

Chapter Title: Text, translation and notes

Book Title: *Of Reynaert the Fox*

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Text, translation and notes

About the translation – The English translation of Willem’s *Van den vos Reynaerde* aims to present readers who are not familiar with Middle Dutch with a narrative that may be enjoyed in its own right, while it follows at the same time the Middle Dutch text as closely as is reasonably possible. Lines are kept parallel, unless this would result in distorted grammar and style, but any lack of parallelism never extends beyond two or three lines. Thus readers of the translation will find it easy to refer to the original text. Tenses in medieval – including Middle Dutch – texts tend to sway between present and past. These alternations have mostly been preserved in the translation as they rarely hinder comprehension. The anthropomorphic animals are referred to by pronouns usually reserved for human beings. For the names of the animals one form is used consistently in the translation; this is the form listed as headword in the Index of proper names.

Thea Summerfield

- 1 Willem die *Madocke* maecte, [192va,22]
 daer hi dicken omme waecte,
 hem vernoyde so haerde
 dat die avonture van Reynaerde
 5 in Dietsche onghemaket bleven
 – die *Arnout* niet hevet vulscreven –
 dat hi die vijte *dede* soucken
 ende hise na den Walschen boucken
 in Dietsche dus hevet begonnen.
 10 God moete ons ziere hulpen jonnen!
 Nu keert hem daertoe mijn zin
 dat ic bidde in dit beghin
 beede den dorpren enten doren,
 ofte si commen daer si horen
 15 dese rijme ende dese woort
 (die hem onnutte sijn ghehoort),
 dat sise laten onbescaven.
 Te vele slachten si den raven,
 die emmer es al even malsch.
 20 Si maken sulke rijme valsch,
 daer si niet meer of ne weten [192vb]
 dan ic doe hoe dat si heeten
 die nu in Babilonien leven.
 Daden si wel, si soudens begheven.
 25 Dat en segghic niet dor minen wille.
 Mijns dichtens ware een ghestille,
 ne hads mi eene niet ghebeden
 die in groeter hovesscheden

1 A Middle Dutch story about Madoc has not come down to us, but there are strong indications that a work with this title did at one time exist. Willem's earlier tale probably told of a dream that Madoc had, as seems to be suggested in Maerlant's *Rijmbijbel* (cf. p. 16). Madoc is sometimes considered to have been a story about a seafarer's adventures.

6 It has been suggested that *Van den vos Reynaerde* was written by two poets and that Willem completed Arnout's unfinished work. However, serious objections may be raised to this notion of joint authorship. Assuming that the name was not an invention, it seems probable, also in view of the emphatic *Walsch-Dietsch* (French-Dutch) contrast in the lines before and after the name, that Arnout was a French *Renart* poet (cf. p. 15).

13 *dorpren* ('peasants') refers to non-courtly persons.

Prologue

1 Willem who made *Madocke*,
 which often kept him awake,
 was so extremely annoyed
 that the tales of Reynaert
 5 – which Arnout has not finished –
 remained unwritten in Dutch
 that he had the life looked for
 and, following the French books,
 he began it in Dutch as follows.
 10 May God favour us with his help!
 Now I am of a mind
 to urge at this beginning
 both peasants and fools
 whenever they happen to hear
 15 the rhyme and these words
 (which are wasted on them),
 that they leave them unchanged.
 They too much resemble the raven
 who always thinks he knows it all.
 20 They claim that many verses are untrue
 which they know no more about
 than I know what the people are called
 who now live in Babylon.
 If they were sensible, they would give up.
 25 I am not saying this for myself.
 I would not have written this poem
 if a certain lady had not asked me
 who likes to conduct her affairs

23 *Babilonien* ('Babylon') is used here in a hyperbolic comparison to indicate a proverbially distant, foreign place. It may well be the case that the oblique reference to biblical Babylon, the scene of linguistic 'babel', is intentional. *Genesis* 11 describes how building the tower of Babel led to the rise of multiple languages and the resulting confusion and incomprehension among people.

26 Literally the Middle Dutch phrase reads: 'my poetry writing would only be silence'.

26-31 Willem claims to have written his verse romance at the request of a courtly lady, whom he does not, however, name. It is usually assumed that, rather than having a real, existing person in mind, the poet parodied the medieval custom of dedicating writings to the nobility, and especially to noble women.

gherne keert hare saken.
30 Soe bat mi dat ic soude maken
dese avontuere van Reynaerde.
Al begripic die grongaerde
ende die dorpren ende die doren,
ic wille dat dieghene horen
35 die gherne pleghen der eeren
ende haren zin daertoe keeren
dat si leven hoofschelike,
sijn si arem, sijn si rike,
diet verstaen met goeden sinne.
40 Nu hoert hoe ic hier beghinne!

Het was in eenen tsinxendaghe
dat beede bosch ende haghe
met groenen loveren waren bevaen.
Nobel die coninc hadde ghedaen
45 sijn hof crayeren overal,
dat hi waende, hadde hijs gheval,
houden ten wel groeten love.
Doe quamen tes sconinx hove
alle die diere, groet ende cleene,
50 sonder vos Reynaert alleene.
Hi hadde te hove so vele mesdaen
dat hire niet dorste gaen.
Die hem besculdich kent, ontsiet.
Also was Reynaerde ghesciet
55 ende hieromme scuwedi sconinx hof,
daer hi in hadde crancken lof.
Doe al dat hof versamet was,
was daer niemen, sonder die das,
hi ne hadde te claghene over Reynaerde,

42-48 The initially harmonious atmosphere is evoked by means of a so-called 'Natureingang': it is spring and trees and hedgerows are covered in green leaves (see also 322-26). The

in a very courtly manner.
 30 She asked me to make
 this story about Reynaert.
 Although I denounce the nit-pickers
 and the peasants and the fools,
 I wish it to be heard by those
 35 who like to act honourably
 and put their minds
 to living in a courtly way,
 whether they be poor or rich,
 and who will understand it properly.
 40 Now hear how I begin!

King Nobel holds court

It was on a day at Whitsuntide
 when trees and shrubbery alike
 were dressed all over with green leaves.
 Nobel the King had had
 45 his court-day proclaimed everywhere,
 which, he thought, – all being well –
 would greatly increase his fame.
 Then came to the king's court
 all the animals, large and small,
 50 except for Reynaert the fox alone.
 He had behaved so badly at court
 that he did not dare go.
 Whoever is knowingly guilty, is afraid.
 This was the case with Reynaert
 55 and that is why he avoided the king's court
 where his esteem was low.
 When the entire court had gathered
 there was nobody, except the badger,
 who did not have some reason for complaining of

opening scene of *Van den vos Reynaerde* stands in the tradition of many medieval Arthurian romances, in which the king holds court on Ascension Day or at Whitsun.

- 60 den fellen metten grijsen baerde.
 Nu gaet hier up eene claghe.
 Isingrijn ende sine maghe
 ghinghen voer den coninc staen. [193ra]
 Ysengrijn begonste saen
- 65 ende sprac: 'Coninc heere,
 dor hu edelheit ende dor hu eere
 ende dor recht ende dor ghenade,
 ontfaerme hu miere scade
 die mi Reynaert heeft ghedaen,
- 70 daer ic af dicken hebbe ontfaen
 groeten lachter ende verlies.
 Voer al dandre ontfaerme hu dies
 dat hi mijn wijf hevet verhoert
 ende mine kindre so mesvoert
- 75 dat hise beseekede daer si laghen,
 datter twee noint ne saghen
 ende si worden staerblent.
 Nochtan hoendi mi sent.
 Het was sint so verre comen
- 80 datter eenen dach af was ghenomen
 ende Reynaerd soude hebben ghedaen
 sine onschulde. Ende also saen
 also die heleghe waren brocht,
 was hi andersins bedocht
- 85 ende ontfoer ons in sine veste.
 Heere, dit kennen noch die beste
 die te hove zijn commen hier.
 Mi hevet Reynaert, dat felle dier,

62-71 In the course of the court day Ysingrijn the wolf, supported by his relatives, brings charges against Reynaert. Medieval feudal society initially lacked a strong, central source of authority. The authorities usually prosecuted only after the injured party had made a formal complaint. See also the 'complaint' made by Cortoys, and by Pancer/Cuwaert and Canteleer later in the story.

72-77 In branch II of the *Roman de Renart* (Martin 1882-1887, 1027-1396) the fox finds himself in the wolves' lair by accident. After Haersint, the she-wolf, has agreed to have sexual intercourse with Reynaert, the latter urinates on her cubs and leaves the lair. Once her husband has returned, the she-wolf tries to convince him without much success that she has been raped. A few days later the two wolves chase the fox. When the she-wolf gets stuck in the

60 Reynaert, the scoundrel with the grey beard.
 Now a charge is made against him.
 Ysingrijn and his relatives
 took up their positions before the king.
 Ysingrijn began at once
 65 and said: 'My Lord King,
 for the sake of your nobility and of your honour,
 and for the sake of justice and of mercy,
 take pity on the harm
 inflicted upon me by Reynaert,
 70 through whom I have often incurred
 great humiliation and loss.
 Take pity especially because
 he has had his way with my wife
 and has maltreated my children so badly
 75 that, by pissing on them where they lay,
 two of them lost their sight
 and are now totally blind.
 In addition he later disgraced me.
 It had by then come to such a pass
 80 that a day had been appointed
 when Reynaert should swear
 his innocence in court. But as soon
 as the relics were brought,
 he changed his mind
 85 and escaped us in his stronghold.
 My lord, this is well known among the highest
 of those who have come here to court.
 Reynaert, that vicious animal,

narrow entrance to the fox's den, she is raped, in full view of the approaching wolf, by Renart who has left his den by another exit. Ysingrijn's complaint concerns the rape; for obvious reasons he remains silent about his wife's adultery (cf. pp. 32-33).

73 *verhoert* is ambiguous; apart from meaning 'raped', it refers to sexual fulfilment.

79-85 Reynaert's escape when about to swear his innocence is seen in a different light when the story of Ysingrijn's devious plan, recounted in branch Va of the *Roman de Renart*, is taken into account (Martin 1882-1887, 1091-1272). There the fox flees because he discovers just in time that the holy relics on which he was to swear were in fact the teeth of the dog Roonel, who was shamming death. The wolf's biased version of events clearly demonstrates that he is dissembling (cf. p. 33).

so vele te leede ghedaen,
 90 ic weet wel al sonder waen:
 al ware al tlaken paerkement
 dat men maket nu te Ghent,
 inne ghescreeft niet daeran.
 Dies zwijghics nochtan,
 95 neware mijns wives lachter
 ne mach niet bliven achter,
 no onversweghen no onghewroken.’
 Doe Ysengrijn dit hadde ghesproken,
 stont up een hondekijn, hiet Cortoys,
 100 ende claghede den coninc in Francsoys
 hoet so arem was wijleneere
 dat alles goets en hadde meere
 in eenen winter, in eene vorst,
 dan alleene eene worst
 105 ende hem Reynaert, die felle man, [193rb]
 die selve worst stal ende nam.
 Tybeert die cater die wart gram.
 Aldus hi sine tale began
 ende spranc midden in den rinc
 110 ende seide: ‘Heere coninc,
 dordat ghi Reynaerde zijt onhout,
 so en es hier jonc no hout,
 hi ne hebbe te wroughene jeghen hu.
 Dat Cortoys claghet nu,
 115 dats over menich jaer ghesciet.
 Die worst was mine, al en claghic niet.
 Ic hadse bi miere lust ghewonnen
 daer ic bi nachte quam gheronnen
 omme bejach in eene molen,
 120 daer ic die worst in hadde ghestolen
 eenen slapenden molenman.
 Hadder Cortoys yewet an,

97 *no onversweghen*: *onversweghen* may be a scribal error for *versweghen*, but it could also be argued that this is a slip of the tongue on Ysingrijn’s part (“nor not hushed up”).

107 *Tybeert die cater*: although the text specifies that Tybeert is a male cat or tomcat, we translate ‘cater’ as ‘cat’, in accordance with usual practice.

has done me so much harm;
 90 I am quite convinced:
 if all the cloth now made in Ghent
 were parchment, I should not have
 enough to describe it all.
 That is why I prefer to be silent about it,
 95 but my wife's disgrace
 must neither be overlooked,
 nor not hushed up, nor remain without revenge.'

When Ysingrijn had spoken thus
 a small dog stood up, called Cortoys,
 100 and complained to the king in French
 how a while ago it had been so poor
 that it had had nothing left
 one winter when there was a frost
 except for one sausage
 105 and that Reynaert, the scoundrel,
 had stolen that very sausage from him.

Tybeert the cat was roused to fury.
 This is how he began his speech
 and he jumped into the middle of the circle
 110 and he said: 'My Lord King,
 because you bear Reynaert ill will
 there is no one here, young nor old,
 or he has something to charge him with before you.
 What Cortoys is complaining of now
 115 happened many a year ago.
 The sausage was mine, but I don't complain.
 I had got hold of it craftily
 when one night, looking for something to bag,
 I went into a mill
 120 where I stole the sausage
 from a sleeping miller.
 If Cortoys profited by it at all

107-25 Tybeert argues that Cortoys' complaint is not admissible: the sausage belonged to the cat, who in his turn had stolen it from a sleeping miller. As the miller was traditionally renowned for sexual prowess in the Middle Ages, the sausage may have ambiguous implications.
117 *lust* is ambiguous, meaning both 'clever trick' as well as 'lust'.

dan was bi niemene dan bi mi.
Hets recht dat omberecht zi
125 die claghe die Cortoys doet.’
Pancer de bever sprac: ‘Dinct hu goet,
Tybeert, dat men die claghe ombeere?
Reynaert es een recht mordeneere
ende een trekere ende een dief.
130 Hi ne heeft oec niemene so lief,
no den coninc, minen heere,
hi ne wilde dat hi lijf ende eere
verlore, mochtire an winnen
een vet morzeel van eere hinnen.
135 Wat sechdi van eere laghe?
En dedi ghistren in den daghe
eene die meeste overdaet
an Cuwaerde den hase, die hier staet,
die noyt eenich dier ghedede?
140 Want hi hem binnen sconinx vrede
ende binnen des coninx gheleede
ghelovede te leerne sinen crede
ende soudene maken capelaen.
Doe dedine sitten gaen
145 vaste tusschen sine beene.
Doe begonsten si overeene
spellen ende lesen beede [193va]
ende lude te zinghene crede.
Mi gheviel dat ic te dien tijden
150 ter selver stede soude lijden.
Doe hoerdic haerre beeder sanc
ende maecte daerwaert minen ganc
met eere arde snelre vaerde.
Doe vandic daer meester Reynaerde,
155 die ziere lessen hadde begheven

140-41 King Nobel has proclaimed peace, which meant that his subjects were not allowed to carry weapons or to pursue old feuds. Reynaert’s attempt on Cuwaert’s life is, therefore, also a breach of the king’s peace. This undermines Nobel’s authority, as Pancer the beaver remarks at the end of his speech (165-69).

142-48 It has been suggested that the expressions *maken capelaen* (‘make chaplain’) and

this was entirely my doing.
 It would only be right to dismiss
 125 the complaint that Cortoys makes.’
 Pancer the beaver spoke: ‘Do you think it right,
 Tybeert, that the complaint should be dismissed?
 Reynaert really is a murderer
 and a cheat and a thief.
 130 Also, there is nobody he likes so much,
 not even my lord the king,
 that he would not wish him to lose
 life and honour if that might get him
 a succulent bite of a chicken.
 135 And a trap, what do you say of that?
 Did he not yesterday, in broad daylight,
 perpetrate one of the worst crimes
 ever committed by any animal
 against Cuwaert the hare, standing here?
 140 For at a time when the king’s peace
 and safe conduct have been proclaimed,
 he promised to teach him the creed
 and to make him chaplain.
 Then he made him sit
 145 tightly between his legs.
 Together they began
 to practice spelling and reading
 and to sing the creed loudly.
 It so happened that at this moment
 150 I passed that place.
 Then I heard them singing together
 and went in that direction,
 at a great speed.
 Then I found master Reynaert there
 155 who had finished

zingen crede (‘sing the creed’) should be read as scabrous allusions to masturbation and sexual intercourse respectively. If this is correct, Reynaert and Cuwaert committed the sin that should not be named in the Middle Ages (the *crimen nefandum*): homosexual love. See in this context also 144-45. This interpretation is supported by a marginal decoration, depicting a very frightened hare with a bloodied bottom, holding a book (cf. Meuwese 2006).

die hi tevoren up hadde gheheven,
 ende diende van sinen houden spelen
 ende hadde Coewaerde bi der kelen
 ende soude hem thoeft af hebben ghenomen
 160 waer ic hem niet te hulpen comen
 bi avontueren in dien stonden.
 Siet hier noch die verssche wonden
 ende die teekine, heere coninc,
 die Coewaert van hem ontfinc.
 165 Laetti dit bliven onghewroken,
 dat hu verde dus es tebroken,
 ghi ne wreket als huwe mannen wijsen,
 men saelt huwen kindren mesprijsen
 hiernaer over wel menich jaer.’
 170 ‘Bi Gode, Pancer, ghi secht waer,’
 sprac Ysengrijn daer hi stoet.
 ‘Heere, waer Reynaerd doot, het waer ons goet,
 also behoude mi God mijn leven.
 Neware wert hem dit vergheven,
 175 hi sal noch hoenen binnen eere maent
 sulken dies niet ne bewaent.’
 Doe spranc up Grinbert die das,
 die Reynaerts broedersone was,
 met eere verbolghenlike tale:
 180 ‘Heere Ysengrijn, men weet dat wale
 ende hets een hout bijspel:
 viants mont seit selden wel.
 Verstaet, neemt miere talen goem:
 ic wilde, hi hinghe an eenen boem
 185 bi ziere kelen als een dief
 die andren heeft ghedaen meest grief.

162-64 The person bringing the charge can strengthen his case by supplying evidence. That is why Pancer points to his relative Cuwaert's fresh wounds. A well-known example from Germanic legal practice is the complaint with the dead man: the victim's body is brought to the court of law by his relatives and is shown when the charge is made. This is also the reason why Cantecler will bring his daughter Coppe's dead body to the court on a bier (283-90).

177-282 In his plea for the defence Grimbeert the badger first proposes a reconciliation between the fox and Ysengrijn, Reynaert's most powerful enemy. He argues that this is the

his earlier lesson
 and was up to his old tricks
 and he had Cuwaert by the throat
 and would have bitten his head off
 160 if I had not accidentally
 come to his aid at that moment.
 See here the fresh wounds
 as evidence, lord king,
 which Cuwaert sustained by his doing.
 165 If you leave unpunished in this way
 the disturbance of your peace,
 ignoring the verdict of your barons,
 it will be held against your children
 for many years to come.'
 170 'By God, Pancer, what you say is true,'
 said Ysingrijn from where he stood.
 'Lord, it would be a good thing for us all
 if Reynaert were dead, so help me God.
 But if he is pardoned for this,
 175 he is sure to trick within a month
 those of us who are not prepared for it.'
 Then Grimbeert the badger jumped up,
 who was Reynaert's brother's son,
 and spoke these angry words:
 180 'Lord Ysingrijn, as everyone surely knows
 and it is an old saying:
 Sweet words rarely fall from the enemy's mouth.
 Listen, pay attention to my words:
 I would wish that the one who
 185 has caused the other most grief
 were hanged by the neck from a tree like a thief.

more appropriate as in his view the wolf has caused Reynaert more harm than the other way
 around (177-202). When this clever counter-accusation is called a *lie* (203-4), Grimbeert
 takes the time to support his claim (205-32), after which he disproves the actual charges made
 against the fox. He interprets the rape as adultery between courtly lovers, the theft of the
 sausage as the confiscation of stolen goods, and dismisses the attack on Cuwaert as a mas-
 ter's chastisement of a recalcitrant pupil (233-62). Finally Reynaert is depicted as a redeemed
 sinner who now lives the life of a hermit and fasts (263-82). For the first time in the story the
 problem of the relationship between rhetoric and reality is raised (cf. pp. 21-22).

Heere Ysengrijn, wildi angaen
 soendinc ende dat ontfaen,
 daertoe willic helpen gherne. [193vb]
 190 Mijn oem en saelt hem oec niet wernen.
 Entie meest andren heeft mesdaen
 sal den andren in baten staen
 van minen oem ende van hu.
 Al comt hi niet claghen nu,
 195 ware mijn oem wel te hove
 ende stonde in sconinx love,
 heere Ysengrijn, als ghi doet,
 en soude den coninc niet dincken goet
 ende ghi ne bleves heden onbegrepen,
 200 dat ghi sijn vel so hebt ghenepen
 so dicwile met huwen scerpen tanden,
 dat hi niet ne conde ghehanden.
 Ysengrijn sprac: 'Hebdi gheleert
 an huwen oem dus lieghen apeert?'
 205 'In hebbe daeran niet gheloghen.
 Ghi hebt minen oem bedroghen
 arde dicke in menegher wijsen.
 Ghi mesleettene van den pladijse
 die hi hu warp van der kerren,
 210 doe ghi hem volghet van verren
 ende ghi die beste pladijse uplaset,
 daer ghi hu ane hadt versadet.
 Ghi ne gaeft hem no goet no quaet,
 sonder alleene eenen pladijsegraet
 215 dat ghi hem te jeghen brocht,
 dordat ghine niet en mocht.
 Sint hoendine van eenen bake
 die vet was ende van goeder smake,
 dien ghi leit in huwen muzeele.

187-88 Grimbeert suggests that the wolf should make a promise of reconciliation and accept a similar promise on the fox's part.

208-16 In branch III of the *Roman de Renart* the fox shams death in the middle of the road when a cart with a load of fish approaches. When he has been tossed on to the cart on account of his valuable pelt, he makes a meal of the fish (Martin 1882-1887, 1-164). Grimbeert twists

Lord Ysingrijn, should you wish
 to agree to a settlement,
 I will be pleased to assist.
 190 My uncle will not make objections either.
 And whoever is the worst miscreant,
 whether it be my uncle or you,
 he will owe the other party compensation.
 Even though he is not now appearing to make a complaint,
 195 if my uncle's standing at court was high
 and if he enjoyed the king's favour
 – as you do, Lord Ysingrijn –
 the king would not approve of it
 and you would not escape punishment this time
 200 for having ravaged his skin
 so often with your sharp teeth,
 while he had no way of taking revenge.'
 Ysingrijn spoke: 'Have you learned
 from your uncle to lie so blatantly?'
 205 – 'I have not told any lies.
 You have deceived my uncle
 very often and in many different ways.
 You cheated him when he threw you
 the plaice from the cart,
 210 while you followed him at a distance
 and picked up the best plaice
 with which you satisfied your hunger.
 You gave him nothing at all,
 except for the bones of one single plaice,
 215 which you offered him
 because you did not fancy them any more.
 Later you cheated him with a side of bacon
 that had much fat on it and was very tasty,
 which you took between your jaws.

this story in such a way that it makes Ysingrijn appear in a bad light. In the badger's version Reynaert is in the wolf's company. In the same way as the wolf owes his success in appropriating a ham to the fox, showing his gratitude by leaving nothing but the string from which it was hung (217-19), he here devours the plaice that Reynaert throws down to him from the cart, leaving nothing but the bones of one single fish (cf. p. 31-32).

- 220 Doe Reynaert heesschede zijn deele,
andwoerdi hem in scerne:
“Hu deel willic hu gheven gherne,
Reynaert, scone jonghelinc!
Die wisse daer die bake an hinc,
225 because, so es so vet.”
Reynaerde waes lettelt te bet
dat hi den goeden bake ghewan
in sulker zorghen, dattene een man
vinc ende warpene in sinen zac.
- 230 Dese pine ende dit onghemac
hevet hi leden dor Ysengrijne [194ra]
ende ondert waerven meer dan ic hu rijme.
Ghi heeren, dinct hu dit ghenouch?
Nochtan om meer onghევouch
- 235 dat hi claghet om sijn wijf,
die Reynaerde hevet al haer lijf
ghemint; so doet hi hare.
Al ne *makeden* zijt niet mare,
ic dart wel segghen over waer
- 240 dat langher es dan VII jaer
dat Reynaert hevet hare trouwe.
Omdat Haersint, die scone vrouwe,
dor minne ende dor quade zede
Reynaert sinen wille dede,
- 245 wattan? So was sciere ghenesen.
Wat talen mach daeromme wesen?
Nu maket heere Cuwaert, die hase,
eene claghe van eere blase.
- Of hi den credo niet wel en las,
250 Reynaerd, die zijn meester was,
mochte hi sinen clerc niet blauwen?
Dat ware onrecht, entrauwen.

217-29 After the distorted story of the theft of the fish Grimbeert relates a shortened version of the theft of the ham in branch V of the *Roman de Renart* (Martin 1882-1887, 1-148). In this way the badger emphasizes once again the greed and malice of the wolf, who broke the agreement to share the booty and fobbed Reynaert off with the string for hanging the side of bacon. **236** *al haer lijf* is ambiguous; it means both ‘all her life’ and ‘with all her body’. Cf. also 1978, 1988.

220 When Reynaert demanded his share,
 you mocked him and said:
 "I should like to give you your share,
 Reynaert, my dear young man!
 The string from which the bacon was hung,
 225 chew on it, it is very greasy."
 Reynaert was little better off
 for having got hold of the fine side of bacon,
 with the risk that someone
 would catch him and toss him into his bag.
 230 This grief and this trouble
 he suffered through Ysingrijn's doing
 and a hunderd times more than I am telling you.
 My lords, don't you think this is enough?
 It is the more disgraceful
 235 that he complains of his wife
 who has loved Reynaert
 all her life, and he her.
 Even though they did not make it known,
 I dare declare as the truth
 240 that for more than seven years
 Reynaert has had her faithful devotion.
 If a beautiful woman like Haersint
 accommodated Reynaert
 on account of her love and lecherous habits,
 245 so what? She soon got over it.
 Why bother wasting words on it?
 Now Lord Cuwaert, the hare,
 is turning a trifle into a complaint.
 If he failed to read the creed as he should,
 250 why should not Reynaert, his master,
 be allowed to beat his pupil?
 Surely, that would not be right.

243 Manuscript F reads *dur hoveschede* instead of *dor quade zede*. The reading in the Comburg manuscript makes sense: by saying that the she-wolf loved Reynaert as she lacks decency, Grimbeert implies that he disapproves of Haersint's behaviour, hoping in this way to impress the king favourably. Nevertheless the reading in F fits the context better: after all, Grimbeert means to argue that the fox and the she-wolf are courtly lovers.

245 This line is ambiguous; it means both 'she soon got over it' and 'she soon reached a climax'.

- Cortoys claghet om eene worst
 die hi verloes in eene vorst.
 255 Die claghe ware bet verholen:
 ende hoerdi dat so was ghestolen?
 Male quesite male perdite:
over recht wert men qualike quite
 dat men hevet qualic ghewonnen.
 260 Wie sal Reynaerde dat verjonnen
 of hi ghestolen goet ghinc an?
 Niemen die recht versceeden can.
 Reynaert es een gherecht man.
 Sint dat die coninc sinen ban
 265 hevet gheboden ende sinen vrede,
 so weetic wel dat hi ne dede
 dinc negheene dan of hi ware
 hermite ofte clusenare.
 Naest siere huut draecht hi een hare.
 270 Binnen desen naesten jare
 so ne hat hi vleesch, no wilt no tam.
 Dat seidi die ghistren danen quam.
 Malcroys hevet hi begheven, [194rb]
 sinen casteel, ende hevet upheven
 275 eene cluse daer hi leghet in.
 Ander bejach no ander ghewin
 so wanic wel dat hi ne hevet
 dan karitate die men hem ghevet.
 Bleec es hi ende magher van pinen.
 280 Hongher, dorst, scerpe karijnen
 doghet hi voer sine zonden.
 Recht te desen selven stonden,
 doe Grimbert stont in dese tale,
 saghen si van berghe te dale
 285 Canticler commen ghevaren,
 ende brochte up eene bare
 eene doode hinne ende hiet Coppe,

257 Garbled Latin for 'male quaesita male perdita', literally: 'badly acquired, badly lost goods', or 'stolen goods never thrive'.

Cortoys complains of a sausage
 that he lost in a frost.
 255 The charge had better not been made:
 didn't you hear that it had been stolen?
Male quesite male perditte:
 It is right to lose in an unlawful way
 that which has been acquired by unlawful means.
 260 Who will blame Reynaert
 for confiscating stolen goods?
 Surely no one conversant with the law.
 Reynaert is a law abiding man.
 Since the king proclaimed his peace
 265 on pain of punishment,
 I know for a fact
 that he behaved no worse than
 if he were a hermit or a recluse.
 Next to his skin he wears a hair shirt.
 270 Within the past year he ate no meat,
 neither of wild nor tame animals.
 So someone said who yesterday came from there.
 He has left Malcroys,
 his castle, and has built a cell
 275 where he now lives.
 He surely has no other possessions
 or income
 than the alms given him.
 Pale he is and thin with doing penance.
 280 Hunger, thirst, sharp chastisement
 he suffers for his sins.
 Just at that moment
 while Grimbeert thus stood pleading,
 they saw Canticleer
 285 coming down the hill,
 who on a bier brought
 a dead hen called Coppe;

273 Malcroys, i.e. evil hole, is one of Reynaert's fortresses, but it is not his strongest. See also the note to line 512.

- die Reynaert hadde bi den croppe
hoeft ende hals afghebeten.
290 Dit moeste nu de coninc weten.
Canteclere quam voer de bare gaende,
sine vederen zeere slaende.
In wederzijden van der baren
ghinc een hane wijde mare.
295 Die een hane hiet Cantaert,
daer wijlen na gheheeten waert
Vrauwe Alenten goeden hane.
Die ander hiet, na minen wane,
die goede hane Crayant,
300 die scoenste hane die men vant
tusschen Portaengen ende Polane.
Elkerlijc van desen hanen
drouch eene berrende stallicht,
dat lanc was ende richt.
305 *Dat* waren Coppen broeders twee,
die riepen: 'O wy' ende 'wee'.
Om haerre sustre Coppen doot
dreven si claghe ende jammer groot.
Pinte ende Sproete droughen die bare.
310 Hem was te moede zware
van haerre suster die si hadden verloren.
Men mocht arde verre horen
haerre tweer carminghe.
Dus sijn si commen int ghedinghe.
315 Canticler spranc in den rijnc [194va]
ende seide: 'Heere coninc,
dor God ende dor ghenade,
nu ontfaermet miere scaden
die mi Reynaert heeft ghedaen
320 ende *minen kinderen* die hier staen
ende seere hebben haren onwille.

