

John Gower, *Confessio Amantis* (selection)

1386-92, preserved in 3 recensions

I. from the *Prologue*

	If I schal drawe into my mynde The tyme passed, thanne I fynde		If I shall summon to my mind Those olden days, then I shall find
95	The world stod thanne in al his welthe. Tho was the lif of man in helthe, Tho was plenté, tho was richesse, Tho was the fortune of prouesse, Tho was knyghthode in pris be name,	<i>its wealth</i> <i>then</i> <i>high time of virtue (strength)</i> <i>valued by report</i>	How all the world was full of wealth: The life of man was passed in health; Riches and plenty nourished then; Then fortune favoured valiant men; Knighthood was then an honoured name
100	Wherof the wyde worldes fame - Write in cronique - is yit withholde. Justice of lawe tho was holde, The privilege of regalie Was sauf, and al the baronie	 <i>written; chronicles; yet maintained</i> <i>justice was then upheld by law</i> <i>royalty</i> <i>safe</i>	Whereof, world-wide, men wrote the fame In chronicles that still endure; Then law and justice were secure, The privilege of royalty Lipheld, and all the barony
105	Worschiped was in his astat; The citees knewen no debat, The poeple stod in obeissance Under the reule of governance, And pes, which ryhtwisnesse keste,	<i>honored; its estate</i> <i>people</i> <i>peace; justice kissed</i>	Respected in their high estate. The cities were not in debate, The people were subservient Under the rule of government; And peace, by righteousness caressed,
110	With charité tho stod in reste. Of mannes herte the corage Was schewed thanne in the visage; The word was lich to the conceite Withoute semblant of deceite.	<i>then</i> <i>shown; face (countenance)</i> <i>like; concept;</i>	With charity lay down in rest. Men let their countenance express Their secret hearts and inwardness; No manner of deceit was wrought, The word was mirror to the thought;
115	Tho was ther unenvied love, Tho was the vertu sett above And vice was put under fote. Now stant the crop under the rote. The world is changed overal,	<i>then</i> <i>top; root (i.e., upside down)</i>	Then love was safe from jealousy; Then virtue was prized royally, And vice was trampled underfoot. Now lies the flower below the root; The world has altered utterly,
120	And therof most in special That love is falle into discord. And that I take to record Of every lond, for his partie, The comune vois which mai nocht lie;	 <i>particular;</i> <i>whereby</i> <i>from; part</i> <i>unanimous voice of the people; one</i>	And in one way especially: Love has grown all discordant now. And, for your witness, set down how In every land beneath the sky, With common voice which cannot lie
125	Noght upon on, bot upon alle It is that men now clepe and calle, And sein the regnes ben divided: In stede of love is hate guided, The werre wol no pes purchase,	 <i>what; make appeal</i> <i>see kingdoms at odds</i> <i>war; obtain</i>	(Not one by one but all for all It is that now they cry and call), Men say their kingdoms are divided; By hate, not love, are laws decided; No peace is now the prize of war;
130	And lawe hath take hire double face, So that justice out of the weie With ryhtwisnesse is gon aweie. And thus to loke on every halve, Men sen the sor withoute salve,	<i>lawyers; put on (donned) their</i> <i>all sides</i> <i>see the wound lacking ointment</i>	The law is double-faced, therefore All justice now has lost its way And righteousness is gone astray. And thus on all sides is revealed That ulcer which is never healed
135	Which al the world hath overtake. Ther is no regne of alle outtake, For every climat hath his diel After the tornynge of the whiel, Which blinde Fortune overthroweth.	<i>has ruined</i> <i>excepted</i> <i>has its share</i> <i>according to</i> <i>turns over</i>	And which is borne by everyone. Kingdom or climate, there is none But has its share of pain to feel As this or that way turns the wheel (Which blindfold Fortune still revolves)
140	Wherof the certain no man knoweth. The hevене wot what is to done, Bot we that duelle under the mone	<i>fact (certainty) no one</i> <i>knows</i> <i>moon (i.e., amidst changeability)</i>	Whose meaning no man surely solves. God only knows what's to be done; But we who dwell beneath the moon

	Stonde in this world upon a weer, And namely bot the pouer	<i>in doubt; unless; power of those who are</i>	Live in a world by conflicts torn; And chiefly if the power borne
145	Of hem that ben the worldes guides - With good consail on alle sides - Be kept upriht in such a wyse, That hate breke noght th'assise	<i>way; the court principal means; kingdom</i>	By those who are the nations' guides Have not good counsel from all sides, To hold it upright so that Hate Breaks not Love' s orderly estate
150	Of love, whiche is al the chief To kepe a regne out of meschief. For alle resoun wolde this, That unto him which the heved is	<i>who; head; obedient also their loyalty accept and welcome them with all his heart hear;</i>	(Which is the prime necessity To keep a realm from anarchy): This is the path all reason treads, That unto them who are the heads,
155	The membres buxom scholden bowe, And he scholde ek her trowthe allowe, With al his herte and make hem chiere, For good consail is good to hiere.	<i>yet one</i>	The limbs should bow obedience, And heads must praise and recompense Their troth, and make them hearty cheer, For good advice is good to hear;
160	Although a man be wys himselve, Yit is the wisdom more of tuelve; And if thei stoden bothe in on, To hope it were thanne anon	<i>that war</i>	And though one man alone be wise, With twelve men wisdom multiplies. And if the parties could agree, Soon there were cause to hope that we
165	That God his grace wolde sende To make of thilke werre an ende, Which everyday now groweth newe. And that is gretly for to rewe	<i>repent</i>	Might feel the grace of God descend To bring this conflict to an end, Though day by day it grows anew - A thing that we should deeply rue,
170	In special for Cristes sake, Which wolde His oghne lif forsake Among the men to geve pes. But now men tellen natheles	<i>who; own life give peace; nonetheless from</i>	Whose very life was sacrificed To give all people peacefulness. But now men tell us, none the less, That love has fled away from us,
175	That love is fro the world departed, So stant the pes unevene parted With hem that liven now adaies. Bot for to loke, at alle assaies,	<i>peace unequally distributed</i>	And peace is ill-divided thus Among the men who live today. Oh, try the question every way: He who loves reason, and would seek it
180	To him that wolde resoun seche After the comun worldes speche It is to wondre of thilke werre, In which non wot who hath the werre.	<i>at any rate seek;</i>	(I use the word as all men speak it), Cannot but marvel at that fight Whose victor no man knows aright. For every land is self-deceived
185	For every lond himself deceyveth And of desese his part receyveth, And yet ne take men no kepe. Bot thilke Lord which al may kepe,	<i>that strife no one knows; worse itself trouble its share men are indifferent (take no heed) but that very</i>	And by its proper dole is grieved, And yet men pay no heed at all. But He before Whom all should fall, To Whom there is no secret thing
190	To whom no consail may ben hid, Upon the world which is betid, Amende that wherof men pleigne With trewe hertes and with pleine,	<i>come to pass [may he] amend; complain simple [may he] reconcile</i>	In earthly minds' imagining: May He cure all the ills and smarts That trouble full and faithful hearts, And bring Love back to us again;
	And reconcile love ageyn, As He which is king sovereign Of al the worldes governaunce, And of His hyhe porveaunce	<i>lofty overview made their reconciled</i>	May He, the lord and sovereign Of this our worldly government, Now mightily be provident To seal His peace upon all lands
	Afferme pes between the londes And take her cause into Hise hondes, So that the world may stonde appesed And His Godhede also be plesed.		And take their cause into His hands, So that the world may be appeased, And His high Godhead too be pleased!

