge.
VESPERS:	See CANONICAL HOURS.

## LIST OF PROPER NAMES



*M* = *Manekine*, *JB* = *John and Blonde*, *T* = *Tale*

- ABRAHAM: Old Testament patriarch, receiver of God's covenant (Genesis 11–25). *M*
- ADAM: The first man and a sinner (Genesis 2–5). *M*
- ARMENIA: Home of Joy's mother; Joy's heritage. *M*
- ARMENIANS: Joy's own people. *M*
- ARRAS: City in northern France (now in the Pas-de-Calais). *M*
- ARTESIANS: Natives of Artois. *M*
- ARTOIS: A former French county on the border of present-day Belgium. *M, JB*
- AUXERRE: City southeast of Paris (at present in the Yonne), in a wine-growing region. *JB*
- BAGHDAD: One of the extremes of the King of Scotland's search for his wife. *M*
- BAVARIANS: Natives of what is now southern Germany. *M*
- BEAUVAISIS: Area around Beauvais, now in the Oise. *M*
- BERRY: Former country, south of Paris. *M*
- BERTHA: Woman of the village. *T*
- BERWICK: Principal port of Scotland (prob. Berwick-on-Tweed). *M*
- BLOIS: City on the Loire (now in the Loir-et-Cher). *JB*
- BLONDE: Daughter and heiress of the Earl and Countess of Oxford. *JB*
- BOULOGNE: Formerly Flemish port on the Channel, now in the Pas-de-Calais. *JB*
- BOULONNAIS: Men of the Boulogne area. *M*
- BRABANTERS: Men from Brabant (now Belgium). *M*
- BRETONS: Men from Brittany, in the west of France. *M*
- BRUGES: Important city of Flanders (now Belgium). *M*
- CHAMPENOIS: Men from Champagne, a large region in the east of France. *M*
- CLERMONT: Town north of Paris (now in the Oise). *M, JB*
- CORBEIL: Town (now in the Essonne) south of Paris and southwest of Dammarin. *JB*
- CORBIE: Town in Picardy (now in the Somme). *JB*
- CORNWALL: The westernmost peninsula of England, part of the King of Scotland's domains. In the Middle Ages its population was largely Celtic. *M*

- CREIL: Town north of Paris, between Clermont and Senlis (now in the Oise). *JB*
- DAMMARTIN (in Goële): Town, castle, and surrounding area northeast of Paris, now in the Seine-et-Marne; it becomes John's fief when he is made count. *JB*
- DAMME: The port of Bruges in the Middle Ages. *M*
- DAVID: Old Testament king, author of the Psalms (1 Samuel, 2 Samuel). *M*
- DOVER: English port on the Channel. *JB*
- DUNDEE: Principal residence of the King of Scotland. *M*
- ELIZABETH: Mary's cousin (Luke 1). *M*
- ENGLAND: Land by which Scotland is placed on the literary map (*M*); land of opportunity for an ambitious young man (*JB*).
- EPERNAY: Town east of Paris, south of Rheims (now in the Marne); site chosen for a tournament. *M*
- EVOLINT, EVOLINC,  
ELUIC, ELUINT: A town and its nearby castles, the dower land of the King of Scotland's mother and her residence after her son's marriage. It cannot be located precisely. *M*
- EVE: The first woman and a sinner (Genesis 2–5). *M*
- FLANDERS: Modern Belgium. Its count welcomes the King of Scotland. *M*
- FLEMINGS: Men of Flanders. *M*
- FRANCE: In medieval texts, usually the Île-de-France (the Parisian region). In *M* it is the northern part of the country, famous for tourneying. *M, JB*
- FRENCHMEN: Participants in the Gournay-Ressons tournament. *M*
- FRIESLAND: Northern Netherlands; the King of Scotland's last stop in his fruitless search. *M*
- GERMANS: Participants in the Gournay-Ressons tournament. *M*
- GHENT: City in Flanders. *M*
- GLOUCESTER: English county contiguous to Oxfordshire. *JB*
- GOURNAY: Town north of Clermont, marking the far limit of the great tourney in *Manekine*.
- GRAVELINES: Formerly a Flemish port between Calais and Dunkirk (now in France [Nord]). *M*
- GREATER INDIA: Another extreme in the King of Scotland's search. *M*
- GUY, Sir: One of the two messengers dispatched by King Louis to the Earl of Oxford. *JB*
- HERMESENT: The salter's wife. *T*
- HERSENT: Woman of the village. *T*
- HESDIN: Town south of Boulogne (now in the Pas-de-Calais). *JB*
- HUNGARY: Native country of Joy. *M*
- HUREPOIS: Men from a region east of Paris. *M*
- IRELAND: Part of the King of Scotland's dominions. *M*