293-301 Cantaert is so famous that Lady Alente at one time named her cock after him. It is not impossible that historic persons (a noble lady and her lover?) are alluded to here, but part of the joke is also the interplay between fiction and reality. Cantaert is a fictional cock and owes his fame entirely to the story's author. In other words, in Willem's poem a 'cock'

Reynaert had bitten her head
 and neck off by the throat.
 290 This the king had to know.
 Canticleer walked in front of the bier,
 beating his wings vehemently.
 On either side of the bier
 walked a cock of renown.
 295 One was called Cantaert,
 whose name was in the past
 given to Lady Alente's noble cock.
 The other one was, if I am right,
 the noble cock Crayant,
 300 the handsomest cock one might find
 between Brittany and Poland.
 Each of these cocks
 carried a lighted candle
 that was tall and straight.
 305 They were Coppe's two brothers,
 crying 'woe' and 'welaway'.
 For their sister Coppe's death
 they loudly complained and lamented.
 Pinte and Sproete carried the bier.
 310 They were deeply saddened
 by the loss of their sister.
 From a very large distance
 their joint lamentations might be heard.
 In this manner they arrived at the court.
 315 Canticleer jumped into the circle
 and said: 'Lord King,
 for God's sake and the sake of mercy,
 take pity on my distress,
 caused by Reynaert on me
 320 and on my children who are standing here
 greatly aggrieved.

is named after a cock made famous by Willem's poem ... The other cock (just as much a literary creation) is called Crayant, *na minen wane*, 'if I am right', the narrator says, as if he is not quite sure and as if this cock really exists and struts around outside the poem, somewhere between Brittany and Poland.

Ten ingane van aprille,
doe die winter was vergaen
ende men siet die bloumen staen
325 over al die velde groene,
doe was ic fier ende coene
van minen groten gheslachte.
Ic hadde jongher zonen achte
ende jongher dochtren zevene,
330 dien wel lusten te levene,
die mi Roede die vroede
hadde brocht *tenen* broede.
Si waren alle vet ende staerc
ende ghinghen in een scone paerc,
335 dat was beloken in eenen muere.
Hierbinnen stoet eene scuere
daer vele honden toe hoorden.
Dat si menich dier fel scoorden,
dies waren mine kindre onvervaert.
340 Dit benijdde dus Reynaert
dat siere waren so vaste binnen
dat hire negheen conste ghewinnen.
Hoe dicken ghinc hi om den muere,
Reynaert, die felle ghebuere,
345 ende leide om ons sine laghen!
Alsene dan die honde saghen,
liepen si na met haerre cracht.
Eene waerf wart hi up de gracht
bi avontueren daer belopen,
350 dat ic hem sach een deel becoepen
sine diefte ende sinen roef,
dat hem die pelse zeere stoef.
Noch ontquam hi bi baraten.
Dattene God moete verwaten!
355 Doe waerwi zijns langhe quijte.
Sint quam hi als een hermitje,

322-420 The image of the enclosed, safe yard in springtime repeats the harmonious beginning of the tale (41-47) and contrasts sharply with the cruel conclusion of Cantecler's story. By producing a proclamation of peace with the king's seal appended and by posing as a pious

In early April
 when winter was gone away
 and the flowers were seen
 325 in all the green fields,
 then I took pride and joy
 in my large offspring.
 I had eight young sons
 and seven young daughters
 330 that were full of life
 and which the sensible hen Roede
 had given me in one brood.
 They were all plump and strong
 and walked about in a fair courtyard
 335 enclosed by a wall.
 Inside it was a barn
 where many dogs were kept.
 As they cruelly tore apart many a beast,
 my children felt no fear.
 340 Reynaert could not bear the thought
 that they were so safe in there
 that he was unable to grab one.
 How often did he walk around the wall,
 Reynaert, that vicious neighbour,
 345 and set his traps for us!
 Whenever the dogs spotted him
 they pursued him with all their might.
 One day when they caught up with him
 by accident, near the ditch,
 350 I saw how he paid to some extent
 for his thieving and robbing:
 the hairs of his pelt went flying about.
 Even so he escaped by a ruse.
 May God put a curse on him!
 355 Then, for a long time, he did not trouble us.
 Later he appeared dressed as a hermit,

hermit (and pilgrim, which seems mutually exclusive), Reynaert lured the credulous cock and his children to the area outside the fence and killed one of them. Eventually the predatory fox made eleven victims. (See for the spatial aspects of the episode, pp. 23-24).

[194vb]

Reynaerd, die mordadeghe dief,
 ende brochte mi zeghele ende brief
 te lesene, heere coninc,
 360 daer hu seghele ane hinc.
 Doe ic die letteren began lesen,
 dochte mi daeran ghescreven
 dat ghi haddet coninclike
 over alle huwen rike
 365 alle dieren gheboden vrede
 ende oec allen voghelen mede.
 Oec brochte hi mi ander niemare
 ende seide dat hi ware
 een begheven clusenare
 370 ende hi hadde ghedaen vele zware
 voer sine zonden meneghe pine.
 Hi toechde mi palster ende slavine,
 die hi brochte van der Elmare,
 daeronder eene scerpe hare.
 375 Doe sprac hi: "Heere Cantecler,
 nu mooghdi wel vorwaertmeer
 van mi sonder hoede leven.
 Ic hebbe bi der *stolen* vergheven
 al vleesch ende vleeschsmout.
 380 Ic bem voertmeer so hout,
 ic moet miere zielen telen.
 Gode willic hu bevelen;
 ic ga daer ic hebbe te doene.
 Ic hebbe middach ende noene
 385 ende priemen te segghene van den daghe."
 Doe nam hi neven eere haghe

361-66 The cock *thinks* that the sealed proclamation reads that King Noble has proclaimed his peace. The fact that he does not express himself with greater certainty indicates that he lacks sufficient proficiency as a reader. Cantecler meant to ascertain whether he and his family had nothing more to fear, but his reading ability fell short of a proper understanding of the text. Could it be that he only recognized a few (Latin?) words?

373 Elmare was a monastery between Aardenburg and Biervliet, near present-day Waterland-Oudeman. Founded in 1144, it was a priory of St Peter's Abbey in Ghent from the thirteenth century onwards. For reasons unknown Willem considers this monastery important: later in the story Elmare is referred to again (cf. 1483 and 1493).

378 Reynaert underpins his story by claiming that he has had his oath to refrain from meat

Reynaert, the murdering villain,
 and brought me a sealed writ
 to read, Lord King,
 360 to which your seal was appended.
 When I began to read the letters
 I took them to signify
 that you, by your royal power,
 had declared in your entire kingdom
 365 peace to all the animals
 and to all the birds as well.
 He also brought me other news
 and said that he had entered
 a reclusive order
 370 and that he had often and most severely
 done penance for his sins.
 He showed me his pilgrim's staff and mantle
 that he had brought from Elmare Priory,
 a rough hair shirt underneath.
 375 Then he said: "Lord Canticleer,
 from now on you will be able to live
 without having to protect yourself from me.
 I have sworn on the stole
 to abstain from eating all meat and dripping.
 380 I am so old now
 that I must look after my soul.
 I commend you to God's care;
 I go where duty calls me.
 I am still to recite the daily Hours
 385 of sext, nones, and prime today."
 Then, along a hedge

and fat confirmed by a priest. The latter is said to have put the stole, the long shawl worn over his surplice, on Reynaert's head.

384-85 Reynaert lists a few of the liturgical hours in the wrong order. The Divine Office or Liturgy of the Hours is a set of daily prayers, said every twenty-four hours and divided into eight canonical hours (although in practice not always at three-hour intervals): matins (prayers said at midnight), lauds (at dawn), the four minor offices in the daytime: prime, terce, sext and none (originally prayers said at six, nine and twelve, and at three in the afternoon), vespers (evensong at sundown) and compline (the evening prayer before retiring). The fact that Reynaert's incorrect list fails to arouse Canticleer's suspicions, indicates that the cock is no better acquainted with ecclesiastical life than the fox.

sinen wech; te dien ghesceede
 ghinc hi lesen sinen crede.
 Ic wart blide ende onvervaert
 390 ende ghinc te minen kindren waert
 ende was so wel al sonder hoede
 dat ic al met minen broede
 sonder zorghe ghinc buten muere.
 Daer gheviel mi quade avontuere,
 395 want Reynaert, die felle saghe,
 was ghecropen dor de haghe
 ende hadde ons die porte ondergaen.
 Doe wart miere kindre saen
 een ghepronden hutten ghetale; [195ra]
 400 dat leide Reynaert in sine male.
 Quade avontuere mi doe nakede,
 want sint dat hise smakede
 in sinen ghierighen mont,
 ne conste ons wachtre no onse hont
 405 no bewachten no bescaermen.
 Heere, dat laet hu ontfaermen:
 Reynaert leide sine laghe
 beede bi nachte ende bi daghe
 ende roefde emmer mine kindre.
 410 So vele es tghetal *nu* mindre
 dant ghewone was te zine
 dat die XV kindre mine
 sijn ghedeghen al tote vieren;
 so zuver heefse die onghiere
 415 Reynaert in sinen mont verslonden.
 Noch ghistren wart hem metten honden
 ontjaghet Coppe die mare,
 die hier legghet up dese bare.
 Dit claghic hu met groeten zeere.
 420 Ontfaremt hu mijns, wel soete heere!
 Die coninc sprac: 'Grimbeert die das,

416-37 As Cantecleer is able to support his complaint legally against Reynaert by showing Coppe's body, legal proceedings must now follow. The cock's story has made it abundantly clear that Reynaert has in no way bettered his life. Grimbeert, who finds his plea invalidated,

he went his way that time,
 reciting the creed.
 I was glad and free from fear
 390 and went to my children
 and was so completely off my guard
 that, with all my brood,
 I went outside the wall without a care.
 There it was that disaster befell me,
 395 for Reynaert, that evil piece of work,
 had crept through the hedge
 and had cut off our way to the gate.
 Then one of my children
 was rapidly taken from the group;
 400 Reynaert led it into his stomach.
 Evil events awaited me then,
 for when he had had a taste of her
 with his greedy mouth,
 405 neither guards nor our dogs
 were able to shield or protect us.
 Lord, may this arouse your pity:
 Reynaert set his traps
 both by night and by day
 and continually robbed me of my children.
 410 Their number is now so diminished
 from what it used to be
 that my fifteen children
 are now reduced to four;
 so thoroughly has that cruel Reynaert
 415 devoured them with his maw.
 It was only yesterday that the dogs,
 chasing him, retrieved Coppe of great repute
 who is lying here on this bier.
 With great distress I bring this charge before you.
 420 Take pity on me, dear Lord!
 The king said: 'Grimbeert the badger,

remains silent. The king announces that he will consult his counsellors as to the proper way to punish Reynaert after Coppe's burial.

hu oem, die clusenare was,
 hi hevet ghedaen so goede carine!
 Levic een jaer, het sal hem scinen!
 425 Nu hoert hier, Canticleer,
 wat sal der talen meer?
 Hu dochter leghet al hier verslegghen.
 God moet haerre zielen pleghen.
 Wi ne moghense niet langher houden
 430 – God moeder al ghewouden –
 ende sullen onse vygelyen zinghen.
 Daerna sullen wise bringhen,
 den lichame, ter eerden met eeren.
 Dan sullen wi met desen heeren
 435 ons beraden ende bespreken
 hoe wi *best* ghewreken
 an Reynaerde dese moort.
 Doe hi ghesprac dese woort,
 beval hi jonghe ende houden
 440 dat si vygelyen zinghen souden.
 Dat hi gheboet, was sciere ghedaen. [195rb]
 Doe mochte men horen aneslaen
 ende beghinnen harde ho
 dat placebo domino
 445 ende die verse die daertoe horen.
 Ic seit oec in waren worden,
 neware oec ware ons te lanc,
 wie daer der zielen vers zanc
 ende wie die zielenlesse las.
 450 Doe die *vygelye* ghehent was,
 doe leide men Coppen in dat graf,
 dat bi engiene ghemaect was,

438-49 Noble gives orders for the *officium defunctorum*, the office for the dead, to be held (cf. the *Rituale Romanum*, Tit. VI, Cap. IV, dating prior to Vaticanum II). It concerns a wake (cf. *vygelyen*, 440), during which a prescribed series of texts and prayers was sung and recited for the soul of the deceased, spread over three liturgical hours: vespers, matins and lauds. The office begins with the antiphone 'placebo domino in regione vivorum' ('I will please the Lord in the land of the living'). These and other antiphones, short hymns, precede and follow the recitation of various psalms (cf. *der zielen vers*, 448); during matins three times three readings from the Book of Job (cf. *die zielen lesse*, 449) alternate with sung responses.

your uncle, who was a hermit,
 certainly kept up his fast!
 Give me a year and I'll show him!
 425 Now listen, Canticleer,
 what more is there to say?
 Your daughter lies here murdered.
 May God have mercy on her soul.
 We cannot keep it here any longer
 430 – it is now at God's command –
 and we shall sing the vigil mass.
 Afterwards we shall commit the body
 to the earth honourably.
 Next we shall take counsel
 435 with these lords and discuss
 how best to take revenge on
 Reynaert for this murder.'
 Having spoken these words
 he ordered young and old
 440 to sing the vigil mass.
 What he ordered was done at once.
 Then one could hear
 how the *placebo domino*
 was begun very loudly
 445 as well as the verses following.
 If it would not take too long
 I would certainly also have mentioned
 who sang the antiphones there
 and who read the lesson.
 450 When the vigil had ended
 Coppe was laid in the grave
 that had been made with ingenuity

446-49 For the first time in the story the narrator positions himself firmly as a commentator on the story. Using the pronoun 'I', he informs his public that he has shortened his account somewhat to avoid long-windedness. For other passages where the narrator addresses the public, using the personal pronoun 'I' to comment on his story, see 298, 648, 806, 1756, 1873-74, 2176-78, 2546-47, 2921-26, 3016-21, 3433. The narrator also guides the tale's reception by addressing his public directly, as in 702, 872, 2833-34, 2885-88. Questions serve to involve the public in the action, as in 647, 689, 747, 753, 961, 1075, 2548, 2926. He draws its attention with the formula *Nu hoert* (877, 970, 1430, 2164, 2238, 2799, 2841, 2849, 2899, 3049, 3317) or *Nu verneemt* (2227).

onder die linde in een gras.
 Van maerbersteene *slecht was*
 455 die saerc die daerup lach.
 Die letteren die men daeran sach,
deden an tgraf bekinnen
 wie daer lach begraven binnen.
 Dus spraken die boucstave
 460 an den zaerc up den grave:
 ‘Hier leghet Coppe begraven,
 die so wale conste scraven,
 die Reynaert die vos verbeet
 ende haren gheslachte was te wreet.’
 465 Nu leghet Coppe onder mouden.
 Die coninc sprac tsinen houden
 dat si hem alle bespraken
 hoe si alrebest ghewraken
 dese groete overdade.
 470 Doe waren si alle te rade
 dat si daer den coninc rieden,
 dat hine dan soude ombieden
 dat hi te hove soude comen,
 no dor scaden no dor vromen
 475 ne lette, hi ne quame int ghedinghe,
 ende men Brune van dien dinghe
 die bodscap soude laden.
 Dies was die coninc sciene beraden,
 dat hi dus sprac te Bruun den beere:
 480 ‘Heere Bruun, dit segghic voer dit heere,
 dat ghi dese bodscap doet.
 Oec biddic hu dat ghi zijt vroet,
 dat ghi hu wacht van baraet; [195va]
 Reynaert es fel ende quaet.
 485 Hi sal hu smeecken ende lieghen.
 Mach hi, hi sal hu bedrieghen
 met valschen woorden ende met sconen.

462 Literally: ‘who was so good at scratching’. The word *scraven* has sexual overtones.

466-78 King Nobel does not decide unilaterally what legal action needs to be taken. He sends for his barons who agree that Reynaert must be summoned to court for criminal

under the lime tree in a patch of grass.
 Of polished marble was
 455 the stone on it.
 The letters that one saw on it
 made it clear
 who lay buried there.
 This is what the letters
 460 on the gravestone read:
 ‘Here lies Coppe,
 who ever joyfully ranged free,
 bitten to death by Reynaert the fox
 who did her family cruel injury.’
 465 Coppe now lies under the soil.
 The king said to his councillors
 that they should discuss among themselves
 how best to avenge
 this great crime.
 470 Then they all agreed
 in their advice to the king
 that he should order him
 to come to court,
 and that nothing, good or bad,
 475 should prevent his attendance at the trial,
 and that Bruun should be the one
 to be charged with the message.
 On this matter the king took a decision without delay,
 addressing Bruun the bear therefore as follows:
 480 ‘Lord Bruun, I say this before this assembly,
 that you must take the message.
 Also, I urge you to act wisely,
 and to beware of deceit;
 Reynaert is wicked and mischievous.
 485 He will flatter you, and tell lies.
 If he can, he will hoodwink you
 with false and fine words.

prosecution, and that Bruun the bear is to deliver the summons. The king complies with their decision (cf. also 165-69, 432-37). Decisions are taken in feudal harmony during the trial and conviction. It is after the conviction that tensions arise (cf. p. 25).

Mach hi, bi Gode, hi sal hu honen.
'Heere,' seit hi, 'laet hu castyen!
490 So moete mi God vermalendyen
of mi Reynaert so sal honen,
inne saelt hem wederlonen,
dat hijs an den dulsten zi.
Nu ne zorghet niet om mi.'
495 Nu neemt hi orlof ende hi sal naken
Daer hi zeere sal mesraken!

Nu es Brune up die vaert
ende hevet in ziere herten onwaert
ende het dochte hem overdaet
500 dat yement soude sijn so quaet
ende dat hem Reynaert hoenen soude.
Dort doncker van eenen woude
quam hi gheloepen dor eene wostine
daer Reynaert hadde de pade sine
505 gheslegghen crom ende menichfoude,
also als hi hutten woude
hadde gheloepen om sijn bejach.
Beneden der woestinen lach
een berch oech ende lanc.
510 Daer moeste Bruun sinen ganc
te middewaerde over maken,
sal hi te Manpertus gheraken.
Reynaerd hadde so menich huus,
maer die casteel Manpertus
515 dat was die beste van sinen borghen.

495-96 The narrator comments that Bruun will meet a bad end. In this way, after Nobel's earlier warning that Bruun must beware of the wicked fox's tricks (482-88), he heightens the suspense for his public. Rather than asking themselves whether or not the bear is going to be duped, they will have wondered how this is going to happen. Various comments by the narrator in what follows (611, 638-43, 1075-80, 2164-78, 3295) and explicit asides by Reynaert (623-26, 2034-49) serve the same function (cf. p. 22).

502-12 By describing Bruun's journey through a variety of landscapes the narrator indicates

By God, he will disgrace you if he can.’
 ‘My Lord,’ said he, ‘stop these admonitions!
 490 May God’s curse be upon me
 if Reynaert disgraces me in such a way
 that I shall not be able to repay in kind,
 making him look silly.
 Do not worry on my account.’
 495 Now he takes his leave and will arrive
 in a place where he will encounter much misfortune!

First summons

Now Bruun is on his way
 and he considers it unlikely in his heart
 and it seemed to him absurd
 500 that anyone would be so wicked
 and that Reynaert would disgrace him.
 Through the darkness of a forest
 he made his way through a wasteland
 where Reynaert had made his tracks
 505 crooked and manifold,
 each time when he had left the forest
 to go hunting.
 On the other side of the wasteland
 was a mountain, high and broad.
 510 Bruun had to make his way
 across it in the middle
 to reach Manpertuus.
 Reynaert had very many residences,
 but the castle of Manpertuus
 515 was the best of his strongholds.

that the bear now enters a different world. He leaves the ordered world of the court and enters the trackless wilderness where Reynaert is lord and master. Here and elsewhere, the spatial transition also clearly implies a moral lapse (cf. pp. 23-24).

512 In the *Roman de Renart*, Renart’s strongest fortress is sometimes called Maupertuis in addition to Malpertuis. It is likely that the scribe of the Comburg manuscript (or a predecessor) took the third letter of the word for an *-n*. Like Malcroys the name means ‘evil hole’.

Daer trac hi in als hi in zorgen
 ende in noede was bevaen.
 Nu es Brune die beere ghegaen
 dat hi te Manpertuus es comen,
 520 daer hi de porte hevet vernomen
 daer Reynaerd hute plach te gane.
 Doe ghinc hi voer die barbecane
 sitten over sinen staert
 ende sprac: 'Sidi in huus, Reynaert?
 525 Ic bem Bruun, des coninx bode. [195vb]
 Die hevet ghezworen bi sinen Gode,
 ne comdi niet ten ghedinghe
 ende ic hu niet voer mi bringhe,
 recht te nemene ende te ghevene
 530 ende in vreden voert te levne,
 hi doet hu breken ende raden.
 Reynaerd, doet dat ic hu rade
 ende gaet met mi te hove waert.'
 Dit verhoerde al nu Reynaert,
 535 die *voer in* sine poerte lach,
 daer hi vele te ligghene plach
 dor waremhede van der zonnen.
 Bi der tale die Bruun heeft begonnen
 bekenden althant Reynaert
 540 ende tart bet te dale waert
 in sine donckerste haghedochte.
 Menichfout was zijn ghedochte
 hoe hi vonde sulken raet
 daer hi Bruun, den fellen vraet,
 545 te scherme mede mochte driven
 ende selve bi ziere eeren bliven.

522 The *barbecane* ('barbican') is a barricade which forms the outer defence of the castle.

531 *breken ende raden*: to break someone's bones and subsequently place him on a wheel.

547-622 Reynaert misleads Bruun by stressing the futility of his journey, saying that he would have gone to King Nobel's court day anyway, if only he had not eaten far too much of some new kind of food. Bruun reacts immediately. On his arrival the bear had addressed Reynaert formally (*Sidi in huus?* 524), as befits his role as the king's messenger. But now that his craving has been aroused, he forgets his official role and changes to an informal mode of address (*wat haetstu*, 562). The bear is no longer master of himself, as is also clear from

That is where he went when he was afraid
and found himself in dire straits.

Now Bruun has walked so far
that he has arrived at Manpertuus,
520 where he spotted the gate
where Reynaert customarily went out.
Then, in front of the barbican,
he sat down on his tail
and said: 'Are you at home, Reynaert?
525 It's me, Bruun, the messenger of the king
who has sworn this oath by his God:
if you do not come to the trial
and if I fail to bring you with me
to subject yourself to the law
530 and to live in peace in the future,
he shall have you broken on the wheel.
Reynaert, do as I advise,
and come with me to court.'
All this was heard by Reynaert,
535 who was lying just inside his porch,
as he often did
on account of the warmth of the sun.
By the words that Bruun had begun to speak
Reynaert recognized him at once
540 and he withdrew further
into the darkest part of his den.
Many thoughts went through his mind
how to devise a plan
by means of which he might
545 trick Bruun, the greedy glutton,
without loss of honour to himself.

the fact that he addresses Reynaert as *neve*, 'nephew' (581), which does not refer to a family relationship, but to Bruun's intention to be on good terms with Reynaert. As Reynaert deliberately pretends to be unaware of what Bruun is trying to do (585, 588-91, 595, 601), Bruun gets increasingly worked up. A similar kind of dynamics is found in the superlatives by which the quantities of honey to be supplied or consumed are indicated (592-93, 598-600, 602-4, 619, 637). Reynaert's hyperbolic language serves the purpose of provocation, while Bruun's is coloured by greed and boastfulness. On the structure of Reynaert's tricks, see also p. 20.

Doe sprac Reynaert overlanc:
 ‘Huwes goets raets hebbet danc,
 heere Bruun, wel soete vrient.
 550 Hi hevet hu qualic ghedient
 die hu beriet desen ganc
 ende hu desen berch lanc
 over te loepene dede bestaen.
 Ic soude te hove sijn ghegaen,
 555 al haddet ghi mi niet gheraden,
 maer mi es den buuc so gheladen
 ende in so utermaten wijse
 met eere vremder nieuwer spise,
 ic vruchte in sal niet moghen gaen.
 560 Inne mach sitten no ghestaen;
 ic bem so utermaten zat.’
 ‘Reynaert, wat haetstu, wat?’
 ‘Heere Brune, ic hat crancke have.
 Arem man dannes gheen grave;
 565 dat mooghdi bi mi wel weten.
 Wi aerme liede, wi moeten heten,
 hadden wijs raet, dat wi node haten. [196ra]
 Goeder versscher honichraten
 hebbic couver arde groet.
 570 Die moetic heten dor den noet,
 als ic hel niet mach ghewinnen.
 Nochtan als icse hebbe binnen,
 hebbicker af pine ende onghemac.’
 Dit hoerde Brune ende sprac:
 575 ‘Helpe, lieve vos Reynaert,
 hebdi honich dus onwaert?
 Honich es een soete spijs
 die ic voer alle gherechten prijse
ende voer alle gherechten minne.
 580 Reynaerd, helpt mi dat ics ghewinne.
 Edele Reynaert, soete neve,
 also langhe als ic sal leven
 willic hu daeromme minnen.
 Reynaerd, helpt mi dat ics ghewinne.’
 585 ‘Ghewinnen, Bruun? Ghi hout hu spot!’

Then Reynaert said after a long time:
 ‘Many thanks for your good advice,
 Lord Bruun, dear friend.
 550 He did you a disservice,
 the person who suggested that you make this journey
 and had you cross
 this mountain range.
 I would have gone to court,
 555 even if you had not advised me to do so,
 but my stomach is so full
 and in such an excessive way
 with some strange new food
 that I fear that I shall not be able to go.
 560 I can neither sit nor stand,
 I am so extremely full.’
 – ‘Reynaert, what did you eat? what?’
 – ‘Lord Bruun, I have eaten poor quality food.
 A poor man is no count,
 565 that is obvious when you look at me.
 We poor people have to eat things that,
 if we had the choice, we would never eat.
 Good, fresh honeycombs
 I have in stock aplenty.
 570 Those I must eat out of necessity
 when I cannot get anything else.
 But when I have swallowed them,
 I suffer pain and discomfort as a result.’
 Bruun heard this and said:
 575 ‘Help, my dear fox Reynaert,
 do you despise honey so much?
 Honey is delicious food,
 which I appreciate above all other dishes
 and love more than any other dish.
 580 Reynaert, help me get it.
 Noble Reynaert, dear nephew,
 so long as I live
 I shall love you for it.
 Reynaert, help me get it.’
 585 – ‘Get it, Bruun? You must be joking!’

'In doe, Reynaert, so waer ic zot,
 hildic spot met hu, neen ic niet.'
 Reynaert sprac: 'Bruun, mochtij's yet?
 Of ghi honich moghet heten,
 590 bi huwer trauwen, laet mi weten.
 Mochtij's yet, ic souts hu saden.
 Ic saels hu so vele beraden,
 ghi ne hatet niet met hu tienen,
 waendic hu hulde daermet verdienen.'
 595 'Met mi tienen? Hoe mach dat wesen?
 Reynaert, hout huwen mont van desen
 ende sijts seker ende ghewes:
 haddic al thonich dat nu es
 tusschen hier ende Portegale,
 600 ic haet al up teenen male.'
 Reynaerd sprac: 'Bruun, wat sechdi?
 Een dorper, heet Lamfroit, woent hier bi,
 hevet honich so vele tewaren,
 ghi ne hatet niet in VII jaren.
 605 Dat soudic hu gheven in hu ghewout,
 heere Brune, wildi mi wesen hout
 ende voer mi dinghen te hove.'
 Doe quam Brune ende ghinc gheloven
 ende sekerde Reynaerde dat: [196rb]
 610 wildine honichs maken zat
 – des hi cume ombiten sal –
 hi wilde wesen overal
 ghestade vrient ende goet gheselle.
 Hieromme louch Reynaert die felle
 615 ende sprac: 'Bruun, heelt mare,
 verghave God dat mi nu ware
 also bereet een goet gheval
 also hu dit honich wesen sal,
 al wildij's hebben VII hamen.'
 620 Dese woort sijn hem bequame,
 Bruun, ende daden hem so sochte,
 hi louch dat hi nemmee ne mochte.

611 Understatement, meaning that he will not eat anything at all.

– ‘I am not, Reynaert, I’d be a fool
 to joke with you, no, not me.’
 Reynaert said: ‘Bruun, would you like some of it?
 If you want to eat honey,
 590 on your word of honour, let me know.
 If you want some, I could make you eat your fill.
 I shall give you so much
 that ten of you would not be able to eat it
 if in that way I would earn your loyal support.’
 595 – ‘Ten of us? How can that be?
 Reynaert, say no more about this
 and know for certain and a fact:
 if I had all the honey
 between here and Portugal,
 600 I would eat it all up in one go.’
 Reynaert said: ‘Bruun, what’s that you’re saying?
 A villager, who is called Lamfroyt, lives near here,
 and he has so much honey, truly,
 that you could not eat it in seven years.
 605 I would put it at your disposal, provided,
 Lord Bruun, that you are prepared to take my side
 and plead for me at court.’
 Then Bruun solemnly promised
 and assured Reynaert
 610 that if the latter was prepared to stuff him with honey
 – of which he will hardly have a taste –
 he would be willing, in all circumstances,
 to prove a loyal friend and good companion.
 This amused that scoundrel Reynaert,
 615 and he said: ‘Bruun, hero of renown,
 if only God were to afford me
 as much happiness
 as this honey will give you,
 even if you wanted seven barrels of it.’
 620 These words pleased Bruun much,
 and he found them so agreeable
 that he laughed himself silly.

Doe peinsde Reynaerd daer hi stoet:
 ‘Bruun, es mine avonture goet,
 625 ic wane hu daer noch heden laten
 daer ghi sult lachen te maten.’
 Na dit peinsen ghinc Reynaert huut
 ende sprac al overluut:
 ‘Oem Bruun, gheselle, willecome!
 630 Het staet so: suldi hebben vrome,
 hier ne mach zijn gheen langher staen.
 Volghet mi; ic sal voeren gaen.
 Wi houden desen crommen pat.
 Ghi sult noch heden werden zat,
 635 saelt na minen wille gaen.
 Ghi sult noch heden hebben sonder waen
 also vele als ghi moghet ghedraghen.’
 Reynaert meende van groten slaghen;
 dit was dat hi hem beriet.
 640 Die keytijf Bruun ne wiste niet
 waer hem Reynaerd die tale keerde,
 die hem honich stelen leerde
 dat hi wel seere sal becoepen.
 Al sprekende quam dus gheloepen
 645 Reynaert met sinen gheselle Brune
 tote Lamfroits bi den tune.
 Wildi horen van Lamfreyde?
 Dat *was, eist waer* so men mi seide,
 een temmerman van goeden love,
 650 ende hadde bi sinen hove
 eene eecke brocht hutten woude [196va]
 die hi ontwee clieven soude
 ende hadde twee wegghen daerin ghesleghen,
 also temmermans noch pleghen.
 655 Die eecke was ontdaen wel wijde.
 Des was Reynaert arde blide.
 Te Brunen sprac hi ende louch:
 ‘Siet hier hu grote ghevouch,

626 Understatement, meaning that he will not find anything to laugh about at all.

629 By addressing Bruun as ‘uncle’ Reynaert follows the example of the bear, who earlier

Then Reynaert thought to himself:
 ‘Bruun, if all goes well for me,
 625 I think I’ll leave you even today
 in a place where you will not laugh much.’
 Having thought this, Reynaert went outside
 and said loudly:
 ‘Uncle Bruun, dear friend, welcome!
 630 The matter is this: if you wish to profit
 we should not stay here any longer.
 Follow me; I’ll lead the way.
 We follow this crooked path.
 You will have your fill today
 635 if all goes as I wish.
 Without doubt, this very day you will get
 as much as you can bear.’
 Reynaert meant a severe beating;
 that was what he had in mind for him.
 640 Bruun the dunce did not get
 the meaning of Reynaert’s words,
 who was teaching him to steal honey
 that he will pay for dearly.
 Talking in this way Reynaert
 645 arrived with his companion Bruun
 at the fence around Lamfroyt’s house.
 Do you want to hear about Lamfroyt?
 He was – if it is true what people told me –
 a carpenter of good repute,
 650 and had brought to his yard
 an oak tree from the forest
 that he intended to split in two
 and in which he had knocked two wedges,
 as carpenters do to this day.
 655 The oak had been split open very wide.
 That pleased Reynaert greatly.
 Laughing, he said to Bruun:
 ‘See here your heart’s desire,

called him ‘nephew’ (581). At the same time their hierarchical positions are highlighted: the bear is mightier than the fox.