II. from Book 1: the introduction

I may nocht strecche up to the hevене Min hand, ne setten al in evene This world, which evere is in balance: It stant nocht in my sufficance	<i>stands not; ability</i>	I may not stretch up to the heavens This hand of mine, nor set at evens This world that wavers on the scales: Little my slender power avails
5 So grete thinges to compasse, Bot I mot lete it overpasse And treten upon othre thinges. Forthi the stile of my writings	<i>undertake must; go by discourse on therefore; style</i>	To compass things so great and high; So I must let them pass me by, And find new matters to recite. Therefore the style of what I write,
Fro this day forth I thenke change 10 And speke of thing is nocht so strange, Which every kinde hath upon honde, And wherupon the world mot stonde, And hath don sithen it began, And schal whil ther is any man;	<i>plan to; something [that] is not; foreign nature has at hand must since</i>	From this day forth I mean to change, And treat of what is not so strange - Something that every creature learns, And whereupon the whole world turns And so has turned since it began, And shall while yet there is a man:
15 And that is love, of which I mene To trete, as after schal be sene. In which ther can no man him reule, For loves lawe is out of reule, That of to moche or of to lite	<i>no one can govern himself unruly passion causes disorder too much; too little</i>	To treat, as shortly shall be seen. – In love, men lose their self-command, For love will come to no one's hand; Thus almost all men must admit
20 Wel nyh is every man to wyte, And natheles ther is no man In al this world so wys, that can Of love tempre the mesure, Bot as it falth in aventure.	<i>blame for, in truth,</i>	Too little or too much of it; Moreover there is not a man Alive who is so wise, he can Set it in tune and temperance, Unless it comes about by chance:
25 For wit ne strengthe may nocht helpe, And he which elles wolde him yelpe Is rathest throwen under fote, Ther can no wiht therof do bote. For yet was nevere such covine,	<i>falls by chance neither intelligence nor who otherwise; boast most quickly; foot where no one; be of help conspiracy</i>	For help is none, in strength or skill; And he whom boasting else would fill, Is soonest levelled with the ground, And nowhere may a cure be found. For never yet was secret art
30 That couthe ordeine a medicine To thing which God in lawe of kinde Hath set, for ther may no man finde The rihte salve of such a sor. It hath and schal ben everemor	<i>who knew how to concoct natural law remedy; ailment</i>	Which had a medicine to impart Against what God by natural (Law has decreed; among us all, None knows the salve for such a sore. Love was, and is, and evermore
35 That love is maister wher he wile, Ther can no lif make other skile; For wher as evere him lest to sette, Ther is no myht which him may lette. Bot what schal fallen ate laste,	<i>no creature do otherwise wherever he chooses to set himself power that may stop him</i>	Shall be our master where he will, In spite of all our mortal skill; For wheresoever he wills to stay, There is no power to say him nay. But what shall come about at last,
40 The sothe can no wisdom caste, Bot as it falleth upon chance. For if ther evere was balance Which of fortune stant governed, I may wel lieve as I am lerned	<i>truth; wise man forecast except; accidentally</i>	No wit may certainly forecast, Save that pure chance may draw the veil; For if there ever were a scale Whose balance is by Fate controlled, Well may I trust what I am told,
45 That love hath that balance on honde, Which wol no reson understonde. For love is blind and may nocht se, Forthi may no certeineté Be set upon his jugement,	<i>believe; taught</i>	And what no skill may understand: The scales are tilted by Love's hand. For Love is blind and cannot see, And so there is no certainty To set on his arbitrament,
50 Bot as the whiel aboute went He gifth his graces undeserved, And fro that man which hath him served Ful ofte he takth awaye his fees,	<i>reliance wheel [of Fortune] turns gives winnings</i>	But, with the turning wheel's intent, He gives his graces undeserved; Often, from people who have served Him well, he takes all benefice,

<p>As he that pleieth ate dees; 55 And therupon what schal befall He not, til that the chance falle, Wher he schal lese or he schal winne. And thus ful ofte men beginne, 59 That if thei wisten what it mente, Thei wolde change al here entente. And for to proven it is so, I am miselven on of tho, Which to this scole am underfonge. 65 For it is siththe go nocht longe, As for to speke of this matiere, I may you telle, if ye woll hiere, A wonder hap which me befell, That was to me bothe hard and fell, 70 Touchende of love and his fortune, The which me liketh to comune And plainly for to telle it oute. To hem that ben lovers aboute Fro point to point I wol declare 75 And wryten of my woful care, Mi wofull day, my wofull chance, That men mowe take remembrance Of that thei schall hierafter rede: For in good feith this wolde I rede, 80 That every man ensample take Of wisdom which him is betake, And that he wot of good aprise To teche it forth, for such emprise Is for to preise; and therefore I 85 Woll wryte and schewe al openly How love and I togedre mette Wherof the world ensample fette Mai after this, whan I am go, Of thilke unsely jolif wo, 90 Whos reule stant out of the weie, Nou glad and nou gladnesse aweie, And yet it may nocht be withstonde For oght that men may understonde.</p>	<p><i>dice</i></p> <p><i>knows not; happens</i> <i>whether; lose</i></p> <p><i>knew</i> <i>their</i></p> <p><i>myself one of those</i> <i>made a member of</i> <i>since</i></p> <p><i>hear</i> <i>wondrous adventure</i> <i>cruel</i> <i>its</i> <i>explain (communicate)</i></p> <p><i>may</i> <i>what; read next</i> <i>advise</i></p> <p><i>to him is allotted</i> <i>knows by sound learning</i> <i>enterprise</i> <i>praiseworthy</i></p> <p><i>obtain (fetch)</i> <i>gone</i> <i>unfortunate happy woe</i></p> <p><i>now</i></p>	<p>As from a man who plays at dice And cannot know his luck at all Until he sees how they will fall And make him either lose or win. Many a time will men begin An enterprise they would amend If they could see how it would end. 60 As proof that this is verity, Myself am in that company And School, a full licentiate. The time ago is not so great (While we are on the subject, you Shall hear, if you are willing to), That j^endured a wondrous thing, Severe and full of suffering, Which had to do with love and fate; This I would fain communicate, Fully and plainly to speak out. To all you lovers round about I shall in detail now declare, In writing, all my woeful care, My woeful day, my woeful lot, So that you shall remember what Hereafter comes before your eyes: For in good faith I would advise You, take example while you may Of wisdom when it comes your way, That by good teaching you consign The truth abroad: such a design Is praiseworthy. So I propose, Plainly, in writing, to disclose How love and I together met - Whereby the world which is not yet May take example, when I go, From that unhappy pleasing woe Whose government has gone astray (Now joy, and now joy-fled-away), Yet there is no withstanding it By any force of human wit.</p>
<p>Upon the point that is befall 95 Of love, in which that I am falle, I thenke telle my matiere: Now herkne, who that wol it hiere, Of my fortune how that it ferde. This enderday, as I forthferde 100 To walke, as I yow telle may, And that was in the monthe of Maii, Whan every brid hath chose his make And thenkth his merthes for to make Of love that he hath achieved; 105 Bot so was I nothing relieved, For I was further fro my love Than erthe is fro the hevene above. As for to speke of eny sped,</p>	<p><i>happened (fared)</i> <i>other day; went forth</i></p> <p><i>bird; mate</i></p> <p><i>obtained</i></p> <p><i>from</i></p> <p><i>any success</i></p>	<p>Now of this matter that befell, Concerning love, and me as well, I mean to make the details clear; Read on, then, if you wish to hear How fate would have it that I fared. And first of all, be this declared: As I walked out the other day, It being then the month of May When every bird upon the Earth Has found his mate, and sings in mirth For love that loves again, then I Was nowise comforted thereby; For I was farther from my love Than Earth is from the Heavens above; Nor any hope that I could see.</p>