- JOHN: (1) Son of Joy and the King of Scotland. *M*  
 (2) Hero of *John and Blonde*
- JORDAN: River of the Holy Land. *M*
- JOY: Heroine of *Manekine*.
- LENS: Town north of Arras (now in the Pas-de-Calais). *M*
- LENT: A penitential season during which tourneying and eating meat were proscribed. *M*
- LIART: Robin's horse. *JB*
- LILLE: City formerly of Flanders, now of France (Nord). *M*
- LONDON: The English capital. *JB*
- LOUIS: King of France. (Although no number is given in *JB*, the reigning kings at the time of Philippe de Remi were Louis VIII and Louis IX.)
- LUZARCHES: Town north of Saint-Denis (now in the Val-d'Oise). *M*
- MANEKINE: Alias of Joy.
- MANESSIER, Sir: Brother of John. *JB*
- MEHAUT: Woman of the village. *T*
- MERC: Merch-St.-Liévin (Pas-de-Calais) (Suchier's suggestion). *JB*
- MONTDIDIER: Town north of Paris (now in the Somme), home of "Walter." *JB*
- MONTMELIANT: Town and area northeast of Dammartin (Seine-et-Marne). *JB*
- MONTREUIL: Town now in the Pas-de-Calais. *JB*
- MOREA: State in the Peloponnese founded by Crusaders. *JB*
- MOREL: The Earl of Gloucester's warhorse, won by John. *JB*
- NORMANS: Natives of Normandy and participants in the great tourney. *M*
- OXFORD: Town and county in south-central England, home of Blonde. *JB*
- PERTH: City in Scotland to which the dowager queen retires during her son's wedding celebration. *M*
- PHARE: River (Fiumicino) running through Rome and into the sea. *M*
- PLAILLY: Town and area north of Dammartin (Oise). *JB*
- POITEVINS: Men from Poitou, a province southeast of Paris. *M*
- POIX: Town southwest of Amiens (now in the Somme). *M*
- PONTOISE: Town near Paris, to the northwest (Val-d'Oise), within a few kilometers of Philippe's home. *JB*
- RESSONS  
 (Ressons-sur-Matz): Town (Oise) marking one limit of the tourney in *M* and very close to the domain of Philippe de Remi.
- RICHAUT: Woman of the village. *T*
- ROBERT, Sir: Brother of John. *JB*
- ROBIN, ROBINET: John's trusty servant. *JB*
- ROME: Seat of the Pope, home of the Senator, Joy's refuge for seven years. *M*

ROYE:	Town north of Paris (now in the Somme). <i>M</i>
SAINTE AMANT:	Apostle to Flanders. <i>M</i>
SAINTE BADOUL:	An invention of the Earl of Gloucester? <i>JB</i>
SAINTE-DENIS:	Town north of Paris (now a suburb). <i>JB</i>
SAINTE-OMER:	Town west of Boulogne (now Pas-de-Calais). <i>M</i>
SAINTE PETER'S:	The main church in Rome. <i>M</i>
SAINTE-POL, Count of:	Husband of one of John's sisters. <i>JB</i>
SCOTLAND:	Chief part of the King of Scotland's domains. <i>M</i>
SENLIS:	City north-northwest of Paris (now in the Oise). <i>M</i>
SENS:	Cathedral city southwest of Paris (Yonne). Dammartin is roughly halfway between it and the Channel.
SWABIANS:	Men from a region of southwest Germany. <i>M</i>
TARSUS:	City in Turkey. <i>M</i>
THEOPHILUS:	Churchman whose pact with the devil was widely known. <i>M</i>
TRINITY:	Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. <i>M</i>
TRISTAN:	Lover of Iseult and hero of many tales. <i>JB</i>
TRISTAN, Sir:	Brother of John. <i>JB</i>
URBAN:	Pope (no number is given). <i>M</i>
VERMANDOIS:	Region northeast of Paris, east of Amiens (now the Aisne). <i>M</i>
VIRGIN:	Mary, mother of Jesus. <i>M, JB</i>
WALTER:	John's pseudonym. <i>JB</i>
WILLIAM, Sir:	A messenger sent to the Earl of Oxford by the King of France. <i>JB</i>
WISSANT:	French port between Calais and Boulogne. <i>M</i>
YSE:	River in Hungary, flowing into the sea. <i>M</i>

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ISBN: 978-0-271-03576-5