Brune, ende nemet wel goem.
 660 Hier in desen selven boem
 es honichs utermaten vele.
 Prouft of ghijs in huwe kele
 ende in huwen buuc moghet bringhen.
 Nochtan suldi hu selven dwinghen:
 665 al dincket hu goet die honichraten,
 hetet te zeden ende te maten,
 dat ghi hu selven niet verdervet.
 Ic ware ontheert ende onthervet,
 wel soete oem, mesquame hu yet.'
 670 Brune sprac: 'Reynaert, ne sorghet niet.
 Waendi dat ic bem onvroet?
 Mate es tallen spele goet.'
 'Ghi secht waer,' sprac Reynaerd.
 'Waeromme bem ic oec vervaert?
 675 Gaet toe ende crupet daerin.'
 Reynaert peinsde om zijn ghewin
 ende Brune liet hem so verdoren
 dat hi thoeft over die horen
 ende die twee voerdere voete instac.
 680 Ende Reynaert poghede dat hi brac
 die wegghen beede huter eecken,
 die daertevoren ghinc so smeeken.
 Bruun bleef ghevanghen in den boem.
 Nu hevet de neve sinen oem
 685 in boesheden bracht met sulker achte
 dat hi met liste no met crachte
 in gheere wijs ne can ontgaen
 ende bi den hoofde staet ghevaen.
 Wat raeddi Brunen te doene?
 690 Dat hi was sterc ende coene
 sal hem niet ghehelpen moghen.
 Hi sach wel, hi was bedroghen.
 Hi began briesschen ende dulen. [196vb]
 Hi was ghegrepen bi zier mulen

672 The bear is quite able to quote the proverb about moderation (a peculiarly courtly virtue), but he does not know how to apply it in what follows. In a subtle way the author has

Bruun. Now take note.
 660 Here in this very tree
 there is an exceptional amount of honey.
 Try to get it down your throat
 and into your stomach.
 But you will have to control yourself:
 665 however tasty you think the honeycombs,
 mind your manners and eat moderately,
 so it does not disagree with you.
 I would be disgraced and dishonoured,
 dearest uncle, if any mishap befell you.'
 670 Bruun said: 'Reynaert, don't worry.
 Do you take me for a fool?
 Moderation in everything.'
 'What you say is true,' said Reynaert.
 'Anyway, why should I worry?
 675 Go, and get inside.'

Reynaert pondered his good luck
 and Bruun allowed himself to be fooled
 to such an extent that he inserted his head,
 ears and all, as well as his two front paws.
 680 And Reynaert did his utmost
 to wrench the two wedges out of the oak –
 he who had earlier talked so smoothly.
 Bruun ended up caught in the tree.
 Now the nephew has caused his uncle
 685 such problems with his devious plans
 that, neither by ingenuity nor by force,
 is there an escape for him in any way,
 and he is held captive by the head.
 What would you advise Bruun to do?
 690 That he was strong and brave
 will not be any help to him now.
 He realized that he had been duped.
 He started to howl and to growl.
 He had got trapped with his muzzle

already been playing with the moderation-immoderation alternation before this (557, 561,
 626, 661, 666).

695 so vaste ende bi den voeten voren,
al dat hi pijnde, was verloren.
Hi ne waende nemmermeer ontgaen.
Van verren was Reynaert ghestaen
ende sach commen Lamfreyde,
700 die up sinen hals brochte beide
een scaerpe haex ende eene baerde.
Hier mooghdi horen van Reynaerde,
hoe hi sinen oem ghinc rampineeren:
'Oem Brune, vaste gaet mineeren!
705 Hier comt Lamfroyt ende sal hu scijncken.
Haddi gheten, so souddi drincken!'
Na der talen so ghinc Reynaert
weder te sinen casteele waert,
sonder orlof. Ende mettien
710 hevet Lamfroyt den beere versien
ende vernam dat hi was ghevaen.
Doe ne was daer gheen langher staen.
Hi liep wech metter haest
daer hi die hulpe wiste naest,
715 daer dat naeste dorp stont,
ende dede hem allen cont
dat daer stont ghevaen een beere.
Doe volchde hem een mekel heere:
int dorp ne bleef man no wijf.
720 Den beere te nemene sijn lijf
liept al dat loepen mochte.
Sulc was die eenen bessem brochte,
sulc eenen vlegghel, sulc een rake,
sulc quam gheloopen met eenen stake,
725 so si quamen van haren werke.
Selve die pape van der kerke
brochte eenen cruusstaf,
die hem de coster noede gaf.
Die coster drouch eene vane

705-6 Preparing and pouring or drinking beverages is a sarcastic reference to inflicting or experiencing physical abuse (see also 1955, 2173-78 and 2801). Making sauces (1216) also belongs to this type of 'special treat' metaphors.

695 and front paws so tightly
 that all his efforts were in vain.
 He thought he'd never escape.
 Reynaert stood at a distance
 and saw Lamfroyt coming,
 700 who carried on his shoulder both
 a sharp hatchet and a battle axe.
 Here you may hear of Reynaert
 and how he began to mock his uncle:
 'Uncle Bruun, tuck in!
 705 Here comes Lamfroyt, ready to pour.
 Having eaten one should drink!'

Having said this, Reynaert
 returned to his castle,
 without taking leave. And just then
 710 Lamfroyt saw the bear
 and noticed that he had got trapped.
 He did not hesitate for a moment.
 He hurriedly made his way
 to where he knew help was at hand
 715 in the nearest village,
 and told everyone
 that a bear stood trapped.
 Then a huge army followed him:
 in the village neither man nor woman stayed behind.
 720 To take the bear's life
 all who could walk came along.
 One brought a broom,
 another a flail; one brought a pitchfork,
 another came running with a stick,
 725 just as they left their work.
 Even the priest from the church
 brought a staff with a crucifix,
 which the verger had reluctantly given him.
 The verger carried a church banner

722-30 The weapons carried by the villagers are ludicrous. They want to attack the bear with objects used in the home and in the fields. In this context it is not surprising that the priest intends to attack Bruun with a crucifix.

- 730 mede te stekene ende te slane.
 Des spapen wijf, vrouwe Julocke,
 quam gheloepen met haren rocke,
 daer so omme hadde ghesponnen.
 Voer hem allen quam gheronnen
- 735 Lamfroyt met eere scerper haex. [197ra]
 Al hadde Brune lettel ghemaex,
 hi ontsach meer ongheval
 ende sette al jeghen al,
 doe hi dat gheruchte hoorde.
- 740 Hi spranc up sodat hem scorede
 van sinen aensichte al die huut.
 Al brochte Brune dat hoeft huut
 met aerbeide ende met pinen,
 nochtan liet hi daer van den zinen
- 745 eene oere ende beede sine lier.
 Nye maecte God so leelic dier!
 Hoe mochte hi zeerre sijn mesrocht?
 Al haddi thoeft hutebrocht,
 eer hi die voete conde ghewinnen
- 750 blever alle die claeuwen binnen
 ende sine twee anscoen beede.
 Dus gherochte hi huut met leede.
 Hoe mochte hi zijn ontheert meer?
 Die voete waren hem so zeer
- 755 dat hi tloepen niet conste ghedoghen.
 Dat bloet liep hem over die hoghen,
 dat hi niet wel conste ghesien.
 Hi ne dorste bliven no vlien.
 Hi sach suut onder die zonne
- 760 Lamfroyt commen gheronnen;
 daerna die priester, die heere,
 hi quam gheloepen vele zeere;
 daerna die coster metter vane;
 daerna alle die prochiane,

731 Priests were forbidden to enter into a sexual relationship, although the reality was often different in the Middle Ages. This means that officially the *pape* who has a wife (or concubine) and children (cf. 1171 and 1236) lives in sin. It is likely that he enjoyed considerable sexual favours,

730 with which to hit and to prod.
 The priest's wife, Lady Julocke,
 came running up with her distaff
 with which she had been spinning.
 In front of them all ran
 735 Lamfroyt with a sharp axe.
 Even though Bruun was not very comfortable,
 he feared more misery
 and made a tremendous effort
 when he heard the noise.
 740 He jumped up, so that
 all the skin was torn from his face.
 Although Bruun extricated his head
 with a great deal of trouble,
 he nevertheless lost in the process
 745 one ear and both his cheeks.
 Never did God create such a hideous animal!
 How could he possibly fare worse?
 Even though he had pulled out his head,
 before he could free his paws
 750 his nails as well as
 his two gloves stayed behind.
 In this way he got out with great pain.
 How could he have been more dishonoured?
 His feet hurt so badly
 755 that he could not bear to walk.
 Blood ran into his eyes,
 so that he could not see properly.
 He dared neither stay nor flee.
 Under the sun, from the south, he saw
 760 Lamfroyt come running up,
 followed by the priest, that worthy,
 who came running fast;
 after him the verger with the banner;
 and after him all the parishioners,

as Julocke's name characterizes her as a temptress: *ju lokke** literally means 'you I tempt'.

751 With the reference to the two gloves, the skin on Bruun's paws is meant.

758 The point here is that Bruun is paralyzed by fear.

- 765 die houde lieden metten jonghen.
 Daerna quam up haren stap ghespronghen
 sulke quene die van houden
 cume eenen tant hadde behouden.
 Wie so wille, wachte hem dies:
- 770 die scade hevet of verlies
 ende groet ongheval,
 over hem so willet al!
 Dit sceen arem man Brunen wel.
 Sulc dreechdem nu an sijn vel
- 775 die des ghesweghen hadde stille,
 hadde Bruun ghestaen tsinen wille.
 Dit was beneden eere riviere [197rb]
 dat Brune, onsalichst alre diere,
 van meneghen dorper was beringhet.
- 780 Doe was daer lettel ghedinghet.
 Hem naecte groet onghemac:
 die een slouch, die ander stac,
 die een slouch, die ander warp.
 Lamfroyt was hem alrescaerpst.
- 785 Een hiet Lottram Lancvoet;
 hi drouch eenen *verhoerden* cloet
 ende stacken emmer na dat hoghe.
 Vrouwe Vulmaerte scerpe loghe
 ghinckene koken met eenen stave.
- 790 Abelquac ende mijn vrouwe Bave
 laghen beede onder die voete
 ende streden beede om eene cloete.
 Ludmoer metter langher nese
 drouch eenen loedwapper an een pese
- 795 ende ghincker met al ommezwinghen.
 Ludolf metten crommen vingheren
 dede hem alles tevoren,
 want hi was best gheboren,

777-819 The way Bruun is maltreated is a parody on skirmishes during battle in medieval narratives. A famous example is the *Chanson de Roland*, in which the rearguard of Charlemagne's army is ambushed near Roncevaux. In one episode the narrator explains at great length how the Frankish commander Roland and his companions Gerin, Gerer, Sansun, Anseïs, Engeler, Oton, Berenger and Margariz exert themselves in the first few fights with the Saracens (cf. Segre & Tys-

765 old people as well as young.
 Next there came, leaning on a stick,
 many an old hag with barely
 a tooth left in her mouth from old age.
 If you're interested, pay heed to this:
 770 he who suffers harm or loss
 and great distress
 is everyone's butt!
 Poor Bruun soon found this out.
 Many were after his skin
 775 who would have kept very quiet
 if Bruun could have done as he wished.
 It was on the bank of a river
 that Bruun, most miserable of all animals,
 was surrounded by many villagers.
 780 Little was said at that time.
 Great discomfort was in store for him:
 some hit him, others stabbed him,
 some hit him, others threw things at him.
 Lamfroyt caused him the sharpest pain.
 785 Lottram Lancvoet, as one man was called,
 carried a stick with horn cladding
 which he constantly aimed at his eye.
 Lady Vulmaerte wielded a stick
 until the pain made him piss himself.
 790 Abelquac and my Lady Bave
 both lay on the ground
 and together fought for one of his balls.
 Ludmoer with the long nose
 was carrying a lead ball on a cord
 795 and was swinging it around.
 Ludolf with the crooked fingers
 set an example to all of them,
 for he was of the highest birth,

sens 2003, *laisse* XCVI-CIV). The participants in the fight in *Van den vos Reynaerde* are no knights, but villagers with comical and suggestive names. Moreover, their weapons and their actions – they try to put out one of Bruun's eyes and fight over one of his testicles – are totally unchivalric. By this kind of uncourtly struggle Bruun, who left the court as a confident hero, is made ridiculous.
788-89 Literally: 'Lady Vulmaerte boiled sharp lye / for him with a stick'.

- sonder Lamfroy alleene.
800 Hughelijn metten crommen beene
was zijn vader, dat weet men wale,
ende was gheboren van *Abstale*
ende was sone vrouwe Ogernen,
eens houtmakigghe van lanternen.
805 Ander wijf ende ander man,
meer dan ic ghenomen can,
daden Brunen groet onghemac,
sodat hem zijn bloet huutlac.
Brune ontfinc al sulc payment
810 als hem elc gaf daeromtrent.
Die pape liet den cruusstaf
ghedichte slaen, slach in slach,
ende die coster metter vane
ghinc hem vastelike ane.
815 Lamfroyt quam ter selver wijlen
met eere scerper bijlen
ende slouchene tusschen hals ende hoeft,
dat Brune wart zeere verdoeft,
dat hi verspranc van den slaghe [197va]
820 tusschen der riviere enter haghe
in eenen trop van houden wiven
ende warper een ghetal van viven
in die riviere die daer liep,
die wel wijt was ende diep.
825 Des papen wijf wasser eene.
Des was spapen bliscap cleene.
Doe hi zijn wijf sach in die vliet,
doe ne luste hem langher niet
Bruun te stekene no te slane.
830 Hi riep: 'Siet, edele prochiane,
ghindre vloot vrouwe Julocke
beede met spillen ende met rocke.
Nu toe, die haer helpen mach!
Ic gheve hem jaer ende dach

826-36 Bruun owes his escape entirely to the fact that in his anguished state he pushes five women into the river. When the priest sees that Julocke is one of them, he abuses the clerical

with the sole exception of Lamfroyt.
 800 Hughelijn with the crooked legs
 was his father, as is well-known,
 and was born in Abstale
 and he was the son of Lady Ogerne,
 who mended lanterns for a living.
 805 Other men and women
 more than I can name,
 caused Bruun great distress,
 so that he lost much blood.
 Bruun was on the receiving end
 810 from every side.
 The priest brought down the staff and crucifix
 ceaselessly upon him, blow upon blow,
 and the verger with the banner
 attacked him with gusto.
 815 Lamfroyt approached at that moment
 with a sharp axe
 and hit him between neck and head;
 Bruun was so dazed
 that he jumped aside because of the blow,
 820 between the river and the hedge,
 into the middle of a group of old women,
 and pushed five of them
 into the river that ran there
 and that was quite wide and deep.
 825 The priest's wife was one of them.
 That little pleased the priest.
 When he saw his wife in the river
 he was no longer interested in
 stabbing or hitting Bruun.
 830 He shouted: 'Look, worthy parishioners,
 there floats Lady Julocke
 with her spindle and her distaff.
 Whoever can help her, go!
 I will give him for a year and a day

means of obtaining grace by promising the villagers pardons for sins (yet to be committed) in return for getting his wife back onto dry land.

- 835 vul pardoen ende aflaet
van alre sondeliker daet.
Beede man ende wijf
lieten den aermen keytijf
Brune ligghen over doot
840 ende ghinghen daer die pape gheboot,
beede met stringhen ende met haken.
Die wijle dat si die vrouwe huut traken,
so quam Brune in die riviere
ende ontsvam hem allen sciere.
845 Die dorperen waren alle gram:
si saghen dat hem Brune ontsvam,
dat si hem niet mochten volghen.
Upt ouver stonden si verbolghen
ende ghinghen na hem rampineren.
850 Bruun die lach in die ryviere
daer hi vant den meesten stroem.
Al dryvende bat hi dat God den boem
moeste verdrouven ende verwaten
daer hi zijn hoere in hadde ghelaten
855 ende beede sine lier.
Voert vloucte hi dat felle dier,
den boesen vos Reynaerde,
diene met sinen brunen baerde
so diepe in die eecke dede crupen.
860 Daerna Lamfroyt van der stupen
daer hi hem so leede dede. [197vb]
In aldustanen ghebede
lach Brune also langhe wijle
dat hi wel een halve mile
865 van der stede was ghedreven
daer die dorpers waren bleven.
Hi was verpijnet ende moede
ende ondercommen van den bloede,
sodat hi hadde crancke vaert.
870 Doe zwam hi te lande waert

860 The *stupen*, the stocks or pillory, refers to the half-split oak in which Bruun is caught with his head and paws.

835 a full pardon and absolution
for all his sinful actions.’
Man and wife both
left the miserable creature
Bruun lying there for dead
840 and went where the priest told them
to go with ropes and with hooks.
While they pulled the woman out,
Bruun reached the river
and quickly swam away from them all.
845 All the villagers were angry:
they saw that Bruun swam away from them,
so that they could not follow him.
They stood on the river bank, incensed,
and started to hurl abuse at him.
850 Bruun was lying in the river
where the current was strongest for him.
Floating along, he prayed that God
would curse and damn the tree
in which he had left his ear
855 and both his cheeks.
Next he cursed that vicious animal,
the wicked fox Reynaert,
who, with his brown beard,
had so deeply made him dive into that oak.
860 Next Lamfroyt, on account of the stocks
by means of which he had suffered so.
Engaged in prayers of this nature
Bruun floated for such a long time
that he had drifted at least half a mile
865 from the place
where the villagers had been left behind.
He was exhausted and tired
and weakened by loss of blood,
causing him to make slow progress.
870 Then he swam towards the land

862 *ghebede* is an ironic euphemism for curses.

ende croep ligghen in dat hoever.
 Ghi ne saghet noint droever
 gheen dier no gheenen man!
 Hi lach jammerlic ende stan
 875 ende slouch met beede sinen lancken.
 Des mochte hi al Reynaerde dancken.
 Nu hoert wat Reynaert heeft ghedaen!
 Hi hadde een vet hoen ghevaen
 bi Lamfroyts an der heyden
 880 eer hi danen was versceiden.
 Hi hadt up eenen berch ghedregghen
 verre huut allen wegghen,
 daer het eenlic was ghenouch.
 Dat was wel zijn ghevouch,
 885 dordat daer was niemens ganc
 ende hi dor niemens bedwanc
 sine proye dorste rumen.
 Doe hi dat hoen toten plumen
 hadde gheleit in sine male,
 890 doe ghinc hi neder te dale
 eenen verholenliken pat.
 Hi was utermaten zat.
 Dat weder was scone ende heet.
 Hi hadde gheloepen dat hem dat zweet
 895 nederliep neven die liere.
 Daeromme liep hi ter riviere,
 dordat hi hem vercoelen soude.
 In bliscap arde menichfoude
 was sijn herte doe bevaen.
 900 Hi hopede wel al sonder waen
 dat Lamfroyt hadde den beere verslegghen
 ende hine thuswaert hadde ghedregghen.
 Doe sprac hi: 'Hets mi wel ghevaren. [198ra]
 Die mi te hove meest soude daren,
 905 die hebbic doot in desen daghe.

875 Bruun is shaking because he is out of breath.

903-8 Reynaert's monologue provides important information about his intentions. He had planned to kill the bear in such a way that he could not be held accountable. He intended to remove a redoubtable opponent through Lamfroyt, which would have enabled him to insist

and crawled up on the bank to lie down there.
 You never saw a more pitiable
 animal or human being!
 He lay there moaning woefully,
 875 shaking with both his sides.
 He had Reynaert to thank for it all.
 Now hear what Reynaert did!
 He had caught a plump chicken
 in the field near Lamfroyt's house
 880 before going on his way.
 He had carried it to a hill,
 far from any road,
 where it was completely deserted.
 That was what he wanted,
 885 because no one went there
 and he would not be forced by any one
 to give up his prey.
 When he had led the chicken
 into his stomach, except for the feathers,
 890 he went down the hill
 along a secret track.
 He was extremely full.
 The weather was fine and hot.
 He had been running until the sweat
 895 ran down his cheeks.
 That is why he went to the river,
 so that he might cool off.
 His heart was filled
 with very great joy for many reasons.
 900 He felt pretty sure
 that Lamfroyt had killed the bear
 and had dragged it to his house.
 Then he said: 'It went well for me.
 The one who would harm me most at court
 905 has been killed today through my doing.

later at court that he knew nothing of the summons. However, it immediately becomes clear that Reynaert's plan has come to nothing: Bruun is still alive. The narrator thus sheds an ironic light on Reynaert's plans and character.

Nochtan wanic sonder claghe
 ende sonder wanconst bliven.
 Ic mach te rechte bliscap driven.’
 Doe Reynaert was in dese tale,
 910 sach hi nederwaert te dale
 ende vernam Bruun daer hi lach.
 Enten eersten als hine sach,
 hadde hijs rauwe ende toren.
 Daer die bliscap was tevoren,
 915 daer lach *nu* thoren ende nijt
 ende sprac: ‘Vermalendijt,
 Lamfroyt, moet dijn herte sijn!
 Du best dulre dan een zwijn,
 Lamfroyt, ergher putensone!
 920 Lettel eeren bestu ghewone.
 Hoe es di dese beere ontgaen,
 die di tevoren was ghevaen?
 Hoe menich morseel leghet daran,
 dat gherne hetet menich man.
 925 O wy, Lamfroyt, verscroven druut,
 hoe rikelike een beerehuut
 heefstu heden verloren,
 die di ghewonnen was tevoren!’
 Dit scelden hevet Reynaert ghelaten
 930 ende ghinc neder bi der straten
 dor te siene hoet Bruun stoet.
 Doe hine sach ligghen al een bloet
 ende ziec ende onghesont,
 den aermen beere, te dier stont
 935 – Dat sach Reynaert arde gherne –
 doe bescalt hine te sinen scherme:
 ‘Siere priester, dieu vo saut!
 Kendi Reynaert, den rybaut?
 Wildine scauwen, so siettene hier,
 940 den roden scalc, den fellen ghier.

930 The *strate* (‘road’) offers a contrast with the secret track that the fox used earlier (891).
 936-51 When Reynaert’s tricks have been successful, he mocks his victims, a common feature of beast tales. This also happens in Bruun’s case, whose impending beating was earlier compared to a drinking bout (704-6). Here he is likened to a cleric on account of the lack of

And yet I do not expect
to be charged or suspected.
I have every reason to be glad.'

910 While speaking these words
Reynaert looked down
and saw Bruun lying there.
And as soon as he saw him,
he felt sad and angry.
His earlier joy
915 now gave way to fury and irritation
and he said: 'Damned,
Lamfroyt, you deserve to be!
You have less sense than a pig,
Lamfroyt, horrible son of a whore!
920 Even a little respect is too much for you.
How did this bear escape you,
which earlier had been caught for you?
There are many delicious morsels on it
which many would like to eat.
925 Dear me, Lamfroyt, useless fellow,
what a precious bearskin
did you lose today
which earlier had been won for you!'

930 Reynaert stopped his abuse
and went down to the road
to see how Bruun was doing.
When he saw him lying there,
the poor bear, covered in blood
injured and in a bad state,
935 – Reynaert took pleasure in seeing it –
he taunted him for his amusement:
'My lord priest, Dieu vos saut!
Do you know the villain Reynaert?
If you want to see him, then you see him here,
940 the red scoundrel, the wicked glutton.

skin on his scalp and skinless paws. His head injury is compared by Reynaert to a skull cap and an outsize tonsure, while the wounds on his paws are associated by the fox with discarded gloves (cf. p. 21).

937 Old French *dieu vos saut* means: 'may God protect you'.

Seght mi priester, soete vrient,
 bi den Heere dien ghi dient,
 in wat ordinen wildi hu doen,
 dat ghi *draghet* roeden capproen?
 945 So weder sidi abd so pryhore? [198rb]
 Hi ghinc hu arde na den hore
 die hu dese crune hevet bescoren!
 Ghi hebt huwen top verloren,
 ghi hebt hu anscoen afghedaen:
 950 ic wane ghi wilt zinghen gaen
 van huwen complete dat ghetijde.
 Dit hoerde Brune ende wart omblijde,
 want hi ne const doe niet ghewreken.
 Hem so dochte sijn herte breken
 955 ende slouch weder in die riviere.
 Hi ne wilde van den fellen diere
 nemmeer hoeren die tale.
 Hi liet hem neder daer te dale
 metten strome dryven tehant
 960 ende ghinc ligghen up dat zant.
 Hoe sal nu Brune te hove comen?
 Al mocht hem al de weerelt vromen,
 hi ne ghinghe niet over sine voete.
 Hi was ghenoopt so onsoete
 965 in die eecke, daer hi tevoren
 van tween voeten hadde verloren
 alle die claeuwen ende dat vel,
 hi ne conste niet ghepeinsen wel
 hoe hi best ten coninc gaet.
 970 Nu hoert hoe hi die vaert bestaet!
 Hi zat over sine hamen
 ende began met groter scamen
 rutsen over sinen staert.
 Ende als hi dus moede waert,

950-51 For the liturgical hours, see the note to lines 384-85.

954 In other words: he could no longer stand it.

961-81 After the painful escape from the half-split oak, the beating by the villagers and Reynaert's cruel taunts, Bruun's humiliation is still not over. His front paws lack skin and

Tell me, priest, dear friend,
 by the Lord that you serve,
 which Order do you intend to join,
 as you are wearing a red hat?
 945 Are you an abbot or prior?
 Whoever gave you this tonsure
 sheared very close to your ears!
 You have lost the hair on your crown,
 you have taken off your gloves:
 950 I take it that you intend
 to sing the Hour of compline.⁷
 Bruun heard this and was not amused,
 for he could not at that moment take revenge.
 It seemed to him his heart would break
 955 and he plunged back into the river.
 He no longer wanted to hear
 the words of that vicious animal.
 He let himself float
 downriver on the current at once
 960 and lay down on the sandy riverbank.
 How is Bruun to reach the court now?
 Nothing in the world
 would induce him to go on foot.
 He had been caught in the oak
 965 so painfully – where earlier he had lost
 from his two paws
 all the nails as well as the skin –
 that he was at a loss
 how best to go to the king.
 970 Now hear how he undertakes the journey!
 He sat on his behind
 and began, feeling very ashamed,
 to move himself forward on his tail.
 And if, doing this, he became tired,

claws, so that once he has crawled out of the water, he can only move in unorthodox fashion, by sliding on his tail and rolling over and over from his back to his stomach. This is how he approaches the court, where some wonder *what* (not: who) it is that comes spinning down the road.

- 975 so wentelde hi dan eene wile.
 Dus dreef hi meer dan eene mile
 eer hi tes coninx hove quam.
 Doe men Brune vernam
 in derre wijs van verren comen,
 980 wart ghetwifelt van hem zomen
 wat daer quam ghewentelt zoe.
 Dien coninc wart de herte onvroe,
 die Brune bekende tehant,
 ende seide: 'Dit es mijn serjant,
 985 Brune; hem es dat hoeft so roet,
 hi es ghewont toter doot.
 Ay God, wie heeftene so mesmaect?' [198va]
 Binnen desen so was Brune ghenaeft
 dat hi den coninc claghen mochte.
 990 Hi stan ende versuchte onzochte
 ende sprac: 'Coninc, edel heere,
 wreket mi dor hu selves eere
 over Reynaerde, dat felle *dier*,
 die mi mine scone lier
 995 met ziere lust verliesen dede
 ende daertoe mine *hoere* mede
 ende hevet mi ghemaect als ghi siet.'
 Die coninc sprac: 'Of ic dit niet
 ne wreke, so moetic zijn verdoomt!'
 1000 Ende hierna so hevet hi ghenoomt
 alle die hoechste bi namen
 ende ontboet dat si quamen
 allegader an sinen raet
ende rieden hoe dese daet
 1005 best werde gherecht tes conincs eere.
 Doe rieden die meeste heeren
 dat menne twee waerven daghen soude,
 Reynaerde, of die coninc woude,
 ende horen tale ende wedertale.
 1010 Oec seiden si, si wilden wale

1009 *tale ende wedertale*: literally: 'tale and countertale', here: charge and defence.

975 he would roll for a while.
 He did this for more than a mile
 before reaching the king's court.
 When Bruun's approach
 in this manner was spotted from a distance,
 980 some could not make out what it was
 that came rolling there.
 The king, who recognized Bruun at once,
 felt very sad at heart
 and said: 'This is my servant,
 985 Bruun; his head is so red
 that he must be mortally injured.
 Dear God, who has maltreated him so?'
 Meanwhile Bruun had come so near
 that he could complain to the king.
 990 He moaned and sighed loudly
 and said: 'King, noble lord,
 revenge me for the sake of your own honour
 on Reynaert, that vicious animal
 who, with his nasty trick,
 995 has made me lose my fair cheeks
 and my ear to boot,
 and has made me as you see me.'
 The king said: 'May I be damned
 if I don't avenge this!'

1000 And afterwards he called
 all the mightiest lords by name
 and ordered them all to attend his council
 and to advise him how this deed
 might best be dealt with by law
 1005 in accordance with the king's honour.
 Then the highest in the land suggested
 that Reynaert should be summoned a second time,
 if the king agreed,
 so that both sides of the story might be heard.
 1010 They also said that they would like

dat Tybeert die cater van desen
 tote Reynaerde bode soude wesen.
 Al ware hi cranc, hi ware vroet.
 Dese raet dinct den coninc goet.
 1015 Doe sprac die coninc: 'Heere Tybeert,
 gaet wech. Eer ghi wederkeert,
 besiet dat Reynaert met hu come.
 Dese heeren segghen some,
 al es Reynaert andren dieren fel,
 1020 hi gheloevet hu so wel
 dat hi gherne doet huwen raet.
 Ne comt hi niet, hets hem quaet.
 Men salne drie waerven daghen
 te lachtre alle sinen maghen.
 1025 Gaet Tybeert, dit secht hem.'
 'Ay heere,' sprac Tybeert, 'ic bem
 een arem wicht, een cleene dier.
 Heere Brune, die staerc was ende fier,
 ne conste Reynaert niet ghewinnen. [198vb]
 1030 In welker wijs salics beghinnen?'
 Doe sprac die coninc: 'Heere Tybeert,
 ghi zijt wijs ende wel gheleert.
 Al sidi niet groet, nochtan
 hets menich die met luste can
 1035 dat werken ende met goeden rade
 dat hi met crachte niet ne dade.
 Gaet, doet sciere mijn ghebod.'
 Tybeert sprac: 'Nu helpe mi God
 dat het mi moete wel vergaen.
 1040 Ic sal eene vaert bestaen
 die mi doet zwaer in minen moet.
 God ghevere mi af al goet!'