<p>So wiste I me non other red, 110 Bot as it were a man forfare Unto the wode I gan to fare, Noght for to singe with the briddes, For whanne I was the wode amidde, I fond a swote grene pleine,</p>	<p><i>know; council</i> <i>worn out with travel</i> <i>wood; go</i> <i>birds</i> <i>sweet</i></p>	<p>No better counsel came to me: Like one worn out with journeying, I sought the woods, but not to sing Among the birds; for when I found Myself at the woods' heart, a ground Of pleasant level green arose;</p>
<p>115 And ther I gan my wo compleigne Wisshinge and wepinge al myn one, For other merthes made I none. So hard me was that ilke throwe, That ofte sithes overthrowe</p>	<p><i>alone by myself</i> <i>[for] me; very pain (circumstance)</i> <i>many times</i></p>	<p>There I lamented in my woes, Wishing and weeping all alone; And other music made I none. So bitter to me was this pain That I was dashed to earth again And yet again, and had no breath;</p>
<p>120 To grounde I was withoute breth; And evere I wisshide after deth, Whanne I out of my peine awok, And caste up many a pitous lok Unto the hevene, and seide thus: 125 "O thou Cupide, O thou Venus, Thow god of love and thou goddesse, Wher is pit��? wher is meknesse? Now doth me plainly live or dye, For certes such a maladie</p>	<p><i>life; delight; well-being</i> <i>complaint</i> <i>whether</i></p>	<p>And all the while, I longed for death. Then, when I woke from out my grief, I prayed to heaven for relief, With many a piteous look above: Goddess of Love, and God of Love - Thou, Venus; Cupid, thou her son - Whither are pity and mercy gone? Now let me wholly live or die; For such a maladie as I</p>
<p>130 As I now have and longe have hadd, It myhte make a wis man madd, If that it scholde longe endure. O Venus, queene of loves cure, Thou lif, thou lust, thou mannes hele, 135 Behold my cause and my queerele, And yif me som part of thi grace, So that I may finde in this place If thou be gracious or non."</p>	<p><i>whether</i></p>	<p>Now have and, truly, long have had, Might cause a Magus to run mad If it should overlong endure. Venus, Queen of passion's cure, Men's life, men's joy, thou balm of need; Take notice of the cause I plead; Yield me a little of thy grace; Resolve me in this very place If thou hast any grace at all.'</p>
<p>140 And with that word I sawh anon The kyng of love and qweene bothe; Bot he that kyng with yhen wrothe His chiere aweiward fro me caste, And forth he passede ate laste. Bot natheles er he forth wente 145 A firy dart me thoghte he hente And threw it thurgh myn herte rote: In him fond I non other bote, For lenger list him noght to duelle. Bot sche that is the source and welle</p>	<p><i>angry eyes</i> <i>countenance</i> <i>before he left</i> <i>seized</i> <i>deepest part of my heart</i> <i>relief (reward)</i> <i>[it] pleased; dwell</i> <i>well</i></p>	<p>And as I let my words down fall, I saw the God and Goddess both. But he, the King of Love, turned wroth Eyes on me, and askance looks cast, And moved away from me at last. And yet it seemed, before he went, He took a fiery dart and sent It through my deepest heart: be sure I found in him no other cure; He had no mind for lingering. But she, who is the Well and Spring (For them that love) of joy or pain, Chose at that season to remain.</p>
<p>150 Of wel or wo, that schal betide To hem that loven, at that tide Abod, bot for to tellen hiere Sche cast on me no goodly chiere: Thus natheles to me sche seide, 155 "What art thou, sone?" and I abreide Riht as a man doth out of slep, And therof tok sche riht good kep And bad me nothing ben adrad: Bot for al that I was noght glad, 160 For I ne sawh no cause why.</p>	<p><i>gladness (weal); happen</i> <i>them; time</i> <i>awaited; speak of here</i> <i>regard</i> <i>started</i> <i>notice</i> <i>afraid</i></p>	<p>But I must set down here that she Turned no kind countenance on me, Though none the less she said: 'Who art Thou, son?' With that I gave a start, Like men awakened suddenly; And this she noted, bidding me Put from my mind all thought of fear. And even so, I felt no cheer, For I could see no reason why.</p>
<p>And eft scheo asketh, what was I: I seide, "A caitif that lith hiere: What wolde ye, my ladi diere?"</p>	<p><i>then (after) she</i> <i>captive (wretch); lies</i></p>	<p>Once more she asked me who was I. I said: 'A wretch who lieth here: What is your will, my Lady dear?' What is your will, my Lady dear?"</p>

	Schal I ben hol or elles dye?"	<i>be made well (whole); die</i>	Am I to heal or perish?' She
165	Sche seide, "Tell thi maladie: What is thi sor of which thou pleignest? Ne hyd it noght, for if thou feignest, I can do thee no medicine." "Ma dame, I am a man of thyne, That in thi court have longe served, And aske that I have deserved, Som wele after my longe wo." And sche began to loure tho,	<i>sorrow; complain hide the truth help you with</i>	Said: 'Son, what is thy malady, The hurt of which thou so complainest? Conceal it not, for if thou feignest, I cannot medicine to thee.' 'Madame, I wear your livery, And long within your Courts have served; I ask for what I have deserved, Comfort in place of my long woe.'
175	Faitours, and so may be that thow Art riht such on, and be feintise Seist that thou hast me do servise." And natheles sche wiste wel, Mi world stod on an other whiel	<i>scowl then imposters (OF faiteor, "contriver") by deceit say knew wheel [of Fortune]</i>	With that she drew her eyebrows low, And said: 'There are too many of you Pretenders: if so be thou too Pretendest, and be such a one, Count well the service thou hast done.' And this she said though knowing well My wheel of fortune stood or fell Without the touch of counterfeit.
180	Withouten eny faiterie: Bot algate of my maladie Sche bad me telle and seie hir trowthe. "Ma dame, if ye wolde have rowthe," Quod I, "thanne wold I telle yow."	<i>false pretense in any case compassion</i>	She bade me none the less repeat What ailed me, and to speak the truth. 'Madame, if you showed any ruth,' I said, 'then I would answer you.'
185	"Sey forth," quod sche, "and tell me how; Schew me thi seknesse everydiel." "Ma dame, that can I do wel, Be so my lif therto wol laste." With that hir lok on me sche caste,	<i>provided that; should last to that extent</i>	'Disclose thy sickness through and through; Speak on, and say how it befell.' 'And that, Madame, I can do well, If I but live so long.' Then she Again looked frowningly at me.
190	And seide: "In aunter if thou live, Mi will is ferst that thou be schrive; And natheles how that it is I wot miself, bot for al this Unto my prest, which comth anon,	<i>in doubt be confessed/absolved know</i>	'In case thou livest, my command Is first that thou be shriven. And, For all that I myself well know How it is with thee, even so I will that thou confessest all
195	I woll thou telle it on and on, Bothe all thi thought and al thi werk. O Genius myn oghne clerk, Com forth and hier this mannes schrifte," Quod Venus tho; and I uplifte	<i>priest, who will arrive immediately one thing at a time hear; confession</i>	Thy thoughts and deeds, both great and small, Unto my priest, who will appear. My Chaplain, Genius, be here To shrive this man!' When this was said, At once I lifted up my head,
200	Min hefd with that and gan beholde The selve prest which as sche wolde Was redy there and sette him down To hiere my confessioun.	<i>then; raised up self-same himself</i>	And there beheld him as he came - That priest whom she had called by name. He sat down, ready to confess me; And, first of all, began to bless me.
205	This worthi prest, this holy man To me spekende thus began, And seide: "Benedicité, Mi sone; of the felicité Of love and ek of all the wo Thou schalt thee schrive of bothe tuo.	<i>speaking bless you also</i>	This worthy priest, this holy man, Addressed me, and he thus began: 'Now, my son, say I <i>benedicite</i> I tell thee that of all felicity, And of all woe, that love has given To thee, thou shalt this day be shriven.
210	What thou er this for loves sake Hast felt, let nothing be forsake, Tell pleinliche as it is befalle." And with that word I gan doun falle On knees, and with devocioun	<i>before</i>	What love has caused thee, before this, To suffer, tell, and nothing miss; As all occurred to thee, tell all.' And at these words, down did I fall Upon my knees; and with devotion, And with a most contrite emotion,
215	And with full gret contricioun I seide thanne: "Dominus, Min holi fader Genius;	<i>Lord</i>	I said, ' <i>O Sancte Domine</i> , Father Genius, shriving me,