1023-24 According to medieval legal procedures an accused had to be summoned three times before he could be sentenced *in absentia*. By staying away the accused showed that he had a bad conscience and wished to stay out of the clutches of the law.

Tybeert the cat to be
 the messenger to Reynaert.
 Although he was weak, he was clever.
 The king thought this good advice.

1015 Then the king said: 'Lord Tybeert,
 on your way. Make sure, before you return,
 that Reynaert comes with you.
 Some of these lords say
 that, although Reynaert is hostile towards
 1020 other animals, he trusts you so much
 that he will do as you tell him.
 If he fails to appear, he will be the worse for it.
 He will be summoned a third time,
 to the disgrace of all his relatives.

1025 Go, Tybeert, tell him this.'
 'Please, lord,' Tybeert said, 'I am
 a poor creature, a small animal.
 Lord Bruun, who was strong and brave
 could not get the better of Reynaert.
 1030 How am I to tackle this?'

 Then the king said: 'Lord Tybeert,
 you are wise and experienced.
 You may not be big, yet often
 many with cunning and discretion
 1035 reach results
 that with violence they would not.
 Go, quickly do as I tell you.'
 Tybeert said: 'Now may God help me,
 that it will end well for me.

1040 I must undertake a journey
 that presses heavily on me.
 God give that I may fare well!'

Nu moet Tybeert doen die vaert,
die zeere es drouve ende vervaart.
1045 Ende als hi up den wech quam,
sach hi van verren ende vernam
Sente Martins voghel, ende quam ghevloghen.
Doe wart Tybeert vroe ende in hoghen
ende riep an: 'Sente Martins voghel,
1049 a *keer herwaert dinen vlogel,*
1050 nu vliech te miere rechter hant!'
Die voghel vloech daer hi vant
een haghe daer hi in wilde lijden
ende vloech Tybeert ter luchter zijden.
Dit teekin ende dit ghemoet
1055 dochte Tybeert niet wesen goet.
Hadde hi ghesien den voghel lijden
scone ter rechter zijden,
so waende hi hebben goet gheval.
Nu was hi dies onthopet al.
1060 Nochtan maecte hi hem selven moet
ende gheliet hem, als menich doet,
bet dan hem te moede was.
Dus liep hi henen sinen pas,
tes hi quam te Manpertus
1065 ende vant Reynaerde in zijn huus
alleene staen verweendelike.
Tybeert sprac: 'God die rike
moete hu goeden avont gheven.
Die coninc dreecht hu an hu leven,
1070 ne comdi niet te hove met mi.'
Reynaert sprac: 'Tybeert, helet vry, [199ra]
neve, ghi zijt mi willecome.
God gheve hu eere ende vrome.
Bi Gode, dat jan ic hu wale!'

1043-59 According to medieval superstition it was bad luck to be passed on one's left by a Saint Martin's bird. The frightened cat has, therefore, been warned. In the Middle Ages the left had negative connotations, a result of biblical influence. It is not known which bird is

Second summons

Now Tybeert has to undertake the journey,
 feeling very anxious and fearful.
 1045 And when he had started on his road,
 he saw and noticed from a distance
 a Saint Martin's bird, which came flying towards him.
 This made Tybeert glad and cheerful
 and he called out: 'Saint Martin's bird,
 1049 a wend your wing this way,
 1050 now fly along my right hand side!'

The bird flew to where it found
 a bush into which it wished to go
 and flew along Tybeert's left hand side.
 This omen and this encounter
 1055 did not seem good news to Tybeert.
 If he had seen the bird pass
 him nicely on his right,
 he would have imagined himself in luck.
 Now he had lost all hope of success.

1060 Nevertheless he pulled himself together
 and pretended – as many do –
 to be more confident than he felt.
 And so he walked on at a steady pace
 until he reached Manpertuus
 1065 and found Reynaert at home,
 standing there full of confidence.

Tybeert said: 'May the Almighty God
 give you a good evening.
 The king is threatening to take your life
 1070 if you do not come to court with me.'
 Reynaert said: 'Tybeert, noble hero,
 nephew, you are welcome here.
 God give you honour and prosperity.
 By God, that would I wish for you!'

meant by the Saint Martin's bird. Suggestions have ranged from a crow, a kite, a goose and a hen harrier. The bird was probably associated with impurity and deadly danger.

1075 Wat coste Reynaerde scone tale?
 Al seghet sine tonghe wale,
 sine herte die es binnen fel.
 Dit wert Tybeerde ghetoghet wel
 eer die lijne wert ghelesen
 1080 ten hende. Ende met desen
 sprac Reynaert: 'Neve, ic wille dat ghi
 tavont herberghe hebt met mi
 ende morghen willen wi metten daghe
 te hove waert sonder saghe.
 1085 In hebbe oec onder alle mine maghe
 niement, Tybeert, daer ic mi nu
 bet up verlate dan up hu.
 Hier was commen Bruun de *vraet*.
 Hi toechde mi so fel ghelaet
 1090 ende dochte mi so overstaerc
 dat ic omme dusent maerc
 den wech met hem niet hadde bestaen.
 Dat sal ic met hu, al sonder waen,
 maerghin metter dagheraet.'
 1095 Tybeert sprac: 'Hets beteren raet
 ende het dinct mi beter ghedaen
 dat wi noch tavont te hove gaen
 dan wi tote morghin beiden.
 Die mane scijnet an der heiden
 1100 also clae alse die dach.
 Ic wane, niemen ne sach
 beter tijt tote onser vaert.'
 'Neen, lieve neve,' sprac Reynaert,
 'sulc mochte ons *dages* ghemoeten,
 1105 hi soude ons quedden ende groeten,
 die ons nemmermee dade goet,

1079-80 These lines mean literally: 'before the line has been read to the end'. Possibly *lijne* suggests a string of prayer beads.

1081-1158 After the first summons the day has advanced. Tybeert already wishes Reynaert 'good evening' (*goeden avont*, 1068) and intends to return at once with the fox to the king's court. Reynaert, however, wishes to wait until the next morning and offers Tybeert hospitality, which means that a meal will have to be eaten. When Tybeert himself mentions the evening meal (1109-10), Reynaert answers that all he has in the house is honey, knowing that cats do not like honey.

1075 What does the smooth talking cost Reynaert?
 Even though his tongue speaks fine words,
 within his heart he is wicked.
 This will become clear to Tybeert
 before the story has been read
 1080 to its conclusion. And then
 Reynaert said: 'Nephew, I want you
 to be my guest tonight,
 and tomorrow, at light of day,
 we will go to court without further ado.
 1085 After all, among all my relatives
 I have no one, Tybeert, in whom
 I put more trust than I do in you.
 Bruun the glutton came here.
 He had such an aggressive attitude
 1090 and I considered him so immensely strong
 that I would not for a thousand marks
 have walked along the way with him.
 But I will with you, definitely,
 tomorrow morning at dawn.'
 1095 Tybeert said: 'It is more advisable
 and it seems better to me
 if we went to court this evening
 than waiting until tomorrow.
 The moon is shining on the heath
 1100 as brightly as if it were day.
 I think that no one could find
 a better time for our journey.'
 'No, dear nephew,' Reynaert said,
 'Those who, if met during the day,
 1105 would address and greet us,
 would most certainly not treat us well

By means of these clever manipulations Reynaert induces the cat to name his favourite food himself (fat mice). In turn, this provides an opening for suggesting that the guest's food should be procured elsewhere. Reynaert's proposition – in which the number of mice in the priest's barn is of a hyperbolic size (1123-26) – is met by Tybeert in equally exaggerated terms (1134-41, 1149-50, 1155-56). The fox increases Tybeert's excitement by pretending not to understand his enthusiasm (1121-22, 1131-32, 1142, 1147). On the structure of Reynaert's tricks, see also p. 20.

1091 A *marc* is a gold or silver coin.

quame hi snachts in ons ghemoet.
 Ghi moet herberghen tavont met mi.’
 Tybeert sprac: ‘Wat souden wy
 1110 eten, Reynaert, of ic hier bleve?’
 ‘Daeromme zorghe ic, lieve neve.
 Hier es der spijsen quaden tijt.
 Ghi mocht heten, begheerdijt, [199rb]
 een stic van eere honichraten,
 1115 die bequamelic es utermaten.
 Wat sechdi, moochdi shonichs yet?’
 Tybeert sprac: ‘Mi ne roukes niet.
 Reynaert, hebdi niet in huus?
 Gavedi mi eene vette muus,
 1120 daermede liet ic hu ghewaert.’
 ‘Eene vette muus,’ sprac Reynaert,
 ‘soete Tybeert, wat sechdi?
 Hier woent noch een pape bi;
 een scuere staet noch an sijn huus,
 1125 daer in es meneghe vette muus.
 Ic waense niet ghedroughe een waghén,
 so dicken hoere ic den pape claghen
 dat sine dryven hutén huuse.’
 ‘Reynaert, zjén daer so vette muse?
 1130 Verghave God, waer ic nu daer.’
 ‘Tybeert,’ seit hi, ‘sechdi waer?
 Wildi muse?’ ‘Of icse wille?
 Reynaert, doet dies een ghestille.
 Ic minne muse voer alle saken.
 1135 Weetti niet dat muse smaken
 bet dan eenich venisoen?
 Wildi minen wille doen
 dat ghi mi leet daer si zjén,
 daermede mochti die hulde mijn
 1140 hebben, al haddi minen vadre
 doot ende mijn gheslachte algadre.’
 Reynaert sprac: ‘Neve, houddi hu spot?’
 ‘Neen ic, Reynaert, also helpe mi God.’
 ‘Weet God, Tybeert, wistic dat,
 1145 ghi soutter sijn noch tavont sat.’

if they met us at night.
 You must stay and be my guest tonight.'

- 1110 Tybeert said: 'What would we
 eat, Reynaert, if I stayed here?'
 'That is what worries me, dear nephew.
 Food is scarce here at the moment.
 You might, if you like,
 eat a piece of honeycomb,
 1115 which is quite delicious.
 What do you say, you like honey perhaps?'
 Tybeert said: 'I don't care for it.
 Reynaert, don't you have anything else in your house?
 If you gave me a fat mouse,
 1120 I would be content with that.'
 'A fat mouse,' Reynaert said,
 'sweet Tybeert, what are you saying?
 Now near here lives a priest;
 a barn is built against his house
 1125 in which there are many fat mice.
 I believe they would not fit into a cart,
 so often do I hear the priest complain
 that they are driving him from house and home.'
 – 'Reynaert, are there really such fat mice there?'
 1130 God give that I was there now.'
 'Tybeert,' he said, 'Is this true?
 Do you want mice?' – 'Do I want them?
 Reynaert, be silent about it.
 I love mice above anything.
 1135 Don't you know that mice taste
 better than any kind of game?
 If you are willing to do as I wish
 by leading me to the place where they are,
 you would be assured of my friendship,
 1140 even if you were the murderer
 of my father and all my kin.'
 Reynaert said: 'Nephew, are you joking?'
 – 'Not me, Reynaert, so help me God.'
 – 'God is my witness, Tybeert: if I was sure of that
 1145 you would eat your fill there even tonight.'

‘Sat, Reynaert? Dat ware vele!’
 ‘Tybeert, dat sechdi thuwen spele.’
 ‘In doe, Reynaert, bi miere wet.
 Haddic een muus ende waer so vet,
 1150 in gaefse niet omme eenen busant.’
 ‘Tybeert, gaet met mi tehand.
 Ic leede hu daer ter selver stat
 daer icker hu sal maken zat,
 eer ic nemmermeer van hu sceede.’
 1155 ‘Ja ic, Reynaert, up die gheleede [199va]
 ghinghe ic met hu te Mompelier.’
 ‘So gaen wi dan. Wi sijn hier
 al te langhe,’ sprac Reynaert.
 Doe so namen si up die vaert,
 1160 Tybeert ende sijn oem Reynaert,
 ende liepen daer si loepen wilden
 dat si nye toghel uphilden
 eer si quamen tes papen scuere,
 die met eenen erdinen muere
 1165 al omme ende omme was beloken,
 daer Reynaert in was tebroken
 des ander daghes daertevoren,
 doe die pape hadde verloren
 eenen hane, die hi hem nam.
 1170 Hieromme was tornich ende gram
 des papen sone Martinet,
 ende hadde voer dat gat gheset
 een strec den vos mede te vane.
 Dus gherne wrake hi den hane.
 1175 Dit wiste Reynaert, dat felle dier,
 ende sprac: ‘Neve Tybeert, hier
 crupet in dit selve gat.
 Ne weset traghe no lat.
 Gaet al omme ende omme gripen.

1156 In the Middle Ages Montpellier in the south of France was the place to study medicine. It was a widely known town, mentioned by Tybeert because it is far away.

1171 Martinet is the result of a forbidden relationship. He is the son of a priest, someone not allowed to enter into a sexual relationship with a woman (see also the note to 731). His

- ‘My fill, Reynaert? That would be nice!’
 – ‘Tybeert, you are only saying this in jest.’
 – ‘I am not, Reynaert, by my faith.
 If I had a mouse, and if it was fat,
 1150 I would not part with it for a piece of gold.’
 – ‘Tybeert, come with me straightaway.
 I shall lead you to this place
 where I shall make you get your fill
 before I ever leave your side again.’
 1155 – ‘Yes, Reynaert, with that assurance
 I would even go with you to Montpellier.’
 – ‘Well, then, let’s go. We have been here
 too long already,’ Reynaert said.
 Then they set out on their journey,
 1160 Tybeert and his uncle Reynaert,
 and ran where they wanted to run,
 with unbridled speed,
 until they reached the priest’s barn,
 which had been enclosed
 1165 all round with an earthen wall,
 which Reynaert had broken into
 the day before
 when the priest had lost
 a cock, which the fox had taken from him.
 1170 For this reason the priest’s son Martinet
 was fuming and irate,
 and before the hole he had
 set a snare to catch the fox.
 So badly did he want to avenge the cock.
 1175 Reynaert, that evil animal, knew this,
 and said: ‘Nephew Tybeert,
 crawl through this hole here.
 Don’t dawdle or be slow.
 Grab everything about and around you.

name is reminiscent of the Saint Martin’s bird that gave a first indication of Tybeert’s impending misfortune (1047) brought about by the priest’s son. He is the one who discovers the cat in the snare, wakes the people in the house, and throws the stone that puts out Tybeert’s eye.

- 1180 Hoert hoe die muse pipen!
 Keert weder huut als ghi zijt sat.
 Ic sal hier bliven voer dit gat
 ende sal hu hier buten beiden.
 Wi ne moghen niet tavont sceiden.
- 1185 Morghin gaen wi te hove waert.
 Tybeert, siet dat ghi niet en spaert.
 Gaet heten ende laet ons keeren
 te miere herberghen met eeren.
 Mijn wijf sal ons wel ontfaen.'
- 1190 'Willic te desen gate ingaen?
 Wat sechdi, Reynaert, eist hu raet?
 Die papen connen vele baraet,
 ic besteece arde noode.'
 'O wy, Tybeert, twi sisi bloode?
- 1195 Wanen quam huwer herten desen wanc?'
 Tybeert scaemde hem ende spranc
 daer hi vant groet ongherec, [199vb]
 want eer hijt wiste, was hem een strec
 omme sinen hals arde vast.
- 1200 Dus hoende Reynaert sinen gast!
 Alse Tybeert gheware wart
 des strecs, wart hi vervaert
 ende spranc voert. Dat strec liep toe.
 Tybeert moeste roupen doe
- 1205 ende wroughede hem selven dor den noot.
 Hi makede een gheroup so groot
 met eenen jammerliken ghelate
 dat Reynaert hoerde up der strate
 buten, daer hi alleene stoet,
- 1210 ende riep: 'Vindise goet,
 die muse, Tybeert, ende vet?
 Wiste nu dat Martinet,

1190-99 Once arrived at the hole in the wall around the priest's barn, Tybeert hesitates despite his greedy appetite. The delay in the action serves to heighten the suspense: is Tybeert going to discover the danger that is in store for him after all? However, Reynaert overcomes Tybeert's suspicions by accusing him of cowardice. Ashamed of himself the cat jumps through the hole, and gets caught in the snare. The same procedure is used to an even more marked degree in the case of the deception of King Nobel (cf. 2200, 2514-17, 2623-35).

1180 Hear how the mice are squeaking!
 Come outside again when you've had enough.
 I shall stay by this hole
 and shall wait for you here outside.
 We must stay together tonight.
 1185 Tomorrow we will go to court.
 Tybeert, take care not to be slow.
 Go and eat and let us return
 to my hospitable dwelling, as is fitting.
 My wife will receive us gladly.'
 1190 – 'Should I go in through this hole?
 What do you say, Reynaert, is that your advice?
 Priests are cunning;
 I don't like to cross them.'
 – 'Oh dear, Tybeert, why are you such a coward?
 1195 What caused this change of heart?'
 Tybeert was ashamed of himself and jumped
 into a place where he experienced great misery,
 because, before he knew it, a snare
 was very tight around his neck.
 1200 In this way Reynaert deceived his guest!
 When Tybert became aware
 of the snare, he took fright
 and jumped forward. The snare pulled tight.
 Tybeert then had to scream
 1205 and betrayed himself by his distress.
 He uttered such loud screams
 and cried out so pitifully
 that Reynaert heard it in the street,
 outside, where he stood by himself,
 1210 and he shouted: 'Are the mice to your liking,
 Tybeert, and are they fat?
 If only Martinet knew

1200 By stating that Reynaert disgraces his guest, the narrator shows disapproval of the fox's behaviour. Reynaert violates the rules governing hospitality in order to get rid of Tybeert (cf. 1108, 1187-89).

1210-25 As was the case where it concerned Bruun, Reynaert rejoices in Tybeert's suffering when his scheme has worked. The sauce (1216) refers to the physical abuse at Martinet's hands (see note to lines 705-6).

dat ghi ter taflen satet
 ende dit wiltbraet dus hatet,
 1215 dat ghi verteert, in weet hoe,
 hi sauder hu saeuse maken toe.
 So hovesch een cnape es Martinet!
 Tybeert, ghi singhet in lanc so bet.
 Pleecht men tes coninx hove des?
 1220 Verghave God, die gheweldich es,
 dat, Tybeert, daer met hu ware
 Ysingrijn die mordenare
 in sulker bliscap als ghi zijt!
 Dus heeft Reynaert groot delijt
 1225 dor Tybeerts ongheval.
 Ende Tybeert stont ende ghal
 so lude dat Martinet ontspranc.
 Martinet riep: 'Ha ha, God danc!
 Ter goeder tijt heeft nu ghestaen
 1230 mijn strec: ic hebber met ghevaen
 den hoenredief na minen wane.
 Nu toe, ghelden wi hem den hane!
 Met desen wart hi toten viere
 ende ontstac eenen stroewisch sciere
 1235 ende wecte moedre ende vadre
 ende die kindre allegadre
 ende riep: 'Nu toe, hi es ghevaen!
 Doe mochte men sien porren saen
 alle die in dien huus waren. [2oora]
 1240 Selve die pape ne wilde niet sparen,
 quam hute sinen bedde moedernaect.
 Martinet hi was gheraect
 tote Tybeert ende riep: 'Hijs hier!
 Die pape spranc an dat vier
 1245 ende ghegreep zijns wijfs rocke.
 Een offerkeersse nam vrouwe Julocke

1236 The scandalous relationship in which the priest is engaged with Julocke has, as we find here, led to more children. This may well be mentioned to discredit the priest even more.
1245-49 In this scene Willem alludes to the motif of the *mundus inversus*, the world turned upside down. The priest and his wife each reach for objects (the distaff and the church candle) which are part of their partner's daily business: Julocke carries the heavy candle, and the priest

that you were at table
 and eating this game in this way
 1215 – how you can stomach it I don't know –
 he would make you a sauce with it.
 Such a well-mannered boy is Martinet!
 Tybeert, you are singing better all the time.
 Is that customary at the king's court?
 1220 If only it had pleased the almighty God
 that that criminal Ysingrijn
 had been with you, Tybeert,
 and as full of joy as you are!
 In this way Reynaert delights
 1225 in Tybeert's mishap.
 And Tybeert stood screaming
 so loudly that Martinet woke up.
 Martinet shouted: 'Ha, ha, thank God!
 My snare was set at the right time:
 1230 it seems to me that I have caught
 the chicken thief with it.
 Let's go now and settle the score for the cock!'

At once he moved to the fire
 and quickly lit a wisp of straw,
 1235 and woke his mother and father
 and all the children
 and shouted: 'Let's go, he's caught!'

Then all those who were in the house
 could be seen to shift themselves immediately.
 1240 The priest himself, not wishing to stay behind,
 left his bed as naked as the day he was born.
 Martinet had reached Tybeert
 and shouted: 'He is here!'

The priest jumped towards the fire
 1245 and grabbed his wife's distaff.
 Lady Julocke took a church candle

runs out wielding the distaff, an object strongly associated with femininity and, in the hands of a man, with a marked lack of masculinity. A little later Julocke says that she would have been quite prepared to give up the alms money of a whole year to have prevented the priest's injury, again assuming her husband's role (1272-75). The comic role reversal is concluded with the image of Julocke carrying her injured husband to his bed in her arms when, like a woman, he has fainted.

ende ontstacse metter haest.
Die pape liep Tybeert naest
ende ghincken metten rocke slaen.
1250 Doe moeste Tybeert daer ontfaen
wel meneghen slach alineen.
Die pape stont, als hem wel sceen,
al naect ende slouch slach in slach
up Tybeert die voer hem lach.
1255 Daer ne spaerdene haer negheen.
Martinet ghegreep eenen steen
ende warp Tybeert een hoghe huut.
Die pape stont al bloeter huut
ende hief up eenen groeten slach.
1260 Alse Tybeert dat ghesach,
dat hi emmer sterven soude,
doe dedi een deel als die boude,
dat dien pape verghinc te scanden.
Beede met claeuwen ende met tanden
1265 dedi hem pant, alsoet wel scheen,
ende spranc dien pape tusschen die been
in die burse al sonder naet,
daer men dien beyaert mede slaet.
Dat dinc viel neder up den vloer.
1270 Die vrouwe was zeerich ende zwoer
bi der zielen van haren vader,
si ne wilde wel om algader
die offerande van eenen jare
dat niet den pape ghevalen ware
1275 dit vernoy ende dese scame.
So sprac: *In* sleets duvels name
moete dit strec sijn gheset!
Siet, lieve neve Martinet,
dit was van huwes vader ghewande.
1280 Siet hier mijn scade ende mijn scande

1260-69 As was the case during the first summons, it is the sensuality of the relationship between the priest and Julocke which enables the messenger to save himself. Because Tybeert, fearing for his life, jumps up into the priest's crutch and tears off a testicle, all members of the family stop maltreating the cat and concentrate on the priest. This enables Tybeert to

and hastily lit it.
 The priest went towards Tybeert
 and started to hit him with the distaff.
 1250 Then Tybeert had to accept
 many blows in a short time.
 The priest stood, as all could see,
 completely naked and, blow upon blow,
 hit Tybeert lying before him.
 1255 Nobody spared themselves there.
 Martinet picked up a stone
 and threw it at Tybeert, which cost him an eye.
 The priest stood dressed only in his skin
 and raised his arms for a mighty blow.
 1260 When Tybeert realised
 that he was sure to die,
 he summoned the little courage he had,
 which led to dishonour for the priest.
 With both his claws and his teeth
 1265 did he injure him, as was obvious,
 and jumped up between the priest's legs,
 at the purse that has no seam,
 with which the bells are rung.
 The thing fell down on to the floor.
 1270 The wife was distressed and swore
 by her father's soul
 that she would gladly have given
 the alms of an entire year
 for the priest not to have suffered
 1275 this sorrow and this shame.
 She said: 'In the name of the hideous devil
 this snare must have been set!
 See, my dear Martinet,
 this was part of your father's tools.
 1280 See here my loss and my shame

tear the snare apart with his teeth and escape (1308-16).

1276-83 Julocke regrets the priest's loss, fearing he will become impotent and unable to satisfy her sexual needs. Once again the priest's forbidden relationship is highlighted.

1278 Julocke's use of the word *neve* expresses intimacy. See also 3075.

emmermeer voert in allen stonden. [200rb]
 Al ghenase hi van der wonden,
 hi blivet den soeten spele mat.
 Reynaert stont noch doe voer tgat.
 1285 Doe hi dese tale hoerde,
 hi louch dat hem bachten scorede
 ende hem crakede die taverne.
 Doe sprac hi te sinen scherne:
 1290 'Swijghet, Julocke, soete vrouwe,
 ende laet zyncken desen rauwe
 ende laet bliven huwen toren!
 Wattan, al hevet hu heere verloren
 eenen van den clippelen zinen?
 Al te min so sal hi pinen!
 1295 Laet bliven dese tale achtre.
 Gheneset de pape, en es gheen lachtre
 dat hi ludet met eere clocken!
 Dus troeste Reynaert vrouwe Julocken,
 die haer arde zeere mesliet.
 1300 Die pape mochte langher niet
 ghestaen; hi viel in ommacht.
 Doe hiefsene up met haerre cracht
 ende drouchene recht te bedde waert.
 Hierbinnen keerde Reynaert
 1305 alleene ter herberghen waert
 ende liet Tybeert zeere vervaert
 ende in zorghen van der doot.
 Al was Tybeerts zorghe groet,
 doe hise alle onledich sach
 1310 over dien pape, die daer lach
 ghewont, doe ghinc hi hem pinen
 so dat hi metten tanden zine
 die pese midden beet ontwee.
 Doe ne wildi letten nemmee
 1315 ende spranc weder hute ten gate
 ende dede hem up die rechte strate,

1288-97 Rey'naert's taunts are not limited to his victim Tybeert. Julocke, too, is comforted sarcastically by the fox on account of her lamentations. According to the fox her husband will

for ever and a day.
 Even if he recovers of his injuries,
 he still won't be up to our sweet game.'

Reynaert was still standing before the hole.
 1285 When he heard these words,
 he laughed until his belly nearly burst
 and a fart cracked from his backside.
 Then he said, mockingly:
 'Be silent, Julocke, dear lady,
 1290 and restrain these lamentations
 and put a stop to your distress!
 What does it matter that your lord has lost
 one of his clappers?
 The less he will need to exert himself!
 1295 Be quiet about this.
 If the priest recovers, it will be no dishonour
 that he rings with one bell!
 In this way Reynaert comforted Lady Julocke,
 who carried on very noisily.
 1300 The priest could no longer
 stand; he fainted.
 Then she lifted him up with a great effort
 and carried him straight to bed.
 Meanwhile Reynaert returned
 1305 to his dwelling alone,
 leaving Tybeert in great anguish
 and mortal fear.
 Even though Tybeert's worries were great,
 when he saw that all were occupied
 1310 with the priest who was lying there
 injured, he made such an effort
 that with his teeth
 he bit the cord in two.
 Then he did not hesitate for a moment
 1315 and jumped back out of the hole
 and took the straight road

be capable of performing satisfactorily in bed with just one testicle. In the course of the first summons Bruun was mocked twice.

die tes conincx waert ghelach.
 Eer hi daer quam, so waest dach
 ende die zonne begonste rijzen.
 1320 In eens arems ziecs wijsen
 quam Tybeert in thof gheronnen,
 die tes papen hadde ghewonnen
 dat hi langhe claghen mach. [200va]
 Also die coninc dit versach,
 1325 dat hi hadde dat hoeghe verloren,
 doe mochte men vreeselike horen
 den coninc dreeghen den dief Reynaert.
 Die coninc doe niet langher ne spaert,
 hi ne riep sine baroene te rade
 1330 ende vraechde wat hi best dade
 jeghen Reynaerts overdaet.
 Doe wart ghindre menich raet
 hoe men Reynaert ter redenen brochte,
 die dese overdaet wrochte.
 1335 Doe sprac Grimbeert die das,
 die Reynaerts broedersone was:
 ‘Ghi heeren, ghi hebt meneghen raet.
 Al ware mijn oem noch also quaet,
 sal men vry recht voertdraghen,
 1340 men salne drie waerven daghen,
 also men doet eenen vryen man.
 Ende en comt hi niet dan,
 so es hi sculdich alre dinc
 daer hi af voer den coninc
 1345 van desen heeren es beclaghet.’
 ‘Wie wildi, Grimbeert, dattene daghet?’
 sprac de coninc. ‘Wie es hier
 die sijn hoeghe ofte sijn lier
 wille setten in avontueren
 1350 omme eene felle creatuere?
 Ic wane hier niemene en es so zot.’
 Grimbeert sprac: ‘So helpe mi God!
 Siet mi hier; ic bem so coene

1340-45 According to the medieval law of litigation Reynaert can be sentenced *in absentia* if

that led to the king's court.
 Before he arrived there, it was day
 and the sun began to rise.

1320 Pitiful and weak,
 Tybeert came running into the court;
 at the priest's house he had gained
 something he might long complain of.
 When the king noticed
 1325 that he had lost an eye,
 the king could be heard to threaten
 that criminal Reynaert fearfully.
 The king then lost no time
 in summoning his barons to council
 1330 and he asked what he might best do
 as regards Reynaert's offence.
 Then many a proposal was made
 how Reynaert, who had perpetrated this offence,
 should be made to see reason.

1335 Then Grimbeert the badger,
 who was Reynaert's brother's son, said:
 'My lords, you have given much advice.
 Even if my uncle were twice as bad,
 if the law for the free is to be maintained,
 1340 he will have to be summoned three times,
 as is done where it concerns a free man.
 And if he fails to appear then,
 he will be found guilty of everything
 of which he has been accused
 1345 by these lords before the king.'
 'Who, according to you, Grimbeert,
 should serve the summons?' said the king.
 'Which of those present is willing
 to risk his eye or cheek
 1350 for a fiendish creature?
 I reckon that no one here is fool enough.'
 Grimbeert said: 'So help me God!
 Look at me here, I am so brave

he also fails to respond to the third summons without a lawful excuse. See the note to 1023-24.

1355 dat ic wel dar bestaen te doene
 dese bodscap, ghebiedijt.
 ‘Grimbeert, gaet wech ende zijt
 vroet ende wacht hu jeghen mesval.’
 Grimbert sprac: ‘Coninc heere, ic sal.’

Dus gaet Grimbeert te Manpertuus.
 1360 Als hire quam, vant hi in huus
 sinen oem ende vrouwe Ermelijnen,
 die bi haren welpekijnen
 laghen in die hagedochte.
 Ende ten eersten dat Grimbeert mochte,
 1365 groette hi sinen oem ende ziere moeyen. [200vb]
 Hi sprac: ‘En sal hu niet vernoyen
 des onrechts daer ghi in zijt?
 Dincket hu noch niet wesen tijt
 dat ghi trect, oem Reynaert,
 1370 tote des conincs hove waert,
 daer ghi wel zeere zijt beclaghet?
 Ghi zijt III waerven ghedaghet.
 Vermerrendi maerghin den dach,
 so zorgheic dat hu ne mach
 1375 negheene ghenade me ghescien.
 Ghi sult in den derden daghe sien
 huwen casteel bestormen, Manpertuus.
 Ghi sult gherecht sien voer hu huus
 eene galghe ofte een rat.
 1380 Over waer segghic hu dat:
 beede hu kindre ende hu wijf

1364-1406 Grimbeert’s announcement that ignoring this third summons will result in the storming of Manpertuus after three days and the death of Reynaert with his wife and children is in accordance with medieval law. Three days after the final summons has been served the breaker of the peace is declared an outlaw. The fox seems impressed by these arguments and states that he will follow Grimbeert to the king’s court (1399-1506). When, at the end of the story, Reynaert has fled with his family to a new wilderness (3140-65, 3317-29), the reader may wonder why he did not do this as soon as Grimbeert issued his summons. One explanation might be that

that I dare take
 1355 this message, if you tell me to.’
 – ‘Grimbeert, be on your way and act
 cautiously and beware of mishaps.’
 Grimbeert said: ‘Lord King, so I shall.’

Third summons

And so Grimbeert goes to Manpertuus.
 1360 When he arrived there, he found
 his uncle and Lady Hermeline at home,
 lying with their cubs
 in their den.
 And as soon as Grimbeert could,
 1365 he greeted his uncle and his aunt.
 He said: ‘Are you not worried
 about your present uncertain legal position?
 Don’t you think it time yet,
 uncle Reynaert, to go
 1370 on your way to the king’s court
 where serious accusations are made against you?
 You have been summoned three times.
 If you fail to appear tomorrow,
 I fear that you will not find
 1375 any mercy anymore.
 On the third day you will find
 your castle Manpertuus stormed.
 You will see in front of your house
 a gallows or wheel erected.
 1380 I assure you of this:
 both your children and your wife

Reynaert goes to court to defend the interests of his clan (small predators), but that explanation does not fit the facts. After all, Reynaert’s lies and bad behaviour at court and later at Manpertuus result in himself and all his relatives being made outlaws. There is, of course, a narrative explanation: if Willem does not let the fox go to court, the story will reach an abrupt and untimely end. Moreover, it later becomes clear that Reynaert has sought the confrontation with the court deliberately, as may be deduced from his admission in 2042-49. It would seem that Reynaert had already decided to go to the king’s court before Grimbeert’s arrival, but does not tell him this.

sullen verliesen haer lijf
 lachterlike, al sonder waen.
 Ghi ne moghet selve niet ontgaen.
 1385 Daeromme es hu de beste raet
 dat ghi met mi te hove gaet.
 Hets messelic hoet ghevallen mach:
 hu es dicken up eenen dach
 vremder avontueren ghevallen
 1390 dan ghi noch, *quite* van hem allen,
 met des conincx orlove
 maerghin sciet huten hove.’
 Reynaert seide: ‘Ghi secht waer.
 Nochtan, Grimbeert, comme ic daer
 1395 onder des conincs ghesinde,
 dat ic binnen den hove vinde
 es up mi verbolghen al.
 Quame ic danen, het ware gheval.
 Nochtan dinct mi beter wesen
 1400 – Ghenese of ic mach ghenesen –
 dat ic met hu te hove vare
 dan het al verloren ware:
 casteel, kindre ende wijf
 ende daertoe mijns selves lijf.
 1405 In mach den coninc niet ontgaen.
 Alse ghi wilt, so willic gaen.
 Hoert,’ seit hi, ‘vrauwe Hermelijne, [201ra]
 ic bevele hu die kindre mine,
 dat ghire wale pleghet nu.
 1410 Voer alle dandre bevelic hu
 minen zone Reynaerdine.
 Hem staen wel de gaerdeline
 in zine muulkine overal.
 Ic hope dat hi mi slachten sal.
 1415 Hier es *Rossel*, een scone dief,
 die hebbic nochtan harde lief,
 ja, als yement sine kindre doet.
 Al eist dat ic nu van hier moet,
 ic salt mi nemen arde na,
 1420 updat ic mach, dat ic ontga.

will most certainly lose their lives
 in a dishonourable way.
 You will not escape yourself.
 1385 Therefore your best advice is
 to come with me to court.
 It is uncertain how it will end:
 you have many a day
 had stranger things happen to you
 1390 than leaving, acquitted of all accusations,
 the court tomorrow
 with the king's approval.'
 Reynaert said: 'You are right.
 Nevertheless, Grimbeert, when I join there
 1395 the king's retinue,
 everyone I shall meet at court
 bears me a grudge.
 To get away from there would be real luck.
 Even so, I think it better
 1400 – however it will end for me –
 that I should go to court with you
 than that all should be lost:
 castle, children and wife,
 and my own life as well.
 1405 I cannot escape the king.
 If you wish, I shall go.
 Listen,' he said, 'Lady Hermeline,
 I entrust my children to you,
 that you may take good care of them.
 1410 Especially I entrust to you
 my son Reynardijn.
 The whiskers on his little muzzle
 suit him well.
 I hope that he will take after me.
 1415 Here is Rossel, a fine scoundrel,
 whom I love dearly nevertheless,
 yes, as much as anyone loves his children.
 Even though I must leave here
 I shall do the best I can,
 1420 if it is within my powers, to escape.

- Grimbeert, neve, God moet hu lonen.
 Met hoofschen woorden ende met sconen
 nam Reynaert an de sine orlof
 ende rूमde sijns selves hof.
- 1425 Ay, hoe drouve bleef vrouwe Hermeline
 ende hare cleene welpekine,
 doe Reynaert sciet huut Manpertuus
 ende hi hof liet ende huus
 aldus omberaden staen.
- 1430 Nu hoert wat Reynaert heeft ghedaen
 teerst dat hi quam an der heyden!
 Hi sprac te Grimbeerte ende zeide:
 ‘Grimbert, *scouwet*, soete neve,
 van zorghen suchtic ende beve.
- 1434a *Ic ga in vresen vander doet.*
 1434b *Mijn berouwenisse is so groet*
 1434c *van sonden die ik hebbe gedaen.*
- 1435 Lieve neve, ic wille gaen
 1437 te biechten hier te di:
 hier nes ander pape bi.
 Hebbic mine biechte ghedaen,
 1440 hoe so die saken sijn vergaen,
 mine ziele sal te claerre wesen.’
 Grimbeert andwoerde na desen:
 ‘Oem, wildi te biechten gaen,
 so moetti dan verloven saen
 1445 alle diefte ende allen roef,
 of en diet hu niet een loef.’

1421 It is strange that Reynaert, having just said these words to his wife, suddenly addresses Grimbeert. Why does he abruptly thank the badger? It is likely that something went wrong at some stage in the textual history of the Comburg redaction. In the original work the fox will probably have continued speaking to Hermeline, as he does in other redactions.

1430-1691 The author uses the fox’s confession to refer from the main story to existing beast narratives and side stories, thus creating a kind of collage. Here follows a survey of the sins Reynaert confesses: he deceived Bruun (1463-64) as well as Tybeert (1465-67), kidnapped and killed Canticleer’s children (1468-72), sneered at the king and queen (1473-77), and tricked Ysingrijn the wolf on many occasions: about their family relationship (1482), as a monk at Elmare (1483-98), with a tonsure (1499-1503), on the ice (1504-7), with the priest of Bloys (1508-1605), at a trapdoor (1606-45), with his wife Haersint (1648-69). Within the reality of the narrative this confession serves two important functions. By making the fox refer to events that (are supposed to) have occurred at an earlier stage of the story or in well-known

Grimbeert, nephew, may God reward you.’

With courtly and with fine words
Reynaert took leave of his family
and departed from his own residence.

1425 Oh, how sadly did Lady Hermeline
and her little cubs stay behind,
when Reynaert left Manpertuus,
leaving home and estate
entirely unprotected.

1430 Now hear what Reynaert did
as soon as he reached the heath!
He addressed Grimbeert and said:
‘Grimbeert, look, dear nephew,
I sigh and tremble with anxiety.

1434a I am in fear of my life.

1434b My remorse concerning the sins
1434c that I have committed is so great.

1435 Dear nephew, I wish

1437 to confess them here to you:

there is no one else near here to act as priest.

Once I have made my confession,
1440 whatever may befall,
my soul will be that much cleaner.’

Grimbeert answered to this:

‘Uncle, if you want to go to confession
you must abjure immediately
1445 all thieving and stealing,
otherwise it will do you no good at all.’

beast narratives, the author provides his public with additional information. Partly on the basis of this confession, readers and listeners are thus able to see that Reynaert’s claims later in the story are a pack of lies (1820-32, 2095-2105, 2706-16). At the same time the fox throws light on his character by the nature of his confession. Two ‘sins’ in particular are dwelled on at great length, with Reynaert rendering the dialogues between himself and the characters involved in direct speech (1508-1645). By recounting these adventures, which are at odds with the confession framework on account of their length and wealth of detail, the fox may well be suspected of glorying in his wicked ways.

1433-38 Reynaert claims to be *in periculum mortis*, in mortal fear of his life. That is a valid reason for making a confession. As there is no priest anywhere near, the fox wishes to confess his sins to the badger. This kind of lay confession was allowed in exceptional circumstances. As becomes clear from what follows, Reynaert lies when he says that he feels perfect contrition (*contritio*).

'Dat weet ic wel,' sprac Reynaert.
 'Grimbeert, nu hoert haerwaert
 ende vandet mi gheraden. [201rb]
 1450 Siet, ic comme hu te ghenaden
 van allegader *mire mesdaet*.
 Nu hoert, Grimbeert, ende verstaet:
 confiteor pater, mater,
 dat ic den otter ende den cater
 1455 ende alle diere hebbe mesdaen.
 Daeraf willic mi in biechten dwaen.'
 Grimbeert sprac: 'Oem, walschedi?
 Of ghi yet wilt, spreect jeghen mi
 in Dietsche, dat ict mach verstaen.'
 1460 Doe sprac Reynaert: 'Ic hebbe mesdaen
 jeghen alle diere die leven.
 Bidt Gode dat hijt mi moete vergheven.
 Ic dede minen oem Brune
 al bloedich maken sine crune.
 1465 Tybeert dede ic muse vaen
 daer ickene zeere dede slaen
 tes papen huus, daer hi spranc int *strec*.
 Ic hebbe ghedaen groet ongherec
 Canticleer ende sine kindre:
 1470 waren si meerre ofte mindre,
 dicken makedicse los.
 Dor recht beclaghet hi den vos.
 Die coninc en es mi oec niet ontgaen.
 Ic hebbe hem toren oec ghedaen
 1475 ende mesprijs der coninghinne,
 dat si spade sullen verwinnen
 also vele eeren van mi.
 Oec hebbic, dat segghic di,
 Grimbeert, mee liede bedroghen
 1480 dan ic di soude ghesegghen moghen.

1452-59 The standard formula to begin a confession is: 'Confiteor, pater, peccavi' ('I confess, father, for I have sinned'). Reynaert corrupts the Latin and continues in the vernacular. The badger holds the corrupt Latin for French. Both animals are treated ironically here.

'I am well aware of it,' Reynaert said.
 'Grimbeert, now listen carefully
 and advise me, please.
 1450 See, I come to you for absolution
 for all my offences.
 Listen, now, Grimbeert, and take note:
 Confiteor pater, mater,
 that I have wronged
 1455 the otter and the cat and every animal.
 Of that I desire to cleanse myself through confession.'
 Grimbeert said: 'Uncle, are you speaking French?
 If you please, speak to me
 in Dutch, so I can understand it.'
 1460 Then Reynaert said: 'I have misbehaved
 towards all living animals.
 Pray God that he may pardon me.
 I caused my uncle Bruun
 to end up with a very bloody crown.
 1465 I induced Tybeert to catch mice
 where I had him badly beaten,
 at the priest's house, where he jumped into the snare.
 I have caused Canticleer
 and his children much grief:
 1470 whether there were many or few,
 often I made away with them.
 He is right to accuse the fox for it.
 Nor did the king escape me.
 I caused him distress
 1475 and the queen such great shame
 that it will be a long time
 before they get as much honour from me.
 Also I have – I am telling you,
 Grimbeert – cheated more persons
 1480 than I could tell you.

1473-77 After Reynaert has admitted his cruel treatment of Bruun, Tybeert and Canticleer, he confesses a heinous deed against Nobel and his wife. What event the fox is alluding to is not altogether clear. Perhaps Reynaert is thinking of his rape of the queen, described in branch Ia of the *Roman de Renart*. Cf. Martin 1882-1887, 1783-1800.

Ende Ysengrijn, dat verstaet,
 hiet ic oem dor baraet.
 Ic maectene moonc ter Elmaren,
 daer wi beede begheven waren.
 1485 Dat wart hem al te zeere te pinen.
 Ic dede hem an die clockelijnen
 binden beede sine voete.
 Dat luden wart hem doe so soete
 dat hijt emmer wilde leeren.
 1490 Dat verghinc hem tonneeren,
 want hi luudde so utermaten [201va]
 dat alle die ghinghen bi der straten
 ende waren binnen der Elmare,
 waenden dat die duvel ware
 1495 ende liepen daer si luden hoerden.
 Eer hi doe conste in corten woerden
 ghespreken "Ic wille mi begheven,"
 hadsi hem na ghenomen tleven.
 Sint dedic hem crune gheven.
 1500 Hem maechs ghedincken al zijn leven,
 dat weetic wel over waer.
 Ic dede hem afbernen dat haer,
 sodat hem die zwaerde cramp.
 Sint dedic hem meerren scamp
 1505 up thijs, daer icken leerde visschen,
 daer hi *niene* conste ontwisschen.
 Hi ontfincker meneghen slach.
 Sint leeddickene up eenen dach

1481-82 The fact that Reynaert calls the wolf 'uncle' is a feature found in many branches of the *Roman de Renart*. The animals are supposed to be related and the wolf is considered to be superior in status to the fox. The fox addresses Ysingrijn in this way to win his confidence. Even though the wolf is deceived time and time again, he continues to believe in his pseudo-nephew's sincerity.

1483-98 It is likely that Willem put together the succinct story of the wolf who has joined a monastic order and, tied to the bell rope, rings the bells and is maltreated, from narrative elements found in various branches of the *Roman de Renart*. In a number of Old French narratives an animal is made a monk, and other tales refer to the ringing of the bells. It is only in branch VIII of the *Roman de Renart* that the two elements occur together: Ysingrijn is made a monk and is maltreated after having rung the bells. Cf. Martin 1882-1887, 119-134. On the monastery of Elmare, see the note to 373.

And Ysingrijn, understand me well,
 I called uncle for a deception.
 I made him a monk in Elmare
 which we had both entered.
 1485 That led to a painful time for him.
 I had him tie his two feet
 to the bell ropes.
 Ringing the bells he liked so much then
 that he was eager to practice it.
 1490 That caused him great shame,
 for he rang the bells so loudly
 that all who were walking outside in the street
 and all who were inside Elmare
 thought that it was the devil
 1495 and ran to where they heard the bells ringing.
 Then, before he could quickly say
 "I want to enter the order",
 they had just about taken his life.
 Subsequently I gave him a tonsure.
 1500 He will remember it all his life,
 I am sure of that.
 I burned away his hair
 as a result of which his scalp shrivelled up.
 Later I caused him more disgrace
 1505 on the ice, where I taught him to fish
 in a place where he could not escape.
 There he received a severe hiding.
 At a later time I took him one day

1499-1503 Reynaert refers to an adventure told in branch III of the *Roman de Renart* (cf. Martin 1882-1887, 165-372). There the fox persuades the hungry wolf that he can have an abundance of delicious eels to eat if he decides to become a monk. When Ysingrijn declares that he wants to join the order, the fox gives him a tonsure by scalding him with boiling water, causing the skin to peel off his scalp.

1504-7 The story of the fishing expedition on the ice features in several branches of the *Roman de Renart*. In branch III the adventure immediately follows the tale of the tonsure (cf. Martin 1882-1887, 373-510). One winter the fox makes the wolf believe that he can catch fish by hanging his tail, with a bucket tied to its end, in a hole in the ice. The next morning the wolf finds his tail frozen fast in the ice. He is assaulted by a passing nobleman and his pack of dogs (cf. pp. 30-31).

1508-1605 The story of Ysingrijn's misfortune in the barn of the priest of the (unknown)

- tote des papen van *Bloys*.
 1510 In al dat lant van Vermendoys
 so en woende gheen pape riker.
 Die selve pape hadde eenen spijker
 daer menich vet bake in lach.
 Des haddic dicken goet ghelach.
 1515 Onder dien spijker haddic een gat
 verholenlike ghemaect. In dat,
 daer dedic Ysingrijn incrupen.
 Daer vant hi rentvleesch in cupen
 ende baken hanghende vele.
 1520 Des vleesch dedi dor sine kele
 so vele gheliden utermaten.
 Als hi weder huten gate
 waende keeren huter noet,
 hem was dien leeden buuc so groet
 1525 dat hi beclaghede zijn ghewin.
 Daer hi was commen ongherich in,
 ne condi *sat* niet commen huut.
 Ic liep, ic maecte groet gheluut
 int dorp ende maecte groet gherochte.
 1530 Nu hoert wat ic daer toebrochte.
 Ic liep aldaer die pape zat
 te ziere taflen ende hat.
 Die pape hadde eenen cappoen, [201vb]
 dat was dat alrebeste hoen
 1535 dat men in al dat lant vant.
 Hi was ghewent al toter hant.
 Dien prandic in minen mont
 voer die tafle daer hi stont,
 aldaert die pape toesach.
 1540 Doe riep die pape: “Nu *vanc*, slach!

village of Bloys consists of two parts. First the tale is told how the wolf, having entered the barn through a gap, gobbled up so much meat that he got stuck on trying to leave. Next Reynaert led the villagers to Ysingrijn by stealing the priest's cock. For the second story Willem may have made use of the *Ysengrimus*, in which, by stealing a cock, the fox leads a priest and the congregation to the wolf, who at that moment is stuck in the ice by his tail (cf. Mann 1987, book 1, 529, and book 2, 158). Just how false Reynaert's feelings of remorse are, is evident from

to the priest of Blois.
 1510 In the entire region of Vermendois
 there was not a richer priest.
 This particular priest had a larder
 where many sides of good bacon were stored.
 I often had a good taste of them.
 1515 Under the larder I had made a hole
 in a hidden place. Into that hole,
 that is where I made Ysengrijn crawl in.
 There he found beef in barrels
 and many sides of bacon hanging up.
 1520 He bolted down an enormous
 amount of meat.
 When he thought to return
 to safety back through the hole,
 his damn belly had become so big
 1525 that he regretted what he had gained.
 The place he had entered hungry
 he could not leave now he was full.
 I ran away; I made a lot of noise
 in the village and made a great racket.
 1530 Now hear how I brought that about.
 I went to where the priest
 was at table, eating his dinner.
 The priest had a capon,
 it was the very best chicken
 1535 to be found anywhere in the region.
 It was quite used to being hand fed.
 That one I grabbed with my mouth
 while it stood before the table,
 before the priest's eyes.
 1540 Then the priest shouted: "Quick, grab him, hit him!"

the obvious pleasure with which he describes the way the wolf is attacked.

1510 Vermendois is a county in Northern France that belonged for some time (1156-1186) to the county of Flanders. It has been suggested that the *lant van Vermendoys* is a concise reference to the area of Oostkerke, between Bruges and Sluis, where the abbey of St.-Quentin (located in the county of Vermendois) had certain possessions.

1527 What is meant here is that the wolf has got stuck.

Helpe! Wie sach dit wonder nye?
 Die vos comt daer ic toezye
 ende roeft mi in *mijn* huus.
 So helpe mi Sancta Spiritus.
 1545 Te wers hem dat hire quam!”
 Dat tafelmes hi upnam
 ende stac de tafle dat so vloech
 verre boven mi arde hoech
 in middenwaerde up den vloer.
 1550 Hi vloucte zeere ende zwoer
 ende hi riep lude “Slach!” ende “Va!”
 Ende ic voeren ende hi na.
 Sijn tafelmes haddi verheven
 ende brochte mi ghedreven
 1555 up Ysingrijn daer hi stont.
 Ic hadde dat hoen in minen mont,
 dat arde groet was ende zwaer.
 Dat so moest ic laten daer,
 waest mi leet ofte lief.
 1560 Doe riep die pape: “Ay, heere dief,
 ghi moet den roef hier laten!”
 Hi riep ende ic ghinc miere straten
 danen, daer ic wesen woude.
 Alse die pape upheffen soude
 1565 dat hoen, sach hi Ysingrine.
 Doe naecte hem eene grote pine.
 Hi warpene int hoeghe metten messe.
 Den pape volchden si zesse,
 die alle met groeten staven quamen.
 1570 Ende als si Ysingrijn vernamen,
 doe maecten si een groet gheloot
 ende die ghebuere quamen huut
 ende maecten grote niemare
 manlic andren, dat daer ware
 1575 in spapen spijker een wulf ghevaen, [202ra]
 die hem selven hadde ghevaen
 bi den buke in dat gat.

1544 The priest invokes the Holy Spirit in corrupt Latin: ‘Sancta Spiritus’ instead of

Help! Whoever saw a marvel like this?
 Even as I watch that fox comes in
 and robs me in my house.
 So help me Sancta Spiritus.
 1545 It will be the worse for him for coming here!"
 He grabbed the table knife
 and knocked against the table so that
 it flew high over my head
 and came down in the middle of the floor.
 1550 He swore heavily and raged
 and shouted loudly "Hit him!" and "Grab him!"
 And I was off and he after me.
 His table knife he held up high
 and he chased me
 1555 to where Ysingrijn was standing.
 In my mouth I had the chicken
 which was very big and heavy.
 I had to leave it there,
 whether I wanted to or not.
 1560 Then the priest shouted: "There, sir thief,
 you have to leave your spoils behind here!"
 He shouted and I made off
 and went on my way.
 When the priest was about to pick up
 1565 the chicken, he spotted Ysingrijn.
 Then great trouble was in store for him.
 The priest threw the knife, hitting him in the eye.
 Six men followed the priest,
 who all came carrying big clubs.
 1570 And when they saw Ysingrijn
 they made a lot of noise
 and the neighbours came out of their houses
 and told one another about the big news
 that there was caught
 1575 in the priest's larder a wolf
 that had got itself trapped
 by its belly in the hole.

'Spiritus Sanctus', thus highlighting his virtual illiteracy.

Als die ghebuere ghevreescheden dat,
liepen si dat wonder bescauwen.
1580 Aldaer wart Ysingrijn teblauwen,
sodat hem ghinc al hutten spele,
want hi ontfincker arde vele
groete slaghe ende groete worpe.
Dus quamen die kindre van den dorpe
1585 ende verbonden hem die hoghen.
Het stont hem so, hi moest ghedoghen.
So zeere slouchsi ende staken
dat sine hutten gate traken.
Doe ghedoghedu vele onghevals.
1590 Ende bonden hem an sinen hals
eene steen ende lietene gaen
ende lietene *dien* honden saen,
diene ghinghen bassen ende jaghen.
Oec diende men hem met groten slaghen
1595 so langhe dat hi ghelove was.
Doe viel hi neder up dat gras
of hi ware al steendoot.
Doe was die kindre bliscap groot.
Ghindre was groete niemare.
1600 Si namene ende leidene up eene bare
ende droughene met groten ghehuke
over steene ende over struke.
Buten dien dorpe in eene gracht
bleef hi liggende al dien nacht.
1605 Inne weet hoe hi danen voer.
Sint verwervic dat hi mi zwoer
sine hulde een jaer al omtrent.
Dat dedi up sulc convent
dat icken soude maken hoenre sat.
1610 Doe leeddickene in eene stat
daer ic hem dede te verstante
dat twee hinnen ende eene hane
in een groet huus an eene straten

1602 This is the waste land outside the village.

1606-45 The story of Ysingrijn's failed chicken theft from a house where the wolf falls off a roof beam as a result of Reynaert's machinations, is an adventure not found anywhere in the *Roman de*

When the neighbours heard that
 they came to see that marvel.
 1580 There Ysingrijn was beaten,
 so that it was no fun for him at all,
 for he received many hard blows there
 and big stones that were thrown at him.
 Then the children from the village came along
 1585 and blindfolded him.
 He had little choice, he had to allow it.
 So violently did they beat and stab him
 that they managed to pull him out of the hole.
 Then he had to suffer a great deal of misery.
 1590 And they tied a stone
 to his neck and let him go
 and at once set the dogs on him,
 that barked at him and chased him.
 He was also treated to severe beatings
 1595 for such a long time that he became exhausted.
 Then he fell down on the grass
 as if he were as dead as a stone.
 Then the children were overjoyed.
 There was much excitement all round.
 1600 They picked him up and laid him on a bier
 and carried him with much clamour
 across a stony and scrubby waste land.
 Outside the village in a ditch
 he lay all that night.
 1605 I don't know how he got away from there.
 Afterwards I managed to make him
 swear his friendship for an entire year.
 He did this on condition
 that I would stuff him with chickens.
 1610 Then I led him to a place
 where I told him
 that, in a large house along the road,
 two hens and a cock

Renart. Willem probably composed this story, basing himself on traditional story elements like the nocturnal break-in and the entrapped burglar betraying his presence by the noise he makes.

1607 *sine hulde* refers to Ysingrijn's loyalty as a vassal.

up eenen aenbalke saten,
 1615 recht teere valdore bi.
 Daer dedic Ysingrijn bi mi
 up dat huus clemmen boven. [202rb]
 Ic seide, ic wilde hem gheloven,
 wildi crupen in die valdore,
 1620 dat hire soude vinden vore
 van vetten hoenren sijn ghevouch.
 Ter valdore ghinc hi ende louch
 ende croep daerin met vare
 ende began tasten harenthare.
 1625 Hi taste ende als hi niet en vant,
 sprac hi: "Neve, hets hier bewant
 te zorghen, ic ne vinder niet."
 Ic sprac: "Oem, wats hu ghesciets?
 Cruupter een lettelt bet in!
 1630 Men moet wel pijnen om ghewin.
 Ic hebse wech diere saten voren."
 Dus so liet hi hem verdoren,
 dat hi die hoenre te verre sochte.
 Ic sach dat icken hoenen mochte
 1635 ende *hortene* so dat hi voer
 van daerboven up den vloer
 ende gaf eenen groeten val,
 dat si ontspronghen overal
 die in dien huse sliepen.
 1640 Die bi den viere laghen, si riepen,
 daer ware in huus si ne wisten wat
 ghevallen voer dat *vyergat*.
 Si worden up ende ontstaken lecht.
 Doe sine daer saghen echt,
 1645 wart hi ghewont toter doot.
 Ic hebben brocht in menegher noot,
 meer dan ic ghesegghen mochte.
 Nochtan, al dat ic nye ghewrochte

1648-69 Reynaert had sexual intercourse with the she-wolf twice: the first time she committed adultery, the second time he raped her (see note to 72-77). The fox's confession concerns the adultery, which, as he states in cryptic terms (1654-55), he would like to repeat

were sitting on a roof beam
 1615 right next to a trapdoor.
 There I made Ysingrijn climb with me
 up to the top of that house.
 I said that I assured him that
 if he would crawl in through the trapdoor,
 1620 he would find just inside
 as many fat hens as he liked.
 Laughing he went to the trapdoor
 and carefully crawled through
 and began to grope around here and there.
 1625 He groped around and when he did not find anything
 he said: "Nephew, I fear there is something
 wrong, I can find nothing here."
 I said: "Uncle, what's up with you?
 Crawl a little further in!
 1630 One needs to take trouble to succeed.
 I have taken away the ones sitting at the front."
 In this way he let himself be fooled
 and looked for the chickens too far off.
 I saw that I could play a nasty trick on him
 1635 and pushed him so that he fell
 from up there on to the floor
 and his fall was so loud
 that everyone woke up
 who was asleep in the house.
 1640 Those who were lying by the fire shouted
 that something in the house, they did not know what,
 had dropped in front of the fireplace.
 They got up and made light.
 When they next saw him there,
 1645 he was given mortal injuries.
 I have brought great trouble on him,
 more than I can say.
 But all the things that I ever perpetrated

some time. This makes it clear once again that Reynaert's confession is insincere. The badger reacts like a serious confessor, not as someone secretly enjoying the story in all its details. His serious attitude is evident from his admonitions in 1678-87.

jeghen hem, so ne roucke ic niet
 1650 so zeere, als dat ic verriet
 vrouwe Yswenden, sijn scone wijf,
 die hi liever hadde dan sijns selfs lijf.
 God die moet mi vergheven.
 Haer dedic dat mi liever ware bleven
 1655 te doene dant es ghedaen.’
 Grimbeert sprac: ‘Of ghi wilt gaen
 claeliken te biechten tote mi
 ende zijn van huwen zonden vry,
 so suldi spreken ombedect. [202va]
 1660 In weet waerwaert ghi dit trect:
 “Ic hebbe jeghen sijn wijf mesdaen.”
 Oem, dat en can ic niet verstaen,
 waer ghi dese tale keert.’
 Reynaert sprac: ‘Neve Grimbeert,
 1665 ware dat hoofschede groot
 of ic hadde gheseit al bloot:
 “Ic hebbe gheslapen bi miere moyen”?
 Ghi zijt mijn maech, hu souts vernoyen
 seidic eeneghe dorperheit.
 1670 Grimbeert, nu hebbic hu gheseit
 al dat mi mach ghedincken nu.
 Gheeft mi afaet, dat biddic hu,
 ende settet mi dat hu dinct goet.’
 Grimbeert was wijs ende vroet
 1675 ende brac een rijs van eere haghe
 ende gaffer mede XL slaghe
 over alle sine mesdaden.
 Daerna, in gherechten raden,
 riet hi hem goet te wesene
 1680 ende te wakene ende te lesene
 ende te vastene ende te vierne
 ende te weghe waert te stierne
 alle die hi buten weghe saghe

1654-55 Reynaert’s comment is ambiguous. He seems to be saying that he did something to the she-wolf that he would sooner not have done, but his words can also be taken to mean that he would prefer still having to do what he is referring to, rather than having already accomplished it.