	So as thou hast experience Of love, for whos reverence		Because thou hast experience Of Love, for whom in reverence
220	Thou schalt me schriuen at this time, I prai thee let me nocht mistime Mi schrifte, for I am destourbed In al myn herte, and so contourbed, That I ne may my wittes gete,	<i>confession</i> <i>perturbed</i>	I am to be confessed today, I beg thee let me not miss-say My shrift - for I am so disturbed Throughout my heart, and so perturbed, And all my senses so upset,
225	So schal I moche thing forgete. Bot if thou wolt my schrifte oppose Fro point to point, thanne, I suppose, Ther schal nothing be left behinde. Bot now my wittes ben so blinde,	<i>question me about my confession</i> <i>left unexamined</i>	That there is much I shall forget: But if thou question all, and sift Every detail of my shrift, Nothing, I think, will be omitted; But now I am so dimly witted,
230	That I ne can miselven teche." Tho he began anon to preche, And with his wordes debonaire He seide to me softe and faire: "Thi schrifte to oppose and hiere,	<i>then; soon</i>	I trust not my self-mastery Then he began to preach to me: Gentle and courteous his words were, And thus he spoke me, soft and fair: 'To shrive you here, and question you,
235	Mi sone, I am assigned hiere Be Venus the godesse above, Whos prest I am touchende of love. Bot natheles for certein skile I mot algate and nedes wile	<i>by</i> <i>pertaining to</i> <i>but nonetheless; specific reasons</i> <i>must continuously</i>	My son, I was assigned to do By Venus, goddess from above, Whose priest I am, concerning love. But there are certain reasons, still, Why I both must and ever will
240	Noght only make my spekynges Of love, bot of othre thinges, That touchen to the cause of vice. For that belongeth to th'office Of prest, whos ordre that I bere,		In my discourse not only tell Of love, but other things as well To which the vices may relate; For this is proper to that state Of priesthood to whose order I
245	So that I wol nothing forbere, That I the vices on and on Ne schal thee schewen everychon; Wherof thou myht take evidence To reule with thi conscience.	<i>leave out</i> <i>point by point</i>	Belong. I shall pass nothing by Till I have shown, omitting none, All vices to you, one by one: After which proof you may decide To take your conscience as your guide.
250	Bot of conclusion final Conclude I wol in special For love, whos servant I am, And why the cause is that I cam. So thenke I to don bothe tuo,		And yet my plan is finally To try, and judge, especially In love, as one who serves the same - Which is the reason why I came. Both things, then, I propose for you:
255	Ferst that myn ordre longeth to, The vices for to telle arewe, Bot next above alle othre schewe Of love I wol the propretes, How that thei stonde be degrees	<i>in succession (a row)</i>	First, that which is my Order's due, To set the vices all a-row; But next, above all else, to show What are love's signs and properties, Ranked by their orders and degrees
260	After the disposicioun Of Venus, whos condicioun	<i>by</i>	According to the governance Of Venus, she whose ordinance I must obey, who am constrained.[...]
[...]	I moste folwe, as I am holde. [...]	<i>bound</i>	With all the forms of priesthood I Shall guide thy shrift so teachingly That at the least thou shalt have learned
275	Of my presthode after the forme I wol thi schrifte so enforme, That ate leste thou schalt hiere The vices, and to thi matiere Of love I schal hem so remene,	<i>recount (bring back)</i>	The vices, which I shall have turned So towards your loving purposes, You shall know what each means and is, Since all a man may say or hear In his confession, must be clear:
280	That thou schalt knowe what thei mene. For what a man schal axe or sein Touchende of schrifte, it mot be plein, It nedeth nocht to make it queinte, For trowthe hise wordes wol nocht peinte:	<i>ask</i> <i>regarding confession; must be complete</i> <i>strange</i> <i>cover over</i>	No need for curious art or grace; Truth does not wear a painted face:

285	That I wole axe of thee forthi, Mi sone, it schal be so pleinely, That thou schalt knowe and understonde The pointz of schrifte how that thei stonde."	<i>that [which]; ask you therefore</i>	Therefore all that I ask shall be, My son, so clearly put to thee, That thou shalt hear and comprehend The points on which all shrifts depend.
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III. the tale of Apolloius of Tyre (book 8: the sin of lechery and general conclusion) – selected passages

a) exposition: Antioch		
275	Of a cronique in daies gon, The which is cleped <i>Pantheon</i> , In loves cause I rede thus, Hou that the grete Antiochus, Of whom that Antioche tok His ferste name, as seith the bok, Was coupled to a noble queene, And hadde a dowhter hem betwene: Bot such fortune cam to honde, That deth, which no king mai withstonde, Bot every lif it mote obeie, This worthi queene tok aweie. The king, which made mochel mone, Tho stod, as who seith, al him one Withoute wif, bot natheles His doghter, which was piereles Of beauté, duelte aboute him stille. Bot whanne a man hath welthe at wille, The fleissh is frele and falleth ofte, And that this maide tendre and softe, Which in hire fadres chambres duelte, Withinne a time wiste and felte. For likinge and concupiscence Withoute insihte of conscience The fader so with lustes blente, That he caste al his hole entente His oghne doghter for to spille. This king hath leisir at his wille With strengthe, and whanne he time sih, This yonge maiden he forlih. And sche was tendre and full of drede, Sche couthe noght hir maidenhede Defende, and thus sche hath forlore The flour which sche hath longe bore. It helpeth noght although sche wepe, For thei that scholde hir bodi kepe Of wommen were absent as thanne, And thus this maiden goth to manne. The wylde fader thus devoureth His oghne fleissh, which non socoureth, And that was cause of mochel care. Bot after this unkinde fare Out of the chambre goth the king, And sche lay stille, and of this thing, Withinne hirsself such sorghe made, Ther was no wiht that mihte hir glade, For feere of thilke horrible vice.	<p><i>chronicle</i></p> <p><i>lament</i> <i>so to speak, alone by himself</i></p> <p><i>beyond compare</i></p> <p><i>frail</i> <i>that [truth]</i></p> <p><i>knew; experienced</i> <i>desire; carnal lust</i></p> <p><i>desires blinded</i></p> <p><i>destroy</i> <i>leisure for</i> <i>saw;</i> <i>raped</i></p> <p><i>knew not how her</i> <i>to protect; lost</i> <i>flower; carried</i></p> <p><i>protect</i></p> <p><i>is taken by a man</i></p> <p><i>whom no one helps</i></p> <p><i>unnatural business</i></p> <p><i>sorrow</i> <i>person; console</i> <i>fear of that same</i></p>