1650 against him I do not regret so much
 as the fact that I betrayed him with
 Lady Haersint, his beautiful wife,
 whom he loved more than his own life.
 May God forgive me!
 With her I did something I like having to do better
 1655 than having done it.'

Grimbeert said: 'If you want to
 confess sincerely to me
 and be free from your sins,
 you must speak openly.
 1660 I do not know what you mean with:
 "I have behaved badly towards his wife".
 Uncle, I do not understand
 what you mean with these words.'
 Reynaert said: 'Nephew Grimbeert,
 1665 would it be very civilised
 if I had bluntly said:
 "I have slept with my aunt"?
 You are my relative, it would disturb you
 if I used a coarse expression.
 1670 Grimbeert, now I have told you
 all that I can remember at present.
 Give me absolution, I pray you,
 and set me the penance that you think fitting.'

Grimbeert was wise and sensible
 1675 and broke a twig off a bush
 and gave Reynaert forty stripes with it
 for all his transgressions.
 Afterwards he urgently
 advised him to be good
 1680 and to wake and to pray
 and to fast and to attend
 and to point the right way
 to all those he would see stray

1675-76 The forty stripes or blows which the fox has had administered by Grimbeert are in accordance with ecclesiastical usage, based on the Bible (*Deut.* 25, 3 and *2 Cor.* 11, 24).

1681 *te vierne* means to observe holy days.

ende hi voert alle sine daghe
 1685 behandelike soude gheneeren.
 Hierna so dedi hem verzwereen
 beede roven ende stelen.
 Nu moet hi siere sielen pleghen,
 Reynaert, bi Grimbeerts rade,
 1690 ende ghinc te hove up ghenade.
 Nu es die biechte ghedaen.
 Die heeren hebben den wech bestaen
 tote des conincs hove waert.
 Nu was buter rechter vaert
 1695 dien si te gane hadden begonnen
 een pryoreit van zwarten nonnen,
 daer meneghe gans ende menich hoen,
 meneghe hinne, menich cappoen
 plaghen te weedene buten muere.
 1700 Dit wiste die felle creatuere,
 die onghetrauwe Reynaert,
 ende sprac: 'Te ghenen hove waert [202vb]
 so leghet onse rechte strate.'
 Met dusdanen barate
 1705 leedde hi Grimbeert bi der scueren,
 daer die hoenre buten muere
 ghinghen weeden harenthare.
 Den hoenre wart Reynaert gheware.
 Sine oghen begonden omme te ghane.
 1710 Buten den andren ghinc een hane
 die arde vet was ende jonc.
 Daerna gaf Reynaert eenen spronc,
 sodat dien hane die plumen stoven.
 Grimbeert sprac: 'Oem, ghi dinct mi doven!
 1715 Onsalich man, wat wildi doen?
 Wildi noch om een hoen
 in alle die groete zonden slaen
 daer ghi te biechten af zijt ghegaen?

1694-1748 Reynaert attempts to steal one of the convent's chickens but is stopped just in time by Grimbeert, who reprimands him severely. The narrator leaves no doubt about Reynaert's evil intentions (1700-7). The fox strays from the straight and narrow

and for the rest of his days
 1685 to make an honest living.
 After this he made him abjure
 both robbing and stealing.
 Now Reynaert has to look after his soul
 following Grimbeert's advice,
 1690 and he went to court in the hope of mercy.
 Now the confession is over.
 The two lords went on their way
 to the king's court.
 Now beside the straight road
 1695 they had started out on,
 there was a priory of black nuns
 where many a goose and many chickens,
 many a hen, many capons
 used to range for food outside the walls.
 1700 The scoundrel knew this,
 that devious Reynaert,
 and said: 'Towards that court
 the straight road leads us.'
 With this deception
 1705 he led Grimbeert to the barn,
 where, outside the walls, the hens
 were pecking here and there.
 Reynaert noticed the hens.
 His eyes began to rove around.
 1710 At a distance from the others walked a cockerel
 that was very fat and young.
 Reynaert leapt in its direction,
 scattering the cockerel's feathers.
 Grimbeert said: 'Uncle, I think you're mad!
 1715 Misguided man, what are you doing?
 Do you want for the sake of a chicken
 to lapse into all the great sins
 which you have just confessed?

immediately after his confession (cf. 1694, 1747 and p. 23-24) and is clearly, therefore, a hypocrite.

1702 *hove* refers to the convent's garden.

- Dat moet hu wel zeere rauwen!’
 1720 Reynaert sprac: ‘Bi rechter trauwen,
 ic hads vergheten, lieve neve.
 Bidt Gode dat hijt mi vergheve.
 Het ne ghesciet mi nemmermeer.’
 Doe daden si eenen wederkeer
 1725 over eene smale brugghe.
 Hoe dicken sach Reynaert achter rugghe
 weder daer die hoenre ghinghen!
 Hi ne conste hem niet bedwinghen,
 hi ne moeste ziere zeden pleghen.
 1730 Al hadde men hem thoeft afgheslegghen,
 het ware ten hoenren waert ghevlogghen
 also verre alst hadde ghemogghen.
 Grimbeert sach dit ghelaet
 ende seide: ‘Onreyne vraet,
 1735 dat hu dat hoghe so ommeget!’
 Reynaert andwoerde: ‘Ghi doet quaet
 dat ghi mine herte so *verseert*
 ende mine bede dus verstorbeert.
 Laet mi doch lesen II paternoster
 1740 der hoenre zielen van den cloester
 ende den gansen te ghenaden,
 die ic dicken hebbe verraden,
die ic desen helegghen nonnen
 met miere lust af hebbe ghewonnen.’
 1745 Grimbeert balch, newaer Reynaert [203ra]
 hadde emmer zine oghen achterwaert,
 tes si quamen ter rechter straten
die si tevoren hadden gelaten.
 1750 Daer keerde si te hove waert
 1749 ende arde zeere beefde Reynaert,
 doe hi began den hove naken,
 daer hi waende seere mesraken.

1744 *lust* is ambiguous, meaning both clever trick and physical desire.

That you will regret dearly!
1720 Reynaert said: 'In all truth,
I had forgotten it, dear nephew.
Pray God he may forgive it me.
It shall never happen again.'
Then they turned back
1725 across a narrow bridge.
How often did Reynaert look back
to where the chickens were!
He could not restrain himself,
he had to follow his instincts.
1730 Even if they had knocked off his head,
it would have flown to the hens,
as far as it possibly could.
Grimbeert noticed this behaviour
and said: 'Filthy glutton,
1735 for having such a roving eye!'
Reynaert answered: 'You are doing wrong
by hurting my feelings so
and by disturbing my prayer.
Allow me to recite two pater nosters
1740 for the salvation of the souls of the convent's
hens and geese,
which I have frequently attacked
and which I have often caught
by tricking these pious nuns.'
1745 Grimbeert was angry, but Reynaert
kept looking back,
until they arrived at the straight road
that they earlier had left.
1750 There they turned towards the court
1749 and Reynaert trembled very much
when he approached the court
where, he feared, he would fare very badly.

Doe in sconinx hof was vernomen
dat Reynaert ware te hove comen
1755 met Grimbeerde den das,
ic wane daer niemene ne was
so arem no van so crancken maghen,
hi ne ghereedde hem up een claghen.
Dit was al jeghen Reynaerde.
1760 Nochtan dedi als die onvervaerde,
hoe so hem te moede was,
ende hi sprac te Grimbeerte den das:
'Leedet ons die hoechste strate.'
Reynaerd ghinc in dien ghelate
1765 ende in also bouden ghebare
ghelijc of hi sconinx sone ware
ende hi niet en hadde mesdaen.
Boudeliken ghinc hi staen
voer Nobele dien coninc
1770 ende sprac: 'God die alle dinc
gheboet, hi gheve hu, coninc heere,
langhe bliscap ende eere!
Ic groet hu, coninc, ende hebbe recht.
En hadde nye coninc eenen knecht
1775 so ghetrauwe jeghen hem
als ic oyt was ende bem.
Dat es dicken worden anschijn.
Nochtan die sulke die hier zijn,
1780 *souden* mi nochtan gherne roven
huwer hulden, wilde ghi hem gheloven.
Maer neen, ghi niet. God moete hu lonen!
Het ne betaemt niet der cronen
dat si den scalken ende den fellen
te lichte gheloven dat si vertellen.
1785 Nochtan willics Gode claghen:
dier es te vele in onsen daghen

1773-95 Reynaert pretends to be one of the king's loyal vassals. The adoption of this stance is connected with the trick which he later uses to deceive Nobel. In the same way as Bruun and Ysin-

Conviction and reconciliation

When it became known at the king's court
 that Reynaert had arrived at court
 1755 with Grimbeert the badger,
 I reckon there was no one
 – however poor or of inferior family –
 who did not prepare himself for a complaint.
 All this was aimed at Reynaert.
 1760 Nevertheless he acted as if he had nothing to fear,
 whatever his real feelings,
 and he said to Grimbeert the badger:
 'Lead us along the high street.'
 Reynaert presented an attitude
 1765 and such bold behaviour
 that it looked as if he were the king's son
 and had done nothing wrong at all.
 Boldly he took up his position
 in front of Nobel the king
 1770 and said: 'God who has created
 everything, may he give you, Lord King,
 enduring joy and honour!
 I greet you, king, as is only right.
 Never did a king have a servant
 1775 as loyal towards him
 as I am and have ever been.
 This has often become clear.
 Yet some of those who are here
 would with pleasure rob me
 1780 of your favour, if you were willing to believe them.
 But no, not you. God reward you!
 It is not fitting for crowned heads
 to put credence too lightly
 in tales told by false counsellors and villains.
 1785 Yet I wish to complain of this to God:
 there are in this day and age too many plotters

grijn are deluded by promises of honey and mice, the fox will make Nobel believe that he has escaped a conspiracy and that it is Reynaert, his most devoted servant, whom he has to thank for it.

- der scalke die wroughen connen, [203rb]
 die *nu* ter rechter hant hebben ghewonnen
 overal in rike hove.
 1790 Dien sal men niet gheloven.
 Die scalcheit es hem binnen gheboren,
 dat si den goeden lieden doen toren.
 Dat wreke God up haer leven
 ende moete hem eewelike gheven
 1795 al sulken loen als si zijn waert!
 Die coninc sprac: 'O wy, Reynaert!
 O wy, Reynaert, onreyne quaet,
 wat condi al scone ghelaet!
 Dat en can hu niet ghehelpen een caf.
 1800 Nu comt huwes smeekens af.
 In werde bi smeekene niet hu vrient.
 Hets waer, ghi sout mi hebben ghedient
 van eere saken in den woude,
 daer ghi qualic in hebt ghehouden
 1805 die eede die ic hadde ghezworen.'
 'O wy, wat hebbic al verloren!
 sprac Canticleer, die daer stont.
 Die coninc sprac: 'Hout huwen mont,
 heere Canticleer, nu laet mi spreken;
 1810 laet mi antwoerden sinen treken.
 Ay, heere dief Reynaert,
 dat ghi mi lief hebt ende waert,
 dat hebdi sonder huwe pine
 mine boden laten anschine:
 1815 arem man Tybeert, heere Brune,
 die noch bloedich es zijn crune!
 Ic ne sal hu niet scelden;
 ic waent hu kele sal ontghelden
 noch heden al up eene wijle.'
 1820 'Nomine patrum, christum filye!
 sprac Reynaert, 'of mijn heere Brune
 noch al bloedich es die crune,

1820 After Nobel's furious reaction Reynaert begins his answer with a garbled formula used when making the sign of the cross (here to ward off approaching evil): In nomine Patris,

capable of making false accusations
 who now have gained the upper hand
 everywhere at powerful courts.
 1790 They should not be believed.
 Villainy is their nature;
 as a result they cause all good people distress.
 May God revenge it upon their lives
 and may He give them in eternity
 1795 such reward as they deserve!’
 The king said: ‘Woe upon you, Reynaert!
 Woe, Reynaert, foul piece of evil,
 what a fine front you put on!
 That will not help you one bit now.
 1800 Stop your flattery now.
 Flattery won’t make me your friend.
 The truth is that you should have served me
 concerning a certain affair in the wood,
 whereas you did not keep
 1805 to the peace that I had proclaimed.’
 – ‘Alas, to think of all I have lost!’
 said Cantecler, who was standing there.
 The king said: ‘Hold your tongue,
 Lord Cantecler, now let me speak;
 1810 let me respond to his nasty tricks.
 Well, Lord villain Reynaert,
 that you love and respect me,
 this you have shown without much trouble
 to my messengers:
 1815 poor Tybeert and Lord Bruun
 whose crown is still covered in blood!
 I shall not find fault about it with you;
 I suspect that your throat will suffer for it
 even today, before long.’
 1820 ‘*Nomine patrum, christum filye!*’
 Reynaert said, ‘If my Lord Bruun’s crown
 is still bloody all over,

et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti (‘in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost’). The fox’s words mean something like ‘in the name of the Fathers and Christ the Son’.

- 1822a *her coninc, wat bestaet mi dat?*
 1822b *Of hi Lamfreits honich at*
 1822c *ende hem die dorper laster dede,*
 1822d *noch heft Brune so grote lede.*
 Was hi teblauwen of versproken,
 waer hi goet, hi ware ghewroken
 1825 eer hi noint vloe int water.
 Banderzijde: Tybeert die cater,
 dien ic herberghede ende ontfinc,
 of hi hute om stelen ghinc
 tes papen sonder minen raet [203va]
 1830 ende hem die pape dede quaet,
 bi Gode, soudic dat ontghelden?
 So mochtic mijn gheluc wel scelden!
 Voert sprac Reynaert: 'Coninc lyoen,
 wien twifelt des, ghi ne moghet doen
 1835 dat ghi ghebiet over mi?
 Hoe groot mine *sake* zi,
 ghi moghet mi vromen ende scaden.
 Wildi mi zieden ofte braden
 ofte hanghen ofte blenden,
 1840 ic ne mach hu niet ontwenden.
 Alle diere zijn in hu bedwanc.
 Ghi zijt groet ende ic bem cranc.
 Mine hulp es cleene ende dhuwe groet.
 Bi Gode, al slouchdi mi doot,
 1845 dat ware eene crancke wrake.'
 Recht in dese selve sprake
 doe spranc up Belin de ram
 ende sine hye, die met hem quam;
 dat was dame Hawy.
 1850 Belin sprac: 'Gawy
 alle voert met onser claghen.'
 Bruun spranc up met sinen maghen
 ende Tybeert die felle

1845 Reynaert means that if he were to be executed, this would be retribution unworthy of a mighty king.

1846-85 Having listed the plaintiffs who have the fox taken prisoner in the king's presence (1846-67), the narrator summarizes the account of Reynaert's trial and conviction

1822a Lord King, what's that to me?
 1822b Even if he did eat Lamfroyt's honey
 1822c and even if those peasants did beat him up,
 1822d surely Bruun is big and strong enough.
 When he was beaten or ridiculed,
 he should, had he been brave, have revenged himself
 1825 before finally escaping into the water.
 And then: that Tybeert the cat,
 whom I received hospitably,
 went out stealing
 at the priest's house against my advice
 1830 and was badly treated by the priest,
 by God! am I to suffer for it?
 Then I can really say goodbye to my luck!
 Reynaert continued: 'King Lion,
 who doubts that you can do
 1835 whatever you command with me?
 However strong my case,
 you can make or break me.
 Whether you want to boil or roast
 or hang or blind me,
 1840 I cannot escape you.
 All animals are in your power.
 You are mighty and I am weak.
 I get little support and you get much.
 By God, if you put me to death,
 1845 that would be a poor revenge.'
 Just as this was being said
 Belin the ram jumped up
 and his ewe that accompanied him;
 that was Lady Hawy.
 1850 Belin said: 'Let all of us
 present our charges.'
 Bruun jumped up with his relatives
 and nasty Tybeert

in a few lines (1868-85, and see pp. 24-25). This summary will be followed by an extensive description of Reynaert's escape from execution, which numbers more than four hundred lines (2052-2490). In this way the emphasis is on the lies with which the fox will gain Nobel's favour.

- ende Ysingrijn sijn gheselle,
 1855 *Fortadent* dat everzwijn
 ende die raven *Tiselijn*,
 Pancer die bever, och Bruneel,
 dat watervar, dat butseel,
 ende dat eencoren, heere Rosseel,
 1860 die *wesel*, *mijn* vrouwe Fine,
 – Cantecler ende die kindre zine
 makeden groten vederslach –
 dat foret Cleenebejach,
 liepen alle in dese scare.
 1865 Alle dese ghinghen openbare
 voer haren heere den coninc staen
 ende daden Reynaerde vaen.
 Nu ghinct ghindre up een playdieren.
 Nye hoerde man van dieren
 1870 so scone tale als nu es hier
 tusschen Reynaerde ende dandre dier [203vb]
 1871 a *orconde denghenen die dat horden!*
 1871 b *Soudic die tale entie worden*
 voertbringhen die men brochte daer,
 het ware mi pijnlic ende zwaer.
 Daeromme corte ic hu de woort.
 1875 Die beste redenen ghinghen daer voort.
 Die claghen die de dieren ontbonden,
 proufden si met goeden orconden,
 als si sculdich waren te doene.
 Die coninc dreef die hoeghe baroene
 1880 te vonnesse van Reynaerts saken.
 Doe wijsden si dat men soude maken
 eene galghe, sterc ende vast,
 ende men Reynaerde den fellen gast
 daeran hinghe bi ziere kelen.
 1885 Nu gaet Reynaerde al hutten spele!
 Doe Reynaert verordeelt was,

1886-1914 Grimbeert leaves the court with Reynaert's relatives; they disagree with the verdict of the death sentence (1886-93). If a conflict with this group were to arise, this would certainly undermine Nobel's position, as he is dependent on his vassals. However, a death sentence has been pronounced that cannot easily be ignored by Nobel, who, although he

and Ysingrijn his companion,
 1855 Fortadent the boar
 and Tiecelin the raven,
 Pancer the beaver, as well as Bruneel,
 the bittern, that shapeless bag,
 and the squirrel, Lord Rosseel,
 1860 the weasel, my Lady Fine,
 – Cantecleer and his children
 wildly flapped their wings –,
 the ferret Cleenebejach,
 they all joined the crowd.
 1865 All of them took up their positions
 before their lord the king
 and had Reynaert taken prisoner.
 Now the pleading started there.
 Never did anyone hear animals
 1870 utter such eloquent words as they did here
 in the case between Reynaert and the other animals,
 1871 a as witnessed by those who heard it!
 1871 b If I had to report the speeches and the words
 that were presented there,
 it would be difficult and troublesome for me.
 That is why I shall shorten the tale for you.
 1875 The best arguments were brought forward there.
 The charges that the animals presented
 were supported by reliable witnesses,
 as was expected of them.
 The king urged the mighty barons
 1880 to pronounce the verdict in Reynaert's case.
 Then they passed as their judgement
 that a gallows should be made, strong and solid,
 and that Reynaert, that felonious fellow,
 was to be hanged from it by his throat.
 1885 Now the game is up for Reynaert!
 When Reynaert had been sentenced,

administers justice and presides over the court of law, can pass no judgement: he is bound to pass sentence as his vassals *wijzen*, 'advise' (165-69). Facing this dilemma, the king – called *arde vroet*, 'very perceptive' (1894) – makes a veiled attempt at postponing the execution. In a pseudo-reproachful tone he addresses the executioners Ysingrijn and Bruun thus: 'how slow

orlof nam Grimbeert die das
 met Reynaerts naeste maghen:
 si ne consten niet verdraghen
 1890 no si ne consten niet ghedoghen,
 dat men Reynaerde voer haren oghen
 soude hanghen alse eenen dief.
 Nochtan waest hem somen lief.
 Die coninc, hi was arde vroet.
 1895 Doe hi mercte ende verstoet
 dat so menich jonghelinc
 met Grimbeerte huten hove ghinc,
 die Reynaerde na bestoet,
 doe peinsdi in sinen moet:
 1900 'Hier mach inloepen andren raet.
 Al es Reynaert selve quaet,
 hi hevet meneghen goeden maech.'
 Doe sprac hi: 'Twi sidi traech,
 Ysingrijn ende heere Bruun?
 1905 Reynaerde es cont menich tuun
 ende hets den avonde bi.
 Hier es Reynaert; ontsprinct hi,
 comt hi III voete huter noot,
 sinen lust die es so groot
 1910 ende hi weet so meneghen keer,
 hi ne wert ghevanghen tsjaermeer.
 Sal men hanghen, twi ne doet ment dan?
 Eer men nu ghereeden can [204ra]
 eene galghe, so eist nacht.'
 1915 Ysingrijn was wel bedacht
 ende sprac: 'Hier es een galghe bi.'
 Ende mettien woerde versuchte hi.
 Doe sprac die cater, heere Tybeert:
 'Heere Ysingrijn, hu es verzeert

you are (1903-4); surely you can see it is nearly evening and Reynaert is so familiar with the terrain that he would not be caught for a considerable time if he escaped (1905-11); if Reynaert is to hang, why don't you get on with it; it is now too late to hang him' (1913-14). The time of day is important as death sentences had to be executed before sun down. Nobel's indirect way of addressing the executioners is a tactical move according to this interpretation. For the first time in the story the king's interests and the interests of the barons do not

Grimbeert the badger took his leave
 with Reynaert's next of kin:
 they could neither bear to see
 1890 nor could they accept
 that Reynaert should before their eyes
 be hanged like a thief.
 Yet some it suited very well.
 The king now, he was very perceptive.
 1895 When he noticed and realized
 that many a youngster
 who was closely related to Reynaert
 left the court with Grimbeert,
 he thought to himself:
 1900 'Here something else needs to be considered.
 Even if Reynaert himself is wicked,
 he has many a good relative.'
 Then he said: 'Why do you dawdle,
 Ysingrijn and Lord Bruun?
 1905 Reynaert is familiar with many hedgerows
 and it is nearly evening.
 Here we have Reynaert; if he escapes,
 if he manages to get three feet of freedom,
 his cunning is so great
 1910 and he knows so many byways
 that he will never be caught in a year.
 If he is to hang, why is it not done?
 Before a gallows can be got
 ready now, it will be night.'
 1915 Ysingrijn had a thought
 and said: 'There is a gallows near here.'
 And with these words he sighed.
 Then the cat, Lord Tybeert, spoke:
 'Lord Ysingrijn, your heart

run completely parallel (see p. 25).

1905 The king means that Reynaert is acquainted with numerous hedgerows in which to hide.

1906 The second day, which started with Tybeert's return to court (cf. 1318-19) was spent delivering the third summons and with Reynart's trial and death sentence at court. Now it is nearly evening.

- 1920 hu herte, in wanconst hu niet.
 Nochtan Reynaert diet al beriet
 ende selve medeghinc
 daer men huwe twee broeders hinc,
 Rumen ende Wijdelancken.
- 1925 Hets tijt, wildijs hem dancken.
 Waerdi goet, het ware ghedaen,
 hi ne ware noch niet onverdaen.’
 Ysingrijn sprac tote Tybeert:
 ‘Wat ghi ons algader leert!
- 1930 Ne ghebrake ons niet een strop,
 langhe heden wist zijn crop
 wat zijn achterhende mochte wegghen.’
 Reynaerd, die langhe hadde gheswegghen,
 sprac: ‘Ghi heeren, cort mine pine.
- 1935 Tybeert heeft eene vaste lijne,
 die hi bejaghede, an sine kele,
 daer hi vernoys hadde vele
 int huus daer hi den pape beet,
 die voer hem stont al sonder cleet.
- 1940 Her Ysingrijn, nu maect hu voren;
 ende sisi nu daertoe vercoren,
 ende ghi, Brune, dat ghi sult dooden
 Reynaert huwen neve, den fellen roden!’
 Doe so sprac die coninc saen:
- 1945 ‘Doet Tybeerte medegaen.
 Hi mach clemmen. Hi mach de lijne
 updragghen sonder huwe pijn.
 Tybeert, gaet voren ende maect ghereet.
 Dat ghi yet let, dats mi leet.’
- 1950 Doe sprac Ysingrijn tote Brune:
 ‘So helpe mi de cloestercrone

1923-27 At Reynaert’s instigation two of the wolf’s brothers have in the past been hanged. A story of this kind is not found in the *Roman de Renart*. It is not clear whether Willem is alluding to a story not known today, or whether he invented the hanging.

1929 Ysingrijn means that Tybeert is talking nonsense.

1943 The intimation of friendly intimacy, *neve*, contrasts sharply with the characterization of Reynaert as a scoundrel.

1944 In redactions other than Comburg it is not the king but Reynaert who tells Tybeert

1920 is troubled, I shall not hold it against you.
 Yet it was Reynaert who had thought it all out
 and went along himself
 to where they hanged your two brothers,
 Rumen and Wijdelancken.
 1925 It's time that you thank him for it.
 If you were strong, it would be over by now,
 he would no longer be alive.'
 Ysingrijn said to Tybeert:
 'What would we do without your advice!
 1930 If we weren't short of a noose,
 his throat would long ago have known
 what his behind weighs.'
 Reynaert, who had long been silent,
 said: 'You lords, shorten my anguish.
 1935 Tybeert has a strong rope
 around his throat, which he acquired
 where he had much to endure
 in the house where he bit the priest
 who stood before him without any clothes.
 1940 Lord Ysingrijn, make haste now;
 after all you have been appointed,
 and you, Bruun, that you should kill
 Reynaert, your nephew, the red scoundrel!'

Then the king spoke at once:
 1945 'Let Tybeert go along.
 He can climb. He can take the rope
 to the top without the difficulty it would cause you.
 Tybeert, hurry and get it ready.
 It pains me to see you so slow.'
 1950 Then Ysingrijn said to Bruun:
 'May the tonsure

to accompany Bruun and Ysingrijn. The wolf's late and inadequate reaction (1953-54) suggests that the redaction in which the fox is the sole speaker is probably closer to the original. It is also primarily in Reynaert's interest that the cat – whom he will accuse a little later – leaves the scene.

1951-52 The wolf swears on his tonsure. This is reminiscent of one of his earlier mishaps. Reynaert scalded his scalp with boiling water, thus making the skin come off (see note to 1499-1503).

- die boven up mijn hoeft staet,
 in hoerde nye so goeden raet
 alse Reynaert selve ghevet hier.
- 1955 Hem langhet omme cloesterbier. [204rb]
 Nu gaen wi voeren ende bruwen hem!
 Bruun sprac: 'Neve Tybeert, nem
 die lijne. Du salt medeloepen.
 Reynaert die salt nu becoepen,
 1960 mijn scone liere ende dine hoghe.
 Ghawi ende hanghene so hoghe
 dats lachter hebben al sine vrient.'
 'Ghawi, hi heves wel verdient,'
 sprac Tybeert ende nam de lijne.
- 1965 Hi ne dede nye so lieve pine.
 Nu waren die drie heeren ghereet
 1966a *die Reynaerde hadden harde leit.*
 Dat was die wulf ende Tybeert
 ende der Bruun, die hadde gheleert
 honich stelen te zinen scaden.
- 1970 Ysingrijn was so beraden,
 eer hi van den hove sciet,
 hi ne wilde des laten niet,
 hi ne vermaende nichten ende neven
 ende alle die binnen den hove bleven,
 1975 beede ghebuere ende gaste,
 dat si Reynaerde hilden vaste.
 Vrouwe Arsenden, zinen wive,
 beval hi bi haren live
 dat so stonde bi Reynaerde
 1980 ende soene name bi den baerde
 ende van hem niet ne sciede,
 no dor goet no dor miede,
 no dor niet no dor noet,

1955 By way of revenge for his tonsure, Ysingrijn suggests brewing monastic beer, a metaphor indicating the preparation of physical abuse (Reynaert will be hanged). In 2173-78 the narrator returns to the brewing metaphor. In 2801 the raven calls Reynaert master butler. Cf. also the note to 705-06.

1977-92 Ysingrijn is described in ironic terms here. By using ambiguous phrases, he inadvertently gives the impression of conducting a marriage between his wife and the fox: he asks her

on top of my head help me;
 I never heard such good advice
 as Reynaert gives here himself.
 1955 He has a fancy for the monks' beer.
 Let us hurry now and brew it for him!
 Bruun said: 'Nephew Tybeert, take
 the rope. You shall come along.
 Reynaert will now pay
 1960 for my fine cheeks and your eye.
 Let's go and hang him so high
 that all his friends will be disgraced.'
 'Let's go, he has certainly deserved it,'
 Tybeert said, and took the rope.
 1965 Never did he exert himself with more pleasure.
 Now the three lords,
 1966a who hated Reynaert intensely, were ready.
 These were the wolf and Tybeert
 and Lord Bruun, who had learned
 to his cost to steal honey.
 1970 Ysingrijn was so determined
 that, before leaving the court,
 he insisted on urging that
 his nieces and nephews
 and all those who remained at court
 1975 – both acquaintances and strangers –
 should keep Reynaert prisoner.
 Lady Haersint, his wife,
 he ordered on her life
 to stand at Reynaert's side
 1980 and to take him by his beard
 and never to part from him,
 not for goods and not for riches,
 not for better and not for worse,

to stay with Reynaert for better and for worse until death will part them (1981-84). Reynaert realizes this and continues the ambiguity by hinting that he did not rape the she-wolf, but that she committed adultery. For that reason he does not need to ask forgiveness from her; asking her husband's forgiveness suffices. That is why Reynaert asks for *half ghenade*, 'half mercy' (1987).

1978 *bi haren live* is ambiguous, meaning 'on her life' or 'with her lover', in other words: Reynaert. Cf. 236, 1988.