	With that cam inne the norrice	<i>nurse</i>
	Which fro childhode hire hadde kept,	
320	And axeth if sche hadde slept,	
	And why hire chiere was unglad.	<i>countenance</i>
	Bot sche, which hath ben overlad	<i>compelled</i>
	Of that sche myhte noght be wreke,	<i>avenged</i>
	For schame couthe unethes speke;	<i>could scarcely</i>
325	And natheles mercy sche preide	<i>prayed</i>
	With wepende yhe and thus sche seide:	<i>weeping eyes</i>
	"Helas, mi soster, waileway,	<i>alas</i>
	That evere I sih this ilke day!	<i>saw; same</i>
	Thing which mi bodi ferst begat	<i>first begat my body</i>
330	Into this world, onliche that	
	Mi worldes worschipe hath bereft."	<i>honor; stolen</i>
	With that sche swouneth now and eft,	<i>fainted; again</i>
	And evere wissheth after deth,	
	So that wel nyh hire lacketh breth.	<i>breath failed her</i>
335	That other, which hire wordes herde,	<i>heard</i>
	In confortinge of hire ansuerde,	
	To lette hire fadres fol desir	<i>obstruct; foolish passion</i>
	Sche wiste no recoverir.	<i>knew; helper</i>
	Whan thing is do, ther is no bote,	<i>done; remedy</i>
340	So suffren thei that suffre mote;	<i>must</i>
	Ther was non other which it wiste.	<i>knew</i>
	Thus hath this king al that him liste	<i>pleased him</i>
	Of his likinge and his plesance,	<i>desire; pleasure</i>
	And laste in such continuance,	<i>persisted in</i>
345	And such delit he tok therinne,	
	Him thoghte that it was no sinne;	
	And sche dorste him nothing withseie.	<i>oppose;</i>
	Bot fame, which goth every weie,	
	To sondry regnes al aboute	
350	The grete beauté telleth oute	
	Of such a maide of hih parage:	<i>noble lineage</i>
	So that for love of mariage	
	The worthi princes come and sende,	<i>arrive and send [messages]</i>
	As thei the whiche al honour wende,	<i>expect</i>
355	And knewe nothing hou it stod.	
	The fader, whanne he understod,	
	That thei his dowhter thus besoghte,	
	With al his wit he caste and thoghte	
	Hou that he myhte finde a lette;	<i>invent an obstruction</i>
360	And such a statut thanne he sette,	<i>statute; established</i>
	And in this wise his lawe he taxeth,	<i>imposes</i>
	That what man that his doghter axeth,	
	Bot if he couthe his question	<i>unless</i>
	Assoile upon suggestion	<i>solve</i>
365	Of certein thinges that befelle,	
	The whiche he wolde unto him telle,	
	He scholde in certein lese his hed.	<i>certainly lose; head</i>
	And thus ther weren manye ded,	
	Here hevedes stondende on the gate,	<i>their heads piked</i>
370	Till ate laste longe and late,	
	For lacke of ansuere in the wise,	<i>according to the rules</i>
	The remenant that weren wise	<i>remainder</i>

	Eschueden to make assay.	<i>Avoided making the attempt</i>
	Til it befell upon a day	
375	Appolinus the Prince of Tyr, Which hath to love a gret desir, As he which in his hihe mod Was likende of his hote blod,	<i>high spirits</i> <i>was amorously disposed because of his passion</i>
380	A yong, a freissh, a lusti knyht, As he lai musende on a nyht Of the tidinges whiche he herde, He thoghte assaie hou that it ferde.	<i>musng</i> <i>to ascertain; would fare</i>
	He was with worthi compainie Arraied, and with good navie	
385	To schipe he goth, the wynd him dryveth, And seileth, til that he arryveth. Sauf in the port of Antioche He londeth, and goth to aproche	<i>safe</i>
	The kinges court and his presence.	
390	Of every naturel science, Which eny clerk him couthe teche, He couthe ynowh, and in his speche Of wordes he was eloquent;	<i>could</i> <i>knew enough</i>
	And whanne he sih the king present, 395 He preith he moste his dowhter have. The king agein began to crave, And tolde him the condicion,	<i>[that] he might</i> <i>demand (asserted his privilege)</i>
	Hou ferst unto his question He mote ansuere and faile nocht,	<i>must</i>
400	Or with his heved it schal be boght. And he him axeth what it was.	<i>head</i> <i>(Apollonius) asked; (the question)</i>
	The king declareth him the cas With sturne lok and sturdi chiere, To him and seide in this manere:	<i>harsh expression</i>
405	"With felonie I am upbore, I ete and have it nocht forbore Mi modres fleissh, whos housebonde Mi fader for to seche I fonde,	<i>sustained;</i> <i>have not desisted from doing it</i>
	Which is the sone ek of my wif.	<i>try</i> <i>also</i>
410	Hierof I am inquisitif; And who that can mi tale save, Al quyt he schal my doghter have; Of his ansuere and if he faile, He schal be ded withoute faile.	<i>riddle solve</i> <i>by rights (freely)</i>
415	Forthi my sone," quod the king, "Be wel avised of this thing, Which hath thi lif in jeupartie."	<i>jeopardy</i>
<u>L</u>	Appolinus for his partie, Whan he this question hath herd,	
420	Unto the king he hath ansuerd And hath rehersed on and on The pointz, and seide therupon: "The question which thou hast spoke, If thou wolt that it be unloke,	<i>one by one</i> <i>elucidated (unlocked)</i>
425	It toucheth al the priveté Betwen thin oghne child and thee, And stant al hol upon you tuo."	<i>secret matters</i> <i>pertains entirely to</i>

	The king was wonder sory tho, And thoughte, if that he seide it oute,	<i>vexed then;</i>
430	Than were he schamed al aboute. With slihe wordes and with felle	<i>sly; treacherous</i>
	He seith, "Mi sone, I schal thee telle, Though that thou be of litel wit, It is no gret merveile as yit,	
435	Thin age mai it nocht suffise: Bot loke wel thou nocht despise Thin oghne lif, for of my grace Of thretty daies fulle a space I grante thee, to ben avised."	<i>be advised (beware)</i> <i>permission; established</i>
440	And thus with leve and time assised This yonge prince forth he wente, And understod wel what it mente, Withinne his herte as he was lered,	<i>taught</i> <i>afraid</i>
445	The king his time hath so deslaied. Wherof he dradde and was esmaied, Of treson that he deie scholde, For he the king his sothe tolde;	<i>delayed</i> <i>afraid (dismayed)</i> <i>secret (truth) revealed</i>
450	And sodeinly the nyhtes tyde, That more wolde he nocht abide, Al prively his barge he hente And hom agein to Tyr he wente;	<i>took</i>
	And in his oghne wit he seide For drede, if he the king bewreide,	<i>own</i> <i>betrayed (exposed)</i>
455	He knew so wel the kinges herte, That deth ne scholde he nocht asterte, The king him wolde so poursuie. Bot he, that wolde his deth eschuie,	<i>escape</i> <i>pursue</i> <i>avoid</i>
	And knew al this tofor the hond, 460 Forsake he thoughte his oghne lond, That there wolde he nocht abyde; For wel he knew that on som syde This tirant of his felonie Be som manere of tricherie	<i>remain</i> <i>occasion</i>
465	To grieve his bodi wol nocht leve. Forthi withoute take leve, Als priveliche as evere he myhte, He goth him to the see be nyhte In schipes that be whete laden:	<i>aggrieve; leave off</i> <i>secretly</i> <i>sea at night</i> <i>were laden with grain</i>
470	Here takel redy tho thei maden And hale up seil and forth thei fare.	<i>hauled up the sail</i>

b) 1st climax: Apollonius in Pentapolis

	His cours he nam with seil updrawe,	<i>took; sail unfurled</i>
600	Where as fortune doth the lawe, And scheweth, as I schal reherse, How sche was to this lord diverse, The which upon the see sche ferketh.	<i>to where Fortune determines [he should go]</i> <i>explain</i> <i>adverse</i> <i>sea; swiftly conveys</i>
	The wynd aros, the weder derketh, 605 It blew and made such tempeste, Non ancher mai the schip areste, Which hath tobroken al his gere;	<i>weather grew dark</i> <i>keep secure</i> <i>broken asunder; its rigging</i>

	The schipmen stode in such a feere, Was non that myhte himself bestere,	<i>make a movement</i>
610	Bot evere awaite upon the lere, Whan that thei scholde drenche at ones. Ther was ynowh withinne wones Of wepinge and of sorghe tho; This yonge king makth mochel wo	<i>destruction</i> <i>drown</i> <i>within the chambers (cabins)</i> <i>then</i>
615	So for to se the schip travaile: Bot al that myhte him nogth availe; The mast tobrak, the seil torof, The schip upon the wawes drof, Til that thei sihe a londes cooste.	<i>suffer</i> <i>ripped in shreds</i> <i>waves was driven</i>
620	Tho made avou the leste and moste, Be so thei myhten come alonde; Bot he which hath the see on honde, Neptunus, wolde nocht acorde, Bot al tobroke cable and corde,	<i>made vow(s); least; greatest</i> <i>provided that</i> <i>shattered utterly</i>
625	Er thei to londe myhte aproche, The schip toclef upon a roche, And al goth doun into the depe. Bot he that alle thing mai kepe Unto this lord was merciabile,	<i>split apart</i>
630	And broghte him sauf upon a table, Which to the lond him hath upbore; The remenant was al forlore, Wherof he made mochel mone.	<i>plank</i> <i>lost</i> <i>lament (moan)</i> <i>by himself alone</i>
635	Thus was this yonge lord him one, Al naked in a povere plit: His colour, which whilom was whyt, Was thanne of water fade and pale, And ek he was so sore acale That he wiste of himself no bote,	<i>wretched condition</i> <i>formerly; fair</i> <i>chilled</i> <i>remedy</i>
640	It halp him nothing for to mote To gete agein that he hath lore. Bot sche which hath his deth forbore, Fortune, thogh sche wol nocht yelpe, Al sodeinly hath sent him helpe,	<i>complain</i> <i>lost</i> <i>held off</i> <i>boast</i>
645	Whanne him thoghte alle grace aweie; Ther cam a fisshere in the weie, And sih a man ther naked stonde, And whan that he hath understonde The cause, he hath of him gret routhe,	<i>fisherman</i>
650	And onliche of his povere trouthe Of suche clothes as he hadde With gret pité this lord he cladde. And he him thonketh as he scholde, And seith him that it schal be yolde,	<i>pity</i> <i>purely; loyalty [even as a poor man]</i>
655	If evere he gete his stat agein, And preide that he wolde him sein If nyh were eny toun for him. He seide, "Yee, Pentapolim, Wher bothe king and queene duellen."	<i>repaid</i> <i>social position</i> <i>tell him</i> <i>nearby; any</i>
660	Whanne he this tale herde tellen, He gladeth him and gan beseche That he the weie him wolde teche.	<i>entreated</i>

	And he him taghte, and forth he wente	
	And preide God with good entente	
665	To sende him joie after his sorwe.	
	It was noght passed yit midmorwe,	<i>mid-day</i>
	Whan thiderward his weie he nam,	<i>took</i>
	Wher sone upon the non he cam.	<i>noon</i>
	He eet such as he myhte gete,	
670	And forth anon, whan he hadde ete,	
	He goth to se the toun aboute,	
	And cam ther as he fond a route	<i>crowd</i>
	Of yonge lusti men withalle.	
	And as it scholde tho befalle,	
675	That day was set of such assisse,	<i>appointment</i>
	That thei scholde in the londes guise,	<i>custom of the land</i>
	As he herde of the poeple seie,	
	Here comun game thanne pleie;	
	And crid was that thei scholden come	
680	Unto the gamen alle and some	
	Of hem that ben deliverde and wyhte,	<i>agile; strong</i>
	To do such maistrie as thei myhte.	
	Thei made hem naked as thei scholde,	
	For so that ilke game wolde,	
685	As it was tho custume and us,	<i>then; use</i>
	Amonges hem was no refus.	<i>[being naked] was no disgrace</i>
	The flour of al the toun was there	
	And of the court also ther were,	
	And that was in a large place	
690	Riht evene afore the kinges face,	
	Which Artestrathes thanne hihte.	<i>was called</i>
	The pley was pleid riht in his sihte,	
	And who most worthi was of dede	<i>valiant; in combat</i>
	Receive he scholde a certain mede	<i>reward</i>
695	And in the cité bere a pris.	<i>gain distinction</i>
	Appolinus, which war and wys	<i>savvy; wise</i>
	Of every game couthe an ende,	<i>knew a bit</i>
	He thoghte assaie, hou so it wende,	<i>to try his luck</i>
	And fell among hem into game.	
700	And there he wan him such a name,	
	So as the king himself acompteth	<i>took note</i>
	That he alle othre men surmonteth,	
	And bar the pris above hem alle.	<i>had excellence</i>
	The king bad that into his halle	
705	At souper time he schal be broght;	
	And he cam thanne and lefte it noght,	<i>did not leave [his meal]</i>
	Withoute compaignie al one.	<i>all alone</i>
	Was non so semlich of persone,	
	Of visage and of limes bothe,	
710	If that he hadde what to clothe.	<i>if [only]; something [appropriate]</i>
	At souper time natheles	
	The king amidde al the pres	<i>crowd</i>
	Let clepe him up among hem alle,	<i>invite</i>
	And bad his mareschall of halle	
715	To setten him in such degré	
	That he upon him myhte se.	
	The king was sone set and served,	

	And he, which hath his pris deserved	<i>distinction</i>
	After the kinges oghne word,	<i>according to</i>
720	Was mad beginne a middel bord,	<i>table [above the general table</i>
	That bothe king and queene him sihe.	<i>[so] that; might see him</i>
	He sat and caste aboute his yhe	<i>eye</i>
	And sih the lordes in astat,	
	And with himself wax in debat	<i>grew conflicted</i>
725	Thenkende what he hadde lore,	<i>lost</i>
	And such a sorwe he tok therfore,	
	That he sat evere stille and thoghte,	
	As he which of no mete roghte.	<i>food was concerned</i>
	The king behield his hevynesse,	
730	And of his grete gentillesse	
	His doghter, which was fair and good	
	And ate bord before him stod,	
	As it was thilke time usage,	<i>at that time customary</i>
	He bad to gon on his message	<i>told [her] to go at his request</i>
735	And fonde for to make him glad.	<i>attempt</i>
	And sche dede as hire fader bad,	
	And goth to him the softe pas	<i>gently</i>
	And axeth whenne and what he was,	
	And preith he scholde his thoghtes leve.	<i>put aside</i>
740	He seith, "Ma dame, be youre leve,	
	Mi name is hote Appolinus,	<i>called</i>
	And of mi richesse it is thus,	
	Upon the see I have it lore.	<i>sea; lost</i>
	The contré wher as I was bore,	
745	Wher that my lond is and mi rente,	<i>income</i>
	I lefte at Tyr, whan that I wente.	<i>departed</i>
	The worschipe of this worldes aghte,	<i>honor; possessions</i>
	Unto the god ther I betaghte."	<i>god I commended there (left behind)</i>
	And thus togedre as thei tuo speeke,	
750	The teres runne be his cheeke.	<i>tears</i>
	The king, which therof tok good kepe,	<i>paid careful attention</i>
	Hath gret pité to sen him wepe,	
	And for his doghter sende agein,	
	And preide hir faire and gan to sein	<i>courteously; proceeded to say</i>
755	That sche no lengere wolde drecche,	<i>hesitate</i>
	Bot that sche wolde anon forth fecche	
	Hire harpe and don al that sche can	
	To glade with that sory man.	<i>find enjoyment; unhappy</i>
	And sche to don hir fader heste	<i>father's command</i>
760	Hir harpe fette, and in the feste	<i>fetched; feast</i>
	Upon a chaier which thei fette	
	Hirself next to this man sche sette:	
	With harpe bothe and ek with mouthe	
	To him sche dede al that sche couthe	
765	To make him chiere, and evere he siketh,	<i>sighs</i>
	And sche him axeth hou him liketh.	<i>asks; it pleases him</i>
	"Ma dame, certes wel," he seide,	
	"Bot if ye the mesure pleide	<i>ratios (metrics) played</i>
	Which, if you list, I schal you liere,	<i>teach</i>
770	It were a glad thing for to hier.	
	"Ha, lieve sire," tho quod sche,	<i>dear sir</i>
	"Now tak the harpe and let me se	