- no dor zorghe van der doot.
 1985 Reynaert andwoerde in corten woorden,
 dat alle die daer waren horden:
 'Heere Ysingrijn, half ghenade!
 Al ware hu lief mijn grote scade
 ende al brincki mi in vernoye,
 1990 ic weet wel: soude mijn moye
 te rechte ghedincken ouder daet,
 so ne dade mi nemmermeer quaet.
 Maer her Ysingrijn, soete oem,
 ghi neemt huwes neven crancken goem,
 1995 ende heere Brune ende heere Tybeert,
 dat ghi mi dus hebt onneert!
 Ghi drie, ghi hebbet ghedaen al [204va]
 dat men mi ontliven sal.
 Daertoe hebdi ghemaket
 2000 dat sowie die mi ghenaket,
 sceldet mi dief of hevet leet.
 Daeromme moetti, God weet,
 gheonneert werden alle drie,
 ghi ne haest dat ghescie
 2005 al dat ghi begaert te doene.
 Mi es dat herte noch also coene;
 ic dar wel sterven eene waerf.
 Ne wart mijn vader doe hi staerf
 van alle sinen zonden vry?
 2010 Gaet, ghereet die galghe! Of ghi
 een twint *nu* langher niet ne spaert,
 of varen moetti inderwaert
 alle huwe voete ende huwe been!
 Doe sprac Ysingrijn: 'Ameen.'
 2015 'Amen,' sprac Brune, 'ende hinderwaert
 moet hi varen die langher spaert.'
 Tybeert sprac: 'Nu haesten wy.'
 Ende mettien woerde spronghen zi
 2020 ende liepen voert arde blide
 ende pijnnden hem ten strijde

1988 This line is ambiguous. Reynaert appears to be saying 'even if you love my downfall', but

nor even for fear of death.
 1985 Reynaert answered quickly
 with words that all assembled there heard:
 'Lord Ysingrijn, have half mercy on me!
 Even if you love my downfall
 and even though you lead me into trouble,
 1990 I know for certain that, if my aunt
 were to remember past actions in all honesty,
 she would never harm me.
 Really, Lord Ysingrijn, dear uncle,
 you take bad care of your nephew,
 1995 as do Lord Bruun and Lord Tybeert,
 for having disgraced me so!
 You three, you are completely responsible
 for it that they shall kill me.
 Moreover, you have ensured
 2000 that anyone who approaches me
 abuses me for a thief or hates me.
 For that reason, God is my witness,
 may all three of you be dishonoured
 if you don't make haste
 2005 to do all that you plan.
 My heart knows no fear at all;
 I have to die at some time.
 Was not my father, when he died,
 free of all sins?
 2010 Go, prepare the gallows! Either you
 don't delay one moment longer,
 or you may go to hell
 as fast as your feet and legs can carry you.'
 Then Ysingrijn said: 'Amen.'
 2015 'Amen,' Bruun said, 'and may he go to hell
 who delays any longer.'
 Tybeert said: 'Let's hurry now.'
 And with these words they jumped up
 and ran away with great joy
 2020 and competed with one another

it is also possible that he says 'even if your beloved (i.e. Haersint) was my downfall'. Cf. 236, 1978.

te springhene over meneghen tuun,
 Ysingrijn ende heere Bruun.
 Tybeert volchde hem naer;
 hem was die voet een lattel zwaer
 2025 van der lijnen die hi drouch.
 Nochtan was hi rasch ghenouch;
 dat dede hem al die goede wille.
 Reynaert stont ende zweech al stille
 ende sach sine viande loepen
 2030 die hem dat strec an waenden cnoepen.
 ‘Maer het sal bliven,’ sprac Reynaert,
 die staet ende scauwet daerwaert
 ende si springhen ende si keeren.
 Hi peinsde: ‘Deus, wat joncheeren!
 2035 Nu laetse springhen ende loepen.
 Levic, si sullent noch becoepen,
 hare overdaet ende hare scampye,
 mi ne ghebreke reynaerdye.
 Nochtanne zijn si mi [204vb]
 2040 liever verre danne bi,
 dieghene die ic meest ontsach.
 Nu willic prouven dat ic mach
 te hove bringhen een baraet
 dat ic voer de dagheraet
 2045 in groter zorghen vant te nacht.
 Hevet mine lust sulke cracht
 alsic noch hope dat so doet,
 al es hi lustich ende vroet,
 ic wane den coninc noch verdoren.’
 2050 Die coninc dede blasen eenen horen
 ende hiet Reynaerde huutwaert leeden.
 Reynaert sprac: ‘Laet teerst ghereeden
 die galghe daer ic an hanghen sal.
 Ende daerbinnen so sal ic al
 2055 den volcke mine biechte conden

2039-49 Reynaert’s monologue informs the tale’s audience of his intentions. His devious plan requires that his three adversaries leave the court. The plan he has concocted is targeted at the king. The indications of time suggest that his plan took shape during the night that ended so badly for Tybeert, that is, even before Grimbeert’s arrival.

in jumping over many a hedgerow,
 Ysingrijn and Lord Bruun.
 Tybeert followed them at a distance;
 he found walking somewhat heavy going
 2025 because of the rope he carried.
 Nevertheless he was quick enough;
 that was because he was in such a good mood.

2030 Reynaert stood there and was silent
 as he watched his enemies walk away
 who thought to put the noose round him.
 'But that will not happen,' said Reynaert,
 who stands and watches them
 as they jump this way and that.

2035 He thought: 'Deus, what silly youngsters!
 Let them jump and run now.
 If I survive, they will pay
 for their arrogance and their abuse,
 if my foxy tricks don't fail me.
 Nevertheless I prefer to see
 2040 in the distance, rather than close by,
 those that I feared most.

Now I want to try to
 to present the court with a plan
 that I thought up before dawn
 2045 in great anguish in the night.
 If my ruse works as well
 as I hope it will,
 then, however clever and quick-witted he is,
 I expect to be able to deceive the king.'

2050 The king gave orders for a horn to be blown
 and had Reynaert led out.
 Reynaert said: 'First let be prepared
 the gallows on which I shall hang.
 And meanwhile I shall
 2055 publicly make my confession

2051 *huutwaer leeden* means 'lead out, forth', i.e. from the court to the gallows.

2054-60 Reynaert announces a public confession to ensure forgiveness for his sins, which is also meant to avoid that other animals are accused falsely of his crimes after his death. Nobel cannot refuse his prisoner this. The way is now clear for Reynaert's fabrications.

in verlanessen van minen zonden.
 Hets beter dat al tfolc verstaet
 mine diefte ende mine ondaet,
 dan si namaels eeneghen man
 2060 mine overdaet teghen an.’
 Die coninc sprac: ‘Nu segghet dan.’
 Reynaert stont als een drouve man
 ende sach al omme harenthare.
 Daer so sprac hi al openbare:
 2065 ‘Helpe,’ seit hi, ‘Dominus!’
 nu en es hier niemen in dit huus,
 no vrient no viant, ic ne bem
 een deel mesdadich jeghen hem.
 Nochtan horet alle, ghi heeren.
 2070 Laet wijsen ende leeren
 hoe ic, Reynaert, aermijnc,
 eerst an die boesheit vinc.
 In allen tijden spade ende vroe,
 was ic een hovesch kint noch doe.
 2075 Doe men mi spaende van der *mammen*,
 ghinc ic spelen metten lammen
 dor te hoerne dat ghebleet,
 sodat ic een verbeet.
 Ten eersten lapedic dat bloet.
 2080 Het smaecte so wel, het was so goet,
 dat ic dat vleesch mede ontgan. [205ra]
 Daer leerdic leckernie an
 so vele dat ic ghinc ten gheeten
 int wout daer icse hoerde bleeten.
 2085 Daer verbeet ic hoekine twee.
 So dedic des derdes daghes mee
 ende ic wart boudere ende coene
 ende verbeet haenden ende hoene
 ende gansen daer icse vant.
 2090 Doe mi bloedich wert mijn tant,

2065 *Dominus*: the Lord God.

2070-76 Reynaert explains how he came to live a life of sin. The fact that Reynaert as a ‘child’ played with lambs, is reminiscent of the vision of the future as described in the Bible

so that my sins may be forgiven.
 It is better that all here present
 should hear of my thieving and my crimes
 than that they should later charge another
 2060 with my misdeeds.'
 The king said: 'Well then, speak.'
 Reynaert stood there, a picture of misery,
 and looked all around him.
 Then he spoke, clearly audible:
 2065 'Help me,' said he, 'Dominus!
 Now there is no one here in this place,
 neither friend nor foe, whom I have not
 wronged in one way or another.
 Nevertheless listen all of you, my lords.
 2070 Let it become clear to you
 how I, Reynaert, poor creature,
 first began my wicked ways.
 At all times, night and day,
 I was a well-behaved child.
 2075 When I was weaned from the breast
 I went to play with the lambs
 so as to hear them bleat,
 until I bit one to death.
 For the first time I lapped up the blood.
 2080 It tasted so good, it was so nice
 that I also tried the flesh.
 That taught me to appreciate good food
 so much that I went to the goats
 in the woods where I heard them bleating.
 2085 There I bit to death two kids.
 This I also did on the third day
 and I became ever bolder and braver
 and killed ducks and chickens
 and geese wherever I came across them.
 2090 When I had developed a taste for blood

in the Book of Isaiah (11, 6-7). On the arrival of the Messiah, the peace of paradise will be restored, and the wolf will lie with the lamb (see pp. 26-27).

was ic so fel ende so wreet
 dat ic zuver up verbeet
 al dat ic vant ende wat mi dochte
 dat mi bequam ende dat ic vermochte.
 2095 Daerna quam ic ende Ysingrine
 te wintre in eenen couden rijme
 bi *Belsele* onder eenen boem.
 Hi rekende dat hi ware mijn oem
 ende began eene sibbe tellen.
 2100 Aldaer worden wi ghesellen.
 Dat mach mi te rechte rauwen!
 Daer gheloofden wi bi trauwen
 recht gheselschap manlic andren.
 Doe begonsten wi tegader wandelen.
 2105 Hi stal tgroete ende ic dat cleene.
 Dat wi bejaechden wart ghemeene.
 Ende als wi deelen souden doe,
 ic was in hueghen ende vroe,
 mochtic mijn deel hebben half.
 2110 Also Ysingrijn bejaghede een calf
 of eenen weder of eenen ram,
 so grongierdi ende maecte hem gram
 ende toechde mi een ghelaet
 dat so zuer was ende so quaet
 2115 dat hi mi daermet van hem verdreef
 ende hem mijn deel algader bleef.
 Nochtan hachtic niet van dien.
 So menich waerven hebbic versien,
 also wi een groete proye lagheden
 2120 die ic ende mijn oem bejagheden,
 eenen osse of eenen bake,
 doe ghinc hi sitten met ghemake
 met sinen wive vrouwe Harsenden [205rb]

2095-99 While under Ysingrijn's influence – who calculated that they were related – Reynaert is supposed to have been persuaded to join the wolf as 'partners in crime'. The fox gives a skewed presentation of the facts. As his earlier confession and other stories show, it was the fox who made the wolf believe that they were related. See note to 1481-82.

2104-38 Earlier, in the distorted tale of the theft of the fish (cf. note to 208-16) and his version of the theft of the side of bacon (see note to 217-29), Grimbeert stressed the wolf's gluttony.

I became so fierce and cruel
 that I bit to death everything
 I met and that I thought
 would agree with me and that I could handle.
 2095 Next I met Ysingrijn
 one winter during a cold spell
 near Belsele under a tree.
 He calculated that he was my uncle
 and began to point out our kinship.
 2100 That is where we became partners.
 I have every reason to regret it!
 There we swore on our word of honour
 loyal friendship to one another.
 Next we began to roam around together.
 2105 He stole the big ones and I the little ones.
 All that we caught was common property.
 But when we came to share,
 I was very pleased indeed
 if I received half of my share.
 2110 When Ysingrijn caught a calf,
 or a wether or a ram,
 he would growl and become ferocious
 and I would be shown such
 disagreeable and mean behaviour
 2115 that he scared me off with it
 and that my share fell to him altogether.
 However, that did not bother me.
 So many times I found,
 when we had been lying in wait for a large prey
 2120 that my uncle and I then caught,
 an ox or a pig,
 that he would sit down at his ease
 with his wife Lady Haersint

Reynaert continues along these lines. In the same way that Grimbeert earlier said that the fox was only given the fish bones and the string from the side of bacon as his share, Reynaert now says that he had to be satisfied with a rib that had been gnawed bare by the wolf's cubs. However, although Reynaert did not get his proper share of the loot, this did not really matter as he is very fond of his uncle and anyway, he is exceedingly rich Slowly but surely the clever fox has worked round to the introduction of the treasure (2134-38).

ende met sinen VII kindren.
 2125 So ne mochtic cume deene hebben
 van den alremintsten rebben
 die sine kindre hadden ghecnaghet.
 Dus nauwe hebbic mi bejaghet.
 Nochtan dat was mi lettel noot.
 2130 Ne waer dat mijn zin so groot
 die lieve drouch te minen oem,
 die mijns nemet crancken goem,
 ic hadde ghewonnen wel tetene.
 Coninc, dit doe ic hu te wetene:
 2135 ic hebbe noch selver ende gout
 dat al es in mier ghewout
 so vele dat cume een waghen
 te VII waerven soude ghedraghen!
 Alsoe die coninc dit verhoerde,
 2140 gaf hi Reynaerde felle andwoerde:
 ‘Reynaert, wanen quam hu die scat?’
 Reynaert andwoerde: ‘Ic segghu dat.
 Wijldijt weten also ict weet,
 no dor lief no dor leet
 2145 so ne salt danne bliven verholen.
 Coninc, dien scat was bestolen.
 Ne waer hi oec ghestolen niet,
 daer ware die moert bi ghesciet
 an hu lijf, in rechter trauwen,
 2150 dat alle huwen vrienden mochte rauwen.’
 Die coninghinne wart vervaert
 ende sprac: ‘O wy, lieve Reynaert!
 O wy, Reynaert, o wy, o wy!
 O wy, Reynaert, wat sechdi?
 2155 Ic mane hu bi der selver vaert
 dat ghi *nu* ons secht, Reynaert,
 die hu ziele varen sal,
 dat ghi ons secht de waerheit al
 openbare ende brinct voort

2139-63 The treasure – the size of which is sketched by Reynart in superlatives (2137-38) – appears to have been stolen and to be at the same the financial means of funding a conspiracy to murder King Nobel. This arouses reactions from the royal couple. Nobel shows

and his seven children.
 2125 Then I would be allowed at most
 one of the tiniest ribs
 that his children had gnawed bare.
 This is how little it yielded me.
 And yet I did not really mind it.
 2130 If I had not felt so much
 affection for my uncle,
 – who hardly cares for me –
 I could have had enough to eat.
 King, this I want you to know:
 2135 I still have silver and gold
 that is entirely at my disposal
 in such great quantities that a cart going seven times
 round would barely be able to transport it.’
 When the king heard this,
 2140 he gave Reynaert a sharp answer:
 ‘Reynaert, how did you come by this treasure?’
 Reynaert answered: ‘I’ll tell you about it.
 If you wish to know what I know,
 neither for love nor for hate
 2145 shall it remain hidden.
 King, that treasure was stolen.
 But if it had not been stolen,
 it would have been used for the murderous
 attack on your life, on my word of honour,
 2150 that would greatly grieve all your friends.’
 The queen became upset
 and said: ‘Alas, my dear Reynaert!
 Alas, Reynaert, alas, alas!
 Alas, Reynaert, what are you saying?’
 2155 I urge you, by nothing less
 than the journey that your soul will undertake,
 that you tell us this instant, Reynaert,
 the whole truth
 publicly, and inform us

an interest in the treasure. The queen fears for her husband’s life; anxiously she encourages Reynaert to speak freely.

2144 The phrase means ‘for nothing in the world’.

- 2160 of ghi weet van eenegher moort
of eenen mordeliken raet
die jeghen minen heere gaet.
Dat laet hier openbare horen.
Nu hoert hoe Reynaert sal verdoren
- 2165 den coninc entie coninghinne [205va]
ende hi bewerven sal met zinne
des coninx vrienſcap ende sine hulde
ende hi, buten haerre ſculde,
Brune ende Yſingrijn beede
- 2170 uphief in groter onghereede
ende in veeten ende in ongheval
jeghen den coninc bringhen ſal!
Die heeren, die nu waren ſo fier
dat ſi Reynaerde waenden bier
- 2175 te ſinen lachtre hebben ghebrauwen.
Ic wane wel in rechter trauwen
dat hi ſal weder mede blanden
dien ſi ſullen drincken met ſcanden!
In eenen ghelate met drouven zinne
- 2180 ſprac Reynaert: ‘Edele coninghinne,
al haddi mi nu niet ghemaent,
ic bem een die ſterven waent.
In laet niet ligghen up mijn ziele.
Ende waert ſo dat mi gheviele,
- 2185 mi ſtonder omme in de helle te ſine
daer die torment es entie pine!
Indien dat die coninc milde
een gheſtille maken wilde,
ic ſoude ſegghen met ghenaden
- 2190 hoe jammerlike hi was verraden
te mordene van zinen lieden.
Nochtan diet alremeest berieden,
ſijn ſom van minen liefſten maghen,

2164-78 The narrator draws his public’s attention: *Nu hoert* (‘Now hear’). He announces that Reynaert will deceive Nobel and his wife and will cause a conflict between them and Bruun and Yſingrijn. This informs the public even at this early stage of the course events will take. The narrator’s comments accentuate Reynaert’s cunning.

2180-2208 Reynaert answers the queen that he wiſhes to ſpeak freely about the murder plot

2160 if you know of any attempt at murder
 or of a plan with intent to murder
 that concerns my husband.
 Let us hear it here in this assembly.’
 Now hear how Reynaert will delude
 2165 the king and queen
 and how, in an ingenious way,
 he will gain the king’s friendship and favour,
 and how he, through no fault of their own,
 will cause Bruun and Ysingrijn both
 2170 great difficulties
 and how he will create hardship for them
 and a feud with the king!
 These lords, they were now very proud
 because they thought to have brewed
 2175 Reynaert some beer to his disgrace.
 However, I truly believe
 that he in his turn will brew them mead
 that they will drink to their shame!
 With a face expressing sadness
 2180 Reynaert said: ‘Noble queen,
 even if you had not pressed me at this moment,
 I am one who expects to die.
 I do not want to burden my soul with it.
 And if I did so accidentally,
 2185 hell would await me for it
 where there is torment and pain!
 If the noble king
 would cause it to be quiet,
 I would, with his permission, relate
 2190 how dreadfully he was betrayed
 by his subjects with a plan for his murder.
 Yet the worst conspirators
 are some of my dearest relatives,

even though a number of his own relatives are implicated. He states that he accuses them only for fear of going to hell. King Nobel is touched by this but still hesitates. He seeks confirmation and asks Reynaert *sechstu mi waer?* (‘are you telling the truth?’ 2200), using the familiar form of address (see also note to 547-622). Reynaert stresses that he speaks the truth; after all, he is about to die (*mine langhe vaert*, ‘my long journey’, 2207) and has to be mindful of the salvation of his soul.

2195 die ic noede soude bedraghen,
 ne daet die zorghe van der hellen,
 daer men seit dat si in quellen
 die hier sterven ende moort
 weten, si ne bringhense voort.
 Dien coninc wart die herte zwaer
 2200 ende sprac: 'Reynaerd, sechstu mi waer?'
 'Waer?' sprac Reynaert, 'vraechdi mi des?
 Ja ne weet ghi wel hoet met mi es?
 Ne bewaent niet, edel coninc,
 al bem ic een aermijnc,
 2205 hoe mochtic sulke moert ghetemen?
 Waendi dat ic wille nemen
eene loghene up mine langhe vaert? [205vb]
 Entrauwen, neen ic!' sprac Reynaert.
 Bi der coninghinnen rade,
 2210 die zeere ontsach des sconinx scade,
 gheboet die coninc openbare
 dat daer niemen so coene en ware
 dat hi een wordekijn yet sprake
 tote dien dat Reynaert met ghemake
 2215 hadde vulseit al sinen wille.
 Doe zweghen si allegader stille.
 Die coninc hiet Reynaerde spreken.
 Reynaert was van fellen treken.
 Hem dochte scone zijn gheval.
 2220 Hi sprac: 'Nu zwichet overal,
 nadien dat es den coninc lief.
 Ic sal hu lesen sonder brief
 die verraderen openbare,
 sodat ic niemene en spare
 2225 dien ic te wroughene sculdich bem.
 Dies lachter hevet, scaems hem!
 Nu verneemt allegader

2197 *Hier*: that is, on earth.

2211 The king raises his voice as he is speaking in an official capacity.

2222 *lesen sonder brief* means to recite by heart and accurately.

2227-38 The narrator's comments ensure that the audience is informed of Reynaert's plan to accuse his father and Grimbeert of treason. Precisely by assigning complicity to his own relatives in

whom I would in no way accuse
 2195 if it was not for the fear of hell,
 where – it is said – all those suffer
 who die here and know of a murder
 and do not reveal it.’
 The king’s heart sank
 2200 and he said: ‘Reynaert, are you telling me the truth?’
 ‘The truth?’ said Reynaert, ‘are you asking me that?
 Surely you know how it is with me?
 Don’t you wonder, noble king,
 how even a poor creature like me
 2205 could bear such an outrage?
 Do you think I would want
 to burden myself with a lie on my long journey?
 Truly, not me!’ Reynaert said.
 On the advice of the queen,
 2210 who feared that the king should come to harm,
 the king loudly proclaimed
 that no one should be so bold
 as to utter so much as a single word
 until Reynaert had been able at his leisure
 2215 to have his say, as it pleased him.
 Then all kept very silent.
 The king told Reynaert to speak.
 Reynaert was full of low tricks.
 It seemed to him that his luck was great.
 2220 He said: ‘Now be silent, all of you,
 because the king wishes it.
 I shall describe without written record
 the traitors to you in this assembly
 in such a way that I shall spare no one
 2225 whom I ought to accuse.
 Whoever is thus disgraced, should be ashamed!’
 Now hear all of you

the murder plot – something unheard of in medieval feudal society – Reynaert strengthens the truth value of his accusations (2233-37 and cf. 2518-27). When a little later he lies to the king and queen, the tale’s listeners know more than the royal couple. In this way the sense of Reynaert’s cleverness is strengthened. See also the note to 2164-78. Grimbeert is absent and subsequently it is revealed that Reynaert’s father has died (2481-83); neither can, therefore, contradict the charges.

hoe Reynaerd sinen erdschen vader
 met verradenessen sal *bedragen*
 2230 ende eenen van sinen liefsten *maghen*;
 dat was Grimberte den das,
 die hem hout van herten was!
 Dat dede Reynaert ommedat,
 dat hi wilde dat men te bat
 2235 sinen woerden gheloeven soude
 van sinen vianden, of hi woude
 die verranesse tyen an.
 Nu hoert hoe hi dies began!
 Reynaert sprac: ‘Wilten teer stonden
 2240 hadde mine heere mijn vader vonden
 des coninx *Hermeliken* scat
 in eene verholnen stat.
Doe mijn vader hadde vonden
 den scat, wart hi in corten stonden
 2245 so overdadich ende so fier
 dat hi veronweerde alle dier
 die sine ghenote tevoren waren.
 Hi dede Tyberte den kater varen
 in Arttinen, dat wilde lant, [206ra]
 2250 aldaer hi Brunen den beere vant.
 Hi ontboet Brune grote Gods houde
 ende hi in Vlaendren commen soude
 ende hi coninc wilde wesen.
 Bruun wart vro van desen:
 2255 hi hadt meneghen dach begaert.
 Daer maecte hi hem te Vlaendren waert
 ende quam in Waes, int soete lant,
 daer hi minen vader vant.
 Mijn vader ontboet Grimbeerte den wysen

2228 *erdschen vader*: his own father, as opposed to the heavenly father of all mankind.

2241 Reynaert arouses the king’s greed by referring to the treasure of King (H)ermeli(n)c (cf. also 2564). It concerns the legendary, fourth-century Gothic sovereign Ermanric from Germanic heroic legend. He is supposed to have possessed an enormous, now lost treasure, and, according to local legend, built the fortress of Ghent.

2243-76 Reynaert describes the conspiracy, which his father is said to have devised and financed. In his story, the five animals swear that they will crown Bruun in Aachen. That places the bear in the capital of the Roman Empire and on Charlemagne’s throne. The

how Reynaert will accuse
 his own father of treason
 2230 as well as one of his dearest relatives;
 that was Grimbeert the badger,
 who was very fond of him!
 Reynaert did this as
 he intended that
 2235 his words about his enemies
 should be the more credited
 when he accused them of treason.
 Now hear how he began this!
 Reynaert said: 'Once upon a time
 2240 my lord and father had found
 the treasure of King Ermelinc
 in a hidden place.
 After my father had found the treasure,
 he became, in no time at all,
 2245 so overconfident and so proud
 that he looked down on all the animals
 who earlier had been his equals.
 He had Tybeert the cat travel
 to the Ardennes, that wild region,
 2250 where he met Bruun the bear.
 He wished Bruun Godspeed,
 and he invited him to come to Flanders,
 and would he like to become king.
 Bruun was glad of this:
 2255 he had wanted it for a long time.
 Then he went to Flanders
 and arrived in Waes, that lovely region,
 where he met my father.
 My father sent for reliable Grimbeert

theme of treason in *Van den vos Reynaerde* is reminiscent of similar themes in Charlemagne epics, in which traitors temporarily manage to manipulate the king by means of bribes or false accusations in such a way that he treats a loyal vassal unjustly. However, eventually feudal order is restored. The point of the joke is that Reynaert pretends that there are traitors at work in King Nobel's court and that he himself is the loyal vassal, whereas the reality is exactly the other way around: it is Reynaert who will prove to be the (successful) traitor, while the so-called traitors are Nobel's loyal vassals. In addition the feudal order will have disappeared for good at the end of the story (cf. 1770-95, 2486-90, 3399-3410, 3436-51 and see pp. 25-26).

- 2260 ende Ysingrijn den grijsen;
 Tybeert die kater was die vijfste;
 ende quamen teenen dorpe, hiet Hijfte.
 Tusschen Hijfte ende Ghend
 hilden si haer paerlement
- 2265 in eere belokenre nacht.
 Daer quamen si bi sduvels cracht
 ende bi sduvels ghewelt
 ende zwoeren daer an twoeste velt
 alle vive des coninx doot.
- 2270 Nu hoert wonder alle groot:
si swoeren op Ysegrims crune,
- 2270a *alle vive, dat si Brune*
- 2270b *souden bringe op den stoel tAken*
- 2270c *ende souden gewellich coninc maken.*
- 2270d Wat si noch overeendraghen:
 wilde yement van sconincx maghen
 dat wedersegghen, mijn vader soude
 met sinen selvere, met zinen goude
- 2275 so denghenen steken achtre
 dat sijs souden hebben lachtre.
 Dit weetic ende segghe hu hoe.
 Eens morghins arde vroe
 gheviel dat mijn neve die das
- 2280 van wine een lettel droncken was
 ende lyet in verholnen rade minen
 wive, miere vrouwen Hermelinen,
 ende al van pointe te pointe seide
 daer si liepen an die heyde.
- 2285 Mijn wijf es eene vremde vrouwe
 ende gaf Grimberte hare trauwe
 dat verholen bliven soude.
 Ten eersten dat so quam ten woude
 daer ic was ende so mi vant,
- 2290 so telde zoet mi tehant.
 Newaer het was al stillekine. [206rb]
 Oec seide zoet bi sulken lijctekine

2270a Another reminder that the fox scalded the skin off Ysingrijn's scalp with boiling water. See the notes to 1499-1503 and 1951-52.

2260 and grey Ysingrijn;
 Tybeert the cat was the fifth
 and they came to a village called Hijfte.
 Between Hijfte en Ghent
 they held their council
 2265 on a dark night.
 There they gathered through the devil's power
 and the devil's might
 and swore there in the waste land
 all five to the king's death.

2270 Now hear a great marvel:
 they swore on Ysingrijn's tonsure,
 2270a all five of them, that they would
 2270b get Bruun on the throne in Aachen
 2270c and would make him a mighty king.
 2270d They also agreed to the following:
 if any of the king's relatives
 was to object, my father would
 with his silver and with his gold
 2275 oppose them to such an extent
 that they would be disgraced.
 That I know and I shall tell you how.