Of what mesure that ye mene."
 Tho preith the king, tho preith the queene, *then prays*
 775 Forth with the lordes alle arewe, *together*
 That he som merthe wolde schewe;
 He takth the harpe and in his wise *in his [own] style*
 He tempreth, and of such assise *tunes; manner*
 Singende he harpeth forth withal,
 780 That as a vois celestial
 Hem thoghte it souneth in here ere, *it seemed to them*
 As thogh that he an angel were.
 Thei gladen of his melodie,
 Bot most of all the compainie
 785 The kinges doghter, which it herde,
 And thoghte ek hou that he ansuerde,
 Whan that he was of hire opposed, *questioned*
 Withinne hir herte hath wel supposed
 That he is of gret gentillesse.
 790 Hise dedes ben therof witsesse
 Forth with the wisdom of his lore; *teaching*
 It nedeth noght to seche more,
 He myhte noght have such manere, *unless he were*
 795 Whanne he hath harped al his fille,
 The kinges heste to fulfille, *command*
 Away goth dissh, away goth cuppe,
 Doun goth the bord, the cloth was uppe,
 Thei risen and gon out of halle.
 800 The king his chamberlein let calle,
 And bad that he be alle weie *in every fashion*
 A chambre for this man pourveie, *prepare*
 Which nyh his oghne chambre be.
 "It schal be do, mi lord," quod he.
 805 Appolinus of whom I mene
 Tho tok his leve of king and queene
 And of the worthi maide also,
 Which preide unto hir fader tho,
 That sche myhte of that yonge man *from that*
 810 Of tho sciences whiche he can *of the kinds of learning he had knowledge of*
 His lore have; and in this wise
 The king hir granteth his aprise, *instruction*
 So that himself therto assente. *provided that [Apollonius]*
 Thus was acorded er thei wente,
 815 That he with al that evere he may
 This yonge faire freisshe may *maiden*
 Of that he couthe scholde enforme;
 And full assented in this forme *on these terms*
 Thei token leve as for that nyht.
 820 And whanne it was amorwe lyht,
 Unto this yonge man of Tyr,
 Of clothes and of good atir
 With gold and selver to despense
 This worthi yonge lady sende:
 825 And thus sche made him wel at ese,
 And he with al that he can plese
 Hire serveth wel and faire agein. *in turn*

	He tawhte hir til sche was certein	<i>accomplished</i>
	Of harpe, of citole, and of rote,	
830	With many a tun and many a note	<i>tune</i>
	Upon musique, upon mesure,	
	And of hire harpe the temprure	<i>tuning</i>
	He tawhte hire ek, as he wel couthe.	
	Bot as men sein that frele is youthe,	
835	With leisir and continuance	<i>persistence</i>
	This mayde fell upon a chance,	<i>change of fortune</i>
	That love hath mad him a querele	<i>made himself quarrel</i>
	Agein hire youthe freissh and frele,	
	That malgré wher sche wole or noght,	<i>despite whether</i>
840	Sche mot with al hire hertes thoght	<i>must</i>
	To love and to his lawe obeie;	
	And that sche schal ful sore abeie.	<i>sorely pay for</i>
	For sche wot nevere what it is,	
	Bot evere among sche fieleth this:	<i>continually</i>
845	Thenkende upon this man of Tyr,	
	Hire herte is hot as eny fyr,	
	And otherwhile it is acale;	<i>chilled (a-cold)</i>
	Now is sche red, nou is sche pale	
	Riht after the condicion	
850	Of hire ymaginacion.	
	Bot evere among hire thoghtes alle,	<i>continually</i>
	Sche thoghte, what so mai befall,	
	Or that sche lawhe, or that sche wepe,	<i>whether; laugh</i>
	Sche wolde hire goode name kepe	
855	For feere of wommanysse schame.	
	Bot what in ernest and in game,	
	Sche stant for love in such a plit,	
	That sche hath lost al appetit	
	Of mete, of drinke, of nyhtes reste,	<i>for food</i>
860	As sche that not what is the beste;	<i>who knows not what</i>
	Bot for to thenken al hir fille	
	Sche hield hire ofte times stille	<i>kept herself</i>
	Withinne hir chambre, and goth noght oute:	
	The king was of hire lif in doute,	
865	Which wiste nothing what it mente.	<i>who knew</i>
	Bot fell a time, as he out wente	
	To walke, of princes sones thre	
	Ther come and felle to his kne;	
	And ech of hem in sondri wise	
870	Besoghte and profreth his servise,	
	So that he myhte his doghter have.	
	The king, which wolde his honour save,	
	Seith sche is siek, and of that speche	<i>says; sick; matter</i>
	Tho was no time to beseche;	<i>implore</i>
875	Bot ech of hem do make a bille	<i>declaration [of wealth and position]</i>
	He bad, and wryte his oghne wille,	
	His name, his fader and his good;	<i>possessions</i>
	And whan sche wiste hou that it stod,	
	And hadde here billes oversein,	<i>their inventories perused</i>
880	Thei scholden have ansuere agein.	
	Of this conseil thei weren glad,	
	And writen as the king hem bad,	

	And every man his oghne bok Into the kinges hond betok,	<i>petition</i>
885	And he it to his dowhter sende, And preide hir for to make an ende And wryte agein hire oghne hond, Riht as sche in hire herte fond. The billes weren wel received,	
890	Bot sche hath alle here loves weyved, And thoghte tho was time and space To put hire in hir fader grace, And wrot agein and thus sche saide: "The schame which is in a maide	<i>their; rejected</i>
895	With speche dar noght ben unloke, Bot in writinge it mai be spoke; So wryte I to you, fader, thus: Bot if I have Appolinus,	<i>unless</i>
900	Of al this world, what so betyde, I wol non other man abide. And certes if I of him faile, I wot riht wel withoute faile Ye schull for me be dowhterles."	<i>whatever happens</i> <i>tolerate</i> <i>fail [to have] him</i>
905	This lettre cam, and ther was press Tofore the king, ther as he stod; And whan that he it understod, He gaf hem ansuer by and by,	<i>a crowd</i> <i>before</i>
910	Bot that was do so prively, That non of othres conseil wiste. Thei toke her leve, and wher hem liste Thei wente forth upon here weie.	<i>them</i> <i>secretly</i> <i>[so] that</i> <i>their; it pleased them</i>
	The king ne wolde noght bewreie The conseil for no maner hihe, Bot soffreth til he time sihe:	<i>reveal</i> <i>haste</i> <i>saw</i>
915	And whan that he to chambre is come, He hath unto his conseil nome This man of Tyr, and let him se The lettre and al the priveté,	<i>taken</i> <i>secret contents</i>
920	The which his dowhter to him sente. And he his kne to grounde bente And thonketh him and hire also, And er thei wenten thanne atuo,	<i>before; separated</i>
925	With good herte and with good corage Of full love and full mariage The king and he ben hol acorded. And after, whanne it was recorded Unto the dowhter hou it stod, The gifte of al this worldes good Ne scholde have mad hir half so blythe:	<i>joyous</i>
930	And forth withal the king als swithe, For he wol have hire good assent, Hath for the queene hir moder sent. The queene is come, and whan sche herde Of this matiere hou that it ferde,	<i>swiftly</i>
935	Sche syh debat, sche syh desese, Bot if sche wolde hir dowhter plese, And is therto assented full.	<i>conflict; distress</i> <i>unless</i>