One morning, very early,
 it so happened that my nephew the badger
 2280 was a little drunk with wine
 and he confided in good faith
 in my wife, Lady Hermeline,
 and told her all about it, detail by detail,
 as they were walking on the heath.
 2285 My wife, who is a special lady,
 gave Grimbeert her promise
 that it would remain a secret.
 As soon as she reached the wood
 where I was and she met me,
 2290 she told it me at once.
 But she did it in secret.
 Also she told it me with such evidence

dat ict kende so waer
dat mi alle mine haer
2295 upwaert stonden van groten vare.
Mine herte wart mi openbare
also caut als een hijs.
Dies zijt seker ende wijs.
Die pude wijlen waren vry
2300 ende oec so beclaechden hem zij
dat si waren sonder bedwanc.
Ende si maecten een ghemanc
ende so groet ghecray up Gode
dat hi hem gawe, bi sinen ghebode,
2305 eenen coninc diese dwonghe.
Dies baden die houde entie jonghe
met groten ghecraye, met groten ghelude.
God ghehoerde die pude
teenen tijde van den jare
2310 ende sende hem den coninc hodevare,
diese verbeet ende *verslant*
in allen landen daer hise vant,
beede in water ende in velt.
Daer hise vant in sine ghewelt,
2315 hi dede hem emmer onghenade.
Doe claechden si; het was te spade.
Het was te spade, ic secht hu twy:
sij die voren waren vry,
sullen sonder wederkeer
2320 sijn eyghin bliven emmermeer
ende leven eewelike in vare
van den coninc hodevare.
Ghi heeren, aerne ende rike,
ic vruchte oec diesghelike
2325 dat nu van hu soude ghevallen.
Doe droughic zorghe voer ons allen.
Dus hebbic ghezorghet voer hu;

2299-2322 The story of the frogs who want to be ruled was known in the Middle Ages both in the vernacular and in Latin in the form of an Aesopian fable. It cannot be determined whether Willem used the Middle Dutch *Esopet* or the Middle Latin tradition. In most versions of the Aesopian fable the frogs do not find themselves having to cope with a stork, but

that I was so convinced of the truth
 that all my hairs
 2295 stood upright for great fear.
 My heart truly became
 as cold as ice.
 Take good heed of the following.
 The frogs used to be free
 2300 and yet they complained
 that they had no one with authority over them.
 And they got together
 and sent up a loud croaking to God
 to give them, by his command,
 2305 a king who would have power over them.
 This begged the old ones and the young ones
 with loud croaking, with a loud noise.
 God heard the frogs
 at a certain time of year
 2310 and sent them king stork,
 who killed and devoured them
 wherever he found them,
 both in the water and in the field.
 Where he could get them in his power,
 2315 he was always merciless towards them.
 Then they complained; it was too late.
 It was too late, I'll tell you why:
 they who used to be free
 will irreversibly
 2320 be subjected to him for ever more
 and live eternally in fear
 of king stork.
 You, my lords, poor and rich,
 I feared something similar
 2325 might befall you now.
 Then I took the care of all of us upon myself.
 Thus I have looked after you;

with a snake. Reynaert uses the fable to illustrate that Nobel's good kingship is preferable to the cruel regime of anti-king Bruun, who would terrorize his subjects as the stork did the frogs. Towards the end of *Van den vos Reynaerde* the implications are that the fable may be re-interpreted as heralding Nobel's new regime, in which only the fittest survive.

dies dancti mi lettel nu!
 Ic kenne Brunen valsch ende quaet
 2330 ende vul van alre overdaet.
 Ic peinsde, worde hi onse heere,
 dat ontvruchtic arde zeere,
 dat wi alle waren verloren. [206va]

Ic *kende den coninc* welgheboren
 2335 ende soete ende goedertiere
 ende ghenadich allen dieren.
 Het dochte mi bi allen dinghen
 eene quade manghelinghe,
 die ons ne mochte comen
 2340 noch theeren noch te vromen.
 Hieromme peinsdic ende poghede.
 Mine herte grote zorghe *ghedoghede*
 hoe so erghe eene zake,
 dat so ghescort worde ende brake
 2345 mijns vaders bosen raet,
 die eenen dorper, eenen vraet,
 coninc ende heere maken waende.
 Emmer badic Gode ende maende
 dat hi den coninc, minen heere,
 2350 behilde sine warelteere.
 Bedi ic kenne wel dat:
 behilde mijn vader sinen scat,
 si souden wel des raets ghetelen
 onder hem ende sinen ghespelen,
 2355 dat die coninc worde verstoten.
 In diepen ghepeinse ende in groten
 was ic dicken, hoe ic dat
 soude vinden waer die scat
 lach die mijn vader hadde vonden.
 2360 Ic wachte nauwe tallen stonden
 minen vader ende leide laghen
 in meneghen bosch, in meneghe haghen,
 beede in velde ende in woude.
 Waer mijn vader, die lusteghe houde,
 2365 henentrac ende henenliep,
 was het droghe, was het diep,

and for this you give me little thanks now!
I know Bruun as false and malicious
2330 and full of violence.
I thought: if he becomes our lord,
then I fear very much
that we would all be lost.
I knew the king as noble
2335 and gentle and kind-hearted
and merciful towards all animals.
It seemed to me in all respects
a poor exchange,
which could bring us
2340 neither honour nor profit.
This I pondered and thought.
I was extremely concerned
how such a terrible business
might be thwarted
2345 and my father's evil plan frustrated,
who intended to make a peasant, a glutton,
king and lord.
Incessantly I prayed to God and begged
that he might allow the king, my lord,
2350 to retain his dominion.
For I was fully aware of the following:
if my father kept his treasure,
he and his accomplices would be sure
to execute the plan
2355 so that the king would be overthrown.
 Deeply immersed in many thoughts
I often found myself, wondering how
I might find out where the treasure
lay hidden that my father had found.
2360 I kept a close guard at all times
on my father and lay in wait
in many a wood, in many a hedgerow,
both in the field and in the wood.
Wherever my crafty old father
2365 went or walked,
whether it was dry or marshy,

waest bi nachte, waest bi daghe,
 ic was emmer in die laghe.
 Waest bi daghe, waest bi nachte,
 2370 ic was emmer in die wachte.
 Up eene stont gheviel daernare
 dat ic mi decte met groten vare
 ende lach ghestrect neven dheerde
 2375 ende van den scatte die ic begheerde
 gherne yewer hadde vernomen. [206vb]
 Doe saghic minen vader comen
 hute eenen hole gheloopen.
 Doe began ic ten scatte hopen,
 bi den barate als ic hem sach
 2380 dryven, als ic hu segghen mach.
 Want hi huten holle quam,
 sach ic wel, ende vernam
 dat hi ommesach ende merked
 of hem yemene ware bi.
 2385 Ende als hi niemene en sach,
 doe queddi den sconen dach
 ende stoppede dat hol met sande
 ende maectet ghelijc den andren lande.
 Dat ic dit sach, ne wiste hi niet.
 2390 Doe saghic, eer hi danen sciet,
 dat hi den steert liet medegaen
 daer sine *vote hadden* ghestaen
 ende decte sijn spore metter mouden.
 Daer leerdic an den vroeden houden
 2395 een lettel meesterlike liste
 die ic tevoren niet ne wiste.
 Aldus voer mijn vader danen
 ten dorpe waert, daer die hanen
 ende die vette hinnen waren.
 2400 Teerst dat ic mi durste baren,
 spranc ic up ende liep ten hole.
 In wilde niet langher zijn in dole
 ende ic *gheraecter* doe tehand.
 Sciere scraefdic up dat zant
 2405 met minen voeten ende croep in.

whether it was by night or by day,
I was ever spying on him.
Whether by day or by night,
2370 I was ever watchful.
Then, one time it so happened
that I covered myself with large ferns
and lay flat on the earth
and would dearly have known something
2375 about the treasure that I coveted.
Then I saw my father
emerge from a hole.
Then I began to have hopes of the treasure
as a result of the wily way
2380 in which he behaved, as I shall tell you.
For when he came out of the hole,
I watched carefully, and noticed
that he looked around to see
if anyone was near.
2385 And when he did not see anyone,
he greeted the light of day
and stopped up the hole with sand,
making it even with the ground around it.
That I saw this, he did not realize.
2390 Then I saw, before he left that place,
that he dragged his tail
across where his feet had been,
and covered his tracks with earth.
There I learned from my cunning old father
2395 a masterly little trick
that I did not know before.
In this way my father went away from there,
in the direction of the village, where
the cocks and the plump hens were.
2400 As soon as I dared show myself
I jumped up and went to the hole.
I did not wish to be in uncertainty any longer
and I got there fast.
Quickly I scratched away the sand
2405 with my paws and crawled in.

- Aldaer vandic groet ghewin.
Daer vandic selver ende goud.
Hier nes niemen nu so houd
dies nye so vele tegader sach!
2410 Doe ne spaerdic nacht no dach,
ic en ghinc trecken ende draghen
sonder karre ende waghē
over dach ende over nacht
met algader miere cracht.
2415 Mi halp mijn wijf, vrouwe Hermeline.
Des dogheden wi grote pine
eer wi den overgroeten scat [207ra]
brochten in een ander gat,
daer hi bet lach tonsen ghelaghe.
2420 Wij droughene onder eenen haghe
in een hol verholenlike.
Doe was ic van scatte rike.
Nu hoert wat si hierbinnen daden
die den coninc hadden verraden.
2425 Brune die beere sendde huut
verholenlike zijn saluut
achter lande ende omboet
al denghenen rijcheit groet
die dienen wilden omme tsout.
2430 Hi beloofde hem selver ende gout
te ghevene met milder hant.
Mijn vader liep in al dat lant
ende drouch des Brunen *brieve*.
2435 Hoe lettēl wiste hi dat de *dieve*
te sinen scatte waren gheraect,
dies hem so quite hadden ghemaect.
En ware die scat niet ontgonnen,
hi hadder met die stat van Lonnen
altegader moghen coepen.
2440 Dus wan hi an zijn ommeloepen!
Doe mijn vader al omme ende omme
tusschen dier Elve entier Zomme

2442 This is the Lower German area.

There I found great booty.
There I found silver and gold.
There is no one present here, however old,
who ever saw so much together!
2410 Then I did not hesitate one moment,
I started dragging and carrying
without a cart or wagon,
both by day and by night,
with all the power that I had.
2415 My wife, Lady Hermeline, helped me.
We had to give ourselves great trouble
before we had taken the enormous treasure
to a different hole,
where it was better within our reach.
2420 We carried it to a hole under a bush
without being noticed.
Then I was in the possession of the treasure.
Now hear what those who had
betrayed the king, did in the meantime.
2425 Bruun the bear sent
his salutation secretly
through the land and promised
great riches to all
who would serve him for pay.
2430 He promised to dole out to them
silver and gold generously.
My father traversed the entire country
with the writs from Bruun.
Little did he know that the thieves
2435 had got to his treasure,
of which they had relieved him.
If the treasure had not been made away with,
he would have been able to buy
the entire city of London with it.
2440 So much did he profit by all his running around!
When my father had crossed
all the land between the Elbe and the Somme

hadde gheloepen al dat lant
 ende hi meneghen coenen serjant
 2445 hadde ghewonnen met sinen goude,
 die hem te hulpen commen soude
 alsoe die zomer quame int lant,
 keerde mijn vader daer hi vant
 Brune entie ghesellen zine.
 2450 Doe teldi die groete pine
 ende die menichfoudeghe zorghe
 die hi voer de hoghe borghe
 int lant van Sassen hadde leden,
 daer die jagheren hadden gheleden
 2455 alle daghe met haren honden,
 die hem vervaerden te meneghen stonden.
 Dit telde hi te spele algader.
 Daerna so toghede mijn vader
 2460 brieve die Brunen wel bequamen, [207rb]
 daer XIIC al bi namen
 sheere Ysingrijns maghe in stonden,
 met scerpen clauwen, met diepen monden,
 sonder die catren ende die baren
 die alle in Bruuns souden waren,
 2465 ende die vosse metten dassen
 van Doringhen ende van Sassen.
 Dese hadden alle ghezworen:
 indien dat men hem tevoren
 van XX daghen ghave haer sout,
 2470 si souden Brunen met ghewout
 seker wesen tsinen ghebode.
 Dit benam ic al, danct Gode!
 Doe mijn vader hadde ghedaen
 sine bodscap, hi soude gaen
 2475 ende scauwen zinen scat.
 Ende als hi quam ter selver stat
 daer hine ghelaten hadde tevoren,
 was die scat al verloren
 ende sijn hol was uptebroken.
 2480 Wat holpe vele hieraf ghesproken?
 Doe mijn vader dat vernam,

in all directions
and had enlisted many a brave soldier
2445 with his gold,
who would come to his aid
once it was summer,
my father returned to where
he found Bruun and his companions.
2450 Then he told them of the great troubles
and the many dangers
that he had experienced
before the high fortresses in the land of Saxony,
where the hunters had passed
2455 every day with their dogs
which had terrified him many times.
All this he said quite casually.
Afterwards my father produced
lists that were much to Bruun's liking,
2460 which contained twelve hundred
named relatives of Lord Ysingrijn,
with sharp claws, with huge maws,
quite apart from the cats and the bears,
all of whom were in Bruun's pay,
2465 and the foxes and the badgers
from Thuringia and from Saxony.
All of them had sworn
that if they were paid
twenty days' wages in advance,
2470 they would, according to their powers,
be sure to obey Bruun's orders.
All this I put a stop to, thank God!
When my father had delivered
his message, he wanted to go
2475 and have a look at his treasure.
And when he arrived in the same place
as where he had left it earlier,
the treasure was completely gone
and his hole broken open.
2480 What use is it to dwell on it?
When my father saw it,

wart hi zeerich ende gram,
 dat hi van torne hem selven hinc.
 Dus bleef achter Brunen dinc
 2485 bi miere behendichede al.
 Nu meerct hier mijn ongheval:
 heere Ysingrine ende Brune de vraet
 hebben nu den nauwen raet
 metten coninc openbare
 2490 ende arem man Reynaerd es die blare!
 Die coninc entie coninghinne,
 die beede hopen ten ghewinne,
 si leedden Reynaerde buten te rade
 ende baden hem dat hi wel dade
 2495 ende hi hem wijsde sinen scat.
 Ende alse Reynaerd horde dat,
 sprac hi: 'Soudic hu wijsen mijn goet,
 heere coninc, die mi hanghen doet?
 So waer ic huut minen zinne!
 2500 'Neen, Reynaert,' sprac die coninghinne,
 'mine heere sal hu laten leven [207va]
 ende sal hu vriendelike vergheven
 allegader sinen evelen moet
 ende ghi sult voert meer sijn vroet
 2505 ende goet ende ghetrauwe.'
 Reynaerd sprac: 'Dit doe ic, vrouwe,
 indien dat mi de coninc nu
 vaste ghelove hier voer hu
 dat hi mi gheve sine hulde
 2510 ende *hi al mine sculde*
 wille vergheven ende ommedat
 so willic hem wijsen den scat,
 den coninc, aldaer hi leghet.'
 Die coninc sprac: 'Ic ware ontweghet,
 2515 wildic Reynaerde vele gheloven.

2491-2541 The moment when the king and queen take Reynaert aside and ask him to show them the treasure (2491-95) is of paramount importance for the story. Blinded by their greed the royal couple opts for private (financial) gain. In this way it becomes evident that the community of the court no longer presents a united front to the fox. Reynaert has succeeded in creating a schism (see pp. 25-26). The fox subsequently leads the conversation in a

he became so miserable and angry
 that he hanged himself from sheer frustration.
 And so Bruun's plan came to nothing,
 2485 entirely as a result of my cunning.
 Now observe my ill luck:
 Lord Ysingrijn and Bruun the glutton
 now clearly are the king's
 trusted counsellors,
 2490 and poor Reynaert is the scapegoat!
 The king and the queen,
 both of whom hoped to profit,
 took Reynaert apart to discuss the matter
 and asked him if he would be so good
 2495 as to show his treasure to them.
 And when Reynaert heard this,
 he said: 'Would I show my property to you,
 Lord King, who is having me hanged?
 Then I would be out of my mind!'
 2500 'No, Reynaert,' said the queen,
 'my lord will let you live
 and will benevolently forgive and forget
 the ill feeling that he felt towards you,
 while you shall henceforth be sensible
 2505 and virtuous and loyal.'
 Reynaert said: 'That I will, my lady,
 if the king firmly promises me now
 in your presence
 that he will give me his support
 2510 and that he will forgive me
 all I am guilty of; and in return
 I will show the king
 where the treasure is kept.'
 The king said: 'I'd be misled
 2515 if I believed all that Reynaert is saying.

subtle way towards a deal: mercy in exchange for the treasure (2496-99, 2506-10). The king, who still mistrusts the fox (2514-17), allows himself to be persuaded by his wife (2500-5, 2518-27, 2528-33). Nevertheless Nobel threatens to persecute Reynaert's descendants for ever if the fox should persist in his wicked ways (2534-37).

Hem es dat stelen ende dat roven
 ende dat lieghen gheboren int been.
 Die coninghinne sprac: 'Heere, neen!
 Ghi moghet Reynaerde gheloven wel.
 2520 Al was hi hier tevoren fel,
 hi nes nu niet dat hi was.
 Ghi hebt ghehoert hoe hi den das
 ende sinen vader hevet bedreghen
 met morde, die hi wel beteghen
 2525 mochte hebben andren dieren,
 wildi meer zijn *argertieren*
 ofte fel ofte onghetrauwe.'
 Doe sprac die coninc: 'Gentel vrouwe,
 al waendic dat mi soude scaden,
 2530 eist dat ghijt mi dorret raden,
 so willic laten up hu ghenent
 dese vorworde ende dit covent
 up Reynaerts trouwe staen.
 Newaer ic segghe hem sonder waen:
 2535 doet hi meer eerchede,
 alle die hem ten tienden lede
 sijn *belanc*, sullent becoepen.'
 Reynaerd sach den coninc beloepen
 ende wart blide in sinen moet
 2540 ende sprac: 'Heere, ic ware onvroet,
 ne gheloofdic hu niet also.'
 Doe nam die coninc een stro
 ende vergaf Reynaerde algader [207vb]
 die wanconst van sinen vader
 2545 ende zijns selves mesdaet toe.
 Al was Reynaert blide doe,
 dat en dinct mi gheen wonder wesen!
 Ja ne was hi van der doot ghenesen?
 Doe Reynaert quite was ghelaten,
 2550 was hi blide utermaten
 ende sprac: 'Coninc, edel heere,

2542-45 By handing him a straw, Nobel forgives Reynaert's sins. It concerns a symbolic legal procedure, the *festucatio* or *halminghe*, during which the straw was thrown down or broken

For him stealing and robbing
 and lying is second nature.’
 The queen said: ‘My lord, no!
 You may certainly believe Reynaert.
 2520 Even though he was wicked before,
 he is no longer what he used to be.
 You have heard how he accused
 the badger and his father
 of a plot to kill you, which he might easily
 2525 have attributed to other animals,
 if he meant to persist in being wicked
 and mean or disloyal.’
 Then the king said: ‘Noble lady,
 even if I thought that it would harm me,
 2530 if you dare advise me to do it,
 then I will, on your responsibility,
 let this agreement and this covenant
 depend on Reynaert’s loyalty.
 But I shall be blunt with him:
 2535 if he perpetrates wicked deeds again,
 all those related to him to the tenth degree
 will suffer for it.’
 Reynaert noticed that the king was swayed
 and rejoiced inwardly,
 2540 and said: ‘Lord, I would be unwise
 if I did not promise you that.’
 Then the king picked up a straw
 and fully forgave Reynaert
 his father’s enmity
 2545 as well as his own crimes.
 That Reynaert was very pleased then
 does not seem a marvel to me!
 Had he not just escaped a certain death?
 When Reynaert had been pardoned,
 2550 he was overjoyed
 and said: ‘King, noble lord,

as a sign of the complete exoneration of all guilt. The official reconciliation, witnessed by the assembled court, is to follow at a later stage (2764-95).

God moete hu loenen al die eere
 die ghi mi doet ende mijn vrouwe.
 Ic secht hu wel bi miere trouwe
 2555 dat ghi mi vele eeren doet,
 so groet eere ende so groet goet
 dat niemen nes onder die zonne
 dien ic also wale jonne
 mijns scats ende miere trauwen
 2560 als ic hu doe ende miere vrouwen.’
 Reynaert nam een stroe voer hem
 ende sprac: ‘Heere coninc, nem.
 Hier gheve ic di up den scat
 die wijlen Ermelinc besat.’
 2565 Die coninc ontfinc dat stroe
 ende dancte Reynaerde zoe
 als quansijs: ‘Dese maect mi heere.’
 Reynaerts herte louch so zeere
 dat ment wel na an hem vernam,
 2570 doe die coninc so gheorsam
 algader was te sinen wille.
 Reynaert sprac: ‘Heere, zwichet stille;
 merket waer mine redene gaet.
 Int oesthende van Vlaendren staet
 2575 een bosch, ende heet Hulsterloe.
 Coninc, ghi moghet wesen vroe,
 mochte onthouden dit:
 een borne, heet Kriekepit,
 gaet zuutwest niet verre danen.
 2580 Heere coninc, ghi ne dorst niet wanen
 dat ic hu de waerheit yet messe.
 Dats een de meeste wildernessse
 die men hevet in eenich rike.

2561-65 The *festucatio* is doubled here, as Reynaert transfers his treasure symbolically by using a straw.

2572 Literally *zwichet stille* means ‘be silent’.

2574-93 The fox gives precise indications where the treasure is to be found. In the forest of Hulsterloe, a historically identifiable place, Kriekeputte is to be found, according to Reynaert. At the time of writing this was probably an existing spring. Reynaert uses these realistic toponyms to impress the reliability of his story upon his audience. For Willem’s audience the references to realistic locations will have served to enhance the dramatic irony of the episode (see p. 22). The

may God reward you for all the honour
 you and my lady do me.
 I assure you on my pledge of loyalty
 2555 that you do me a great honour,
 so much honour and so much favour
 that there is no one under the sun
 to whom I so willingly surrender
 my treasure and my loyalty
 2560 as I do to you and my lady.’
 Reynaert held up a straw
 and said: ‘Lord King, take it.
 I herewith hand over to you the treasure
 which earlier was in Ermelinc’s possession.’
 2565 The king received the straw
 and thanked Reynaert
 as if he meant to say: ‘This makes me its master.’
 In his heart Reynaert laughed so much
 that it almost showed,
 2570 when the king so obediently
 did entirely as he wished.
 Reynaert said: ‘Lord, listen;
 mind what I have to say.
 In the east of Flanders there is
 2575 a wood, which is called Hulsterloe.
 King, you will be pleased
 to remember this:
 a spring, called Kriekeputte,
 runs towards the southwest not far from there.
 2580 Lord King, you need not fear
 that I tell you anything less than the truth.
 It is one of the wildest regions
 that can be found in any realm.

fox characterizes the place as a dismal area, which shows a striking resemblance to the cursed place described in the Bible in the Book of Isaiah (34,10-12), which is prophesied to lie waste for generations and through which no one shall ever pass. It is said there that the cormorant and the bittern possess it, while the owl and the raven shall dwell in it, and that it has no rulers. By Reynaert’s location of his treasure in this very similar *locus terribilis* and his intention to make the king go there (2597 ff.), the story’s audience is warned in a subtle way of Nobel’s impending downfall. The delightful place described at the beginning of the poem (41-43) proves to be an illusion; the gruesome surroundings of Kriekeputte are Nobel’s wretched reality (see p. 24).

2585 Ic segghe hu oec ghewaerlike
 dat somwijlen es een half jaer [208ra]
 dat toten borne commet daer
 no weder man no wijf
 no creature die hevet lijf,
 sonder die hule entie scuvuut
 2590 die daer nestelen in dat cruut,
 of eenich ander voghelijn
 dat *elwaer* gherne wilde zijn
 ende daer *bi* avontuere lijdet.
 Ende daerin leghet mijn scat *ghehidet*.
 2595 Verstaet wel, ditte es hu nutte:
 die stede heetet Kriekeputte.
 Ghi sult daer gaen ende mijn vrouwe.
 Ne wetet oec niemene so ghetrauwe
 die ghi sult laten wesen hu bode.
 2600 Verstaet mi wel, coninc, dor Gode,
 maer gaet daer selve ende alse ghi
 dien selven putte commet bi,
 ghi sult vinden jonghe baerken.
 Heere coninc, dit suldi maerken:
 2605 die alrenaest den putte staet,
 coninc, tote dier baerken gaet.
 Daer leghet die scat onder begraven.
 Daer suldi delven ende scraven
 een lettel mos in deene zijde.
 2610 Daer suldi vinden menich ghesmide
 van goude, rijkelijk ende scone.
 Daer suldi vinden die crone
 die Ermelijnc die coninc drouch
 ende ander chierheit ghenouch:
 2615 edele steene, guldin waerc;
 men cocht niet omme duserent maerc.
 Ay coninc, als ghi hebt dat goet,
 hoe dicken suldi peinsen in huwen moet:
 “Ay Reynaert, ghetrauwe vos,

2589 There has been considerably debate about the word *scuvuut*. It is usually translated as ‘night owl’. This makes little sense, however, as the owl is already mentioned in the same

I also tell you truthfully
 2585 that sometimes for as long as half a year
 neither man nor woman
 comes to that spring,
 nor any living creature
 except the owl and the jay
 2590 who have their nests there in the bushes,
 or any other little bird
 that would prefer to be somewhere else
 and has alighted there by chance.
 And that is where my treasure lies hidden.
 2595 Listen well, this is to your advantage:
 the place is called Kriekeputte.
 You must go there and my lady.
 Do not consider anyone trustworthy enough
 to have him go in your stead.
 2600 Take good note, king, in God's name,
 just go there yourself and when you
 get to the pool in question,
 you will see young birch trees.
 Lord King, this you should note:
 2605 go to that birch
 which is nearest the pool, king.
 The treasure lies buried under it.
 There you must dig and scratch away
 a little moss on one side.
 2610 There you will find many pieces of jewellery
 set in gold, costly and beautiful.
 There you will find the crown
 that King Ermelinc wore
 and many other precious objects:
 2615 gems, goldsmiths' work;
 it could not be bought for a thousand marks.
 Ah, king, once you have these goods,
 how often you will think to yourself:
 "Ah, Reynaert, faithful fox,

line. With the translation 'jay', like the crow and the raven a thief and a scoundrel, we follow Van Gasse 1993.

- 2620 die hier grouves in dit mos
desen scat bi dijnre lust,
God gheve di goet waer du best.”
Doe andwoerde die coninc saen:
‘Reynaert, sal ic die vaert bestaen,
2625 ghi moet zijn mede in die vaert.
Ende ghi moet ons, Reynaert,
helpen den scat ontdehlen. [208rb]
Ic ne *wane* bi mi selven
aldaer nemmermeer gheraken.
- 2630 Ic hebbe ghehoort nomen Aken
ende Parijs. Eist daer yet na?
Ende also als ic versta,
so smeedi, Reynaert, ende roomt.
Kriekeputte dat ghi hier noomt,
2635 wanic es een gheveinsde name.’
Dit was Reynaerde ombequame
ende verbalch hem ende seide: ‘Ja, ja,
coninc, ghi zijter also na
alse van Colne tote meye.
- 2640 Waendi dat ic hu die Leye
wille wijsen in die flume Jordane?
Ic sal hu wel toeghen, dat ic wane,
orconde ghenouch al openbare.’
Lude riep hi: ‘Cuwaert, comt hare!
2645 Comet *voer den* coninc, Cuwaert.’
Die diere saghen dese vaert;
hem allen wonderde wat daer ware.
Cuwaert die ghinc met vare;
hem wonderde wat die coninc woude.
- 2650 Reynaert sprac: ‘Cuwaert, hebdi coude?’
Ghi bevet. Zijt blide al sonder vaer
ende secht minen heere den coninc waer.
Dies *manic* hu bi der trauwen
die ghi *ver Genten* miere vrouwen
2654a *ende hem selven sculdich sijt.*
2654b *Doe sprac Cuwart: ‘Vermaledijt*
2654c *so moetic werden, al wistic wel*
2654d *dat mi costen soude mijn vel,*

2620 who buried under this moss here
 this treasure with all your cunning,
 God be with you wherever you are.”
 Then the king answered at once:
 ‘Reynaert, if I were to undertake the journey,
 2625 you must come along.
 And you, Reynaert, must
 help us dig up the treasure.
 I don’t think that by myself
 I shall ever get there.
 2630 I have heard Aachen mentioned
 and Paris. Is it near there?
 But I fancy, Reynaert, that
 you are trying to curry favour, and are bluffing.
 Kriekeputte, that you mention here,
 2635 is, I reckon, a made-up name.’
 This irritated Reynaert
 and it annoyed him and he said: ‘Yes, yes,
 king, you are as close
 as Cologne is to the month of May.
 2640 Do you think I want to make you believe
 that the Leie is the river Jordan?
 I will soon give you, so I expect,
 plenty of evidence quite openly.’
 Loudly he shouted: ‘Cuwaert, come here!
 2645 Come before the king, Cuwaert.’
 The animals saw him move;
 they all wondered what it meant.
 Cuwaert went with trepidation;
 he wondered what the king wanted.
 2650 Reynaert said: ‘Cuwaert, are you cold?
 You are trembling. Cheer up, don’t be afraid
 and tell my lord the king the truth.
 I urge you to do this by the loyalty
 that you owe to my Lady Gente
 2654a and to himself.’
 2654b Then Cuwaert said: ‘I may be damned,
 2654c even if I knew for certain
 2654d that it would cost me my life,

- 2654e *oftic liege enich wort,*
 2654f *al waert van enige mort,*
 2654g *want gi mi manet bi der trouwen*
 2654h *die ic miere liever vrouwen*
 2655 *ende den coninc sculdich bem.'*
 Doe sprac Reynaert: 'So secht hem:
 weetstu waer Kriekeputte steet?'
 Cuwaert sprac: 'Of ict weet?
 Ja ic, hoe sout wesen soe?
 2660 Ne staet hi niet bi *Hulsterloe,*
 up dien moer in die wostine?
 Ic hebber ghedoghet groete pine
 ende meneghen hongher ende menigh coude
 ende aermoede so menichfoude
 2665 up Kriekenputte so meneghen dach
 dat ics vergheten niet ne mach.
 Hoe mochte ic vergheten dies,
 dat aldaer Reynout de ries
 die valsche penninghe slouch [208va]
 2670 daer hi hem mede bedrouch
 entie ghesellen sine.
 Dat was tevoren eer ic met Rijn
 mijn gheselschap makede vast,
 die mi ghequijtte meneghen past.'
 2675 'O wy,' sprac Reynaert, 'soete Rijn,
 lieve gheselle, scone hondekijn,
 vergave God waerdi nu hier!
 Ghi sout toeghen *vor* desen dier
 met *scone rijme*, waers te doene,
 2680 dat ic noint wart so coene
 dat ic eeneghe saken dede
 daer ic den coninc mochte mede
 te mi waert belghen doen met rechte.
 Gaet weder onder ghene knechte,'
 2685 sprac Reynaert, 'haestelic, Cuwaert.

2662-74 The hare probably gives a truthful report of past events. Having stated that near Kriekeputte he suffered hunger, cold and poverty, he names two animals: Reynout the counterfeiter (a dog?) and the small dog Rijn, who turns out to be a poet. It is unclear whether

2654e if I lie a single word,
 2654f even if it concerned some crime or other,
 2654g since you urge me to do this by the loyalty
 2654h that I owe my dear lady
 2655 as well as the king.’
 Then Reynaert said: ‘Well, tell him:
 do you know where Kriekeputte is?’
 Cuwaert said: ‘Do I know that?
 Yes, of course, how could I not?
 2660 Isn’t it near Hulsterloe,
 near that swamp in the waste land?
 I have endured great suffering there,
 and much hunger and often cold
 and constant poverty
 2665 in Kriekeputte, for so many days,
 that I cannot forget it.
 How could I forget this:
 that unscrupulous Reynout
 made the counterfeit money there
 2670 with which he earned a living for himself
 and his accomplices.
 That was before I became
 firm friends with Rijn,
 who often payed my school fees for me.’
 2675 ‘Alas,’ said Reynaert, ‘darling Rijn,
 dear friend, handsome little dog,
 God give you were here now!
 You would show before these animals
 in fine verse, if necessary,
 2680 that I never was so bold
 as to do anything
 by which I might justly arouse
 the king’s wrath against me.
 Go back to the servants again,’
 2685 said Reynaert, ‘and hurry, Cuwaert.

the author alludes to a beast narrative that is no longer extant, or to real persons and events. Cuwaert’s statement that counterfeiters dwelled near Kriekeputte is tendentious in light of Reynaert’s imaginary treasure.

Mijn heere de coninc ne heeft thuwaert
 gheene sake te sprekene meer.
 Cuwaert dede eenen wederkeer
 ende ghinc van sconincx rade daer.
 2690 Reynaert sprac: 'Coninc, eist waer
 dat ic seide?' 'Reynaert, jaet.
 Verghevet mi, ic dede quaet
 dat ic hu mestroude yet.
 Reynaert, goede vrient, nu siet
 2695 den raet dat ghi met ons gaet
 ten putte aldaer dien *berke* staet
 daer die scat leghet begraven onder.'
 Reynaert sprac: 'Ghi secht wonder.
 Waendi, in waers arde vro,
 2700 coninc, oft mi stonde also
 dat ic met hu wandelen mochte
 also als ons beeden dochte
 ende ghi, heere, waert al sonder zonde?
 Neent, het es also ic hu orconde
 2705 ende ict hu segghe, al eist scame.
 Doe Ysingrijn in sduvels name
 in de ordine ghinc hier tevoren
 ende hi te moonke wart bescoren,
 doe ne conste hem de provende niet ghenoughen
 2710 daer VI moonke hem bi bedroughen.
 Hi claghede van honghere ende carmede [208vb]
 so zeere dats mi ontfaermede.
 Doe hi carmede ende wart traech,
 doe haddics rauwe als een zijn maech
 2715 ende gaf hem raet dat hi ontran.
 Daeromme bem ic in spaeus ban.
 Maerghin als die zonne upgaet,
 willic te Roeme om aflaet.
 Van Roeme willic overzee;
 2720 danen ne keeric nemmermee

2706-16 Reynaert gives a new twist to the story of how the wolf entered a monastery and was given a tonsure (see notes to 1499-1503, 1951-52 and 2270a). Reynaert is supposed to have incited the hungry monk Ysingrijn to leave the monastery, and it is for this that he is now under a papal ban. His excommunication is invented by the fox to prevent having to

My lord the king has nothing further
 to discuss with you.’
 Cuwaert went back
 and left the king’s council there.
 2690 Reynaert said: ‘King, is it true
 what I told you?’ – ‘Reynaert, it is.
 Forgive me, it was wrong of me
 to mistrust you somewhat.
 Reynaert, good friend