	Which is a dede wonderfull, For no man knew the sothe cas	<i>true situation</i>
940	Bot he himself, what man he was; And natheles, so as hem thoghte, Hise dedes to the sothe wroghte That he was come of gentil blod. Him lacketh nocht bot worldes good,	<i>except</i> <i>it seems to them</i> <i>pointed to the truth</i>
945	And as therof is no despeir, For sche schal ben hire fader heir, And he was able to governe. Thus wol thei nocht the love werne	<i>forbid</i>
950	Of him and hire in none wise, Bot ther acorded thei divide The day and time of mariage. Wher love is lord of the corage,	<i>agreed upon a plan for</i> <i>heart;</i>
955	Him thenketh longe er that he spede; Bot ate laste unto the dede The time is come, and in her wise With gret offrende and sacrificise Thei wedde and make a riche feste, And every thing which was honeste	<i>it seems to him; succeed</i> <i>according to their custom</i> <i>honorable</i>
960	Withinnen house and ek withoute It was so don, that al aboute Of gret worschipe, of gret noblesse Ther cride many a man largesse	<i>cried out for (gave thanks for) almsgiving</i>
965	Unto the lordes hihe and loude; The knyhtes that ben yonge and proude, Thei jouste ferst and after daunce. The day is go, the nyhtes chaunce Hath derked al the bryhte sonne; This lord, which hath his love wonne,	
970	Is go to bedde with his wif, Wher as thei ladde a lusti lif, And that was after somdel sene, For as thei pleiden hem betwene, Thei gete a child between hem tuo, To whom fell after mochel wo.	<i>somewhat revealed</i>
975	Now have I told of the spousailes. Bot for to speke of the mervailles Whiche afterward to hem befelle, It is a wonder for to telle. It fell adai thei riden oute,	<i>wedding</i>
980	The king and queene and al the route, To pleien hem upon the stronde, Wher as thei sen toward the londe A schip sailende of gret array. To knowe what it mene may,	<i>company</i> <i>shore</i>
985	Til it be come thei abide; Than sen thei stonde on every side, Endlong the schipes bord to schewe, Of penonceals a riche rewe. Thei axen when the schip is come.	<i>awaited</i> <i>ship's side</i> <i>banners; display (row)</i>
990	Fro Tyr, anon ansuerde some, And over this thei seiden more The cause why thei comen fore	<i>whence</i>

	Was for to seche and for to finde Appolinus, which was of kinde	<i>by birth right</i>
995	Her liege lord: and he appiereth, And of the tale which he hiereth He was riht glad; for thei him tolde, That for vengeance, as God it wolde, Antiochus, as men mai wite,	<i>their</i> <i>know</i>
1000	With thondre and lythnyge is forsmite; His doghte hath the same chaunce, So be thei bothe in o balance. "Forthi, oure liege lord, we seie In name of al the lond, and preie,	
1005	That left al other thing to done, It like you to come sone And se youre oghne liege men With othre that ben of youre ken, That live in longinge and desir	<i>[that] it please you</i> <i>own</i> <i>kin (quality)</i>
1010	Til ye be come agein to Tyr." This tale after the king it hadde Pentapolim al overspradde, Ther was no joie for to seche;	<i>heard it</i> <i>seek</i>
1015	For every man it hadde in speche And seiden alle of on acord, "A worthi king schal ben oure lord: That thoghte ous first an hevnesse Is schape ous now to gret gladnesse." Thus goth the tidinge overal.	<i>one</i> <i>what seemed to us; burdensome</i> <i>has become for us</i>

c) family reunion: Apolonius & Thaisa

	Tho was ther spoke in many wise	
1650	Amonges hem that weren wise, Now this, now that, bot ate laste The wisdom of the toun this caste, That yonge Taise were asent. For if ther be amendement	<i>determined</i> <i>would be sent for</i>
1655	To glade with this woful king, Sche can so moche of every thing, That sche schal gladen him anon. A messenger for hire is gon, And sche cam with hire harpe on honde,	<i>knows</i>
1660	And seide hem that sche wolde fonde Be alle weies that sche can, To glade with this sory man. Bot what he was sche wiste nocht, Bot al the schip hire hath besoght	<i>attempt</i> <i>every means that she is able</i> <i>who; knew</i> <i>except; crew had begged her</i>
1665	That sche hire wit on him despende, In aunter if he myhte amende, And sein it schal be wel aquit. Whan sche hath understonden it, Sche goth hir doun, ther as he lay,	<i>employ</i> <i>on the chance that; improve</i> <i>[had] said; well worth her effort</i> <i>grasped this</i> <i>where</i>
1670	Wher that sche harpeth many a lay And lich an angel sang withal; Bot he no more than the wal Tok hiede of eny thing he herde. And whan sche sih that he so ferde,	<i>like</i> <i>wall (i.e., source of strength)</i> <i>saw; fared so</i>

1675	Sche falleth with him into wordes, And telleth him of sondri bordes, And axeth him demandes strange, Wherof sche made his herte change, And to hire speche his ere he leide	<i>various tales (jests)</i> <i>unusual riddles</i>
1680	And hath merveile of that sche seide. For in proverbe and in probleme Sche spak, and bad he scholde deme In many soubtil question: Bot he for no suggestioun	<i>puzzle (riddle);</i> <i>asked; judge</i> <i>prompting</i>
1685	Which toward him sche couthe stere, He wolde nocht o word ansuere, Bot as a madd man ate laste His heved wepende away he caste, And half in wraththe he bad hire go.	<i>that in respect to him; could stir up</i> <i>he, weeping, quickly turned his head away</i>
1690	Bot yit sche wolde nocht do so, And in the derke forth sche goth, Til sche him toucheth, and he wroth, And after hire with his hond He smot: and thus whan sche him fond	<i>recoiled</i> <i>struck</i>
1695	Desesed, courtaisly sche saide, "Avoi, mi lord, I am a maide; And if ye wiste what I am, And out of what lignage I cam, Ye wolde nocht be so salvage."	<i>desist!</i> <i>knew who</i> <i>savage</i>
1700	With that he sobreth his corage And put away his hevy chiere. Bot of hem tuo a man mai liere What is to be so sibb of blod. Non wiste of other hou it stod,	<i>mood</i> <i>morose behavior</i> <i>of those two one may learn</i> <i>akin by blood</i> <i>neither knew</i>
1705	And yit the fader ate laste His herte upon this maide caste, That he hire loveth kindely, And yit he wiste nevere why. Bot al was knowe er that thei wente;	<i>[such] that; warmly (naturally)</i> <i>discovered before</i>
1710	For God, which wot here hol entente, Here hertes bothe anon descloseth. This king unto this maide opposeth, And axeth ferst what was hire name, And wher sche lerned al this game,	<i>who knew their whole</i> <i>their; soon</i> <i>questioned</i>
1715	And of what ken that sche was come. And sche, that hath hise wordes nome, Answerth and seith, "My name is Thaise, That was som time wel at aise. In Tharse I was forthdrawe and fed;	<i>parentage</i> <i>understood</i> <i>ease</i> <i>brought up</i>
1720	Ther lerned I til I was sped Of that I can. Mi fader eke I not wher that I scholde him seke; He was a king, men tolde me. Mi moder dreint was in the see."	<i>successful</i> <i>what I know</i> <i>know not</i> <i>drowned</i>
1725	Fro point to point al sche him tolde, That sche hath longe in herte holde, And nevere dorste make hir mone Bot only to this lord alone, To whom hire herte can nocht hele,	<i>held</i> <i>dared; complaint</i> <i>stay concealed</i>

1730	Torne it to wo, torne it to wele, Torne it to good, torne it to harm. And he tho toke hire in his arm, Bot such a joie as he tho made Was nevere sen; thus be thei glade,	<i>whether it may turn</i> <i>then</i>
1735	That sory hadden be toforn.	

d) epilogue: the moral

	Lo, what it is to be wel grounded: For he hath ferst his love founded	
1995	Honesteliche as for to wedde, Honesteliche his love he spedde And hadde children with his wif, And as him liste he ladde his lif; And in ensample as it is write,	<i>honorably</i> <i>honorably; fulfilled</i> <i>it pleased him</i> <i>written</i>
2000	That alle lovers myhten wite How ate laste it schal be sene Of love what thei wolden mene. For se now on that other side, Antiochus with al his pride,	<i>know</i> <i>intend</i>
2005	Which sette his love unkindely, His ende he hadde al sodeinly, Set agein kinde upon vengance, And for his lust hath his penance.	<i>unnaturally</i> <i>against nature</i>

John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, Volume 1, ed. Russell A. Peck, TEAMS Middle English Texts Series: Kalamazoo 2006

<https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/peck-confessio-amantis-volume-1>

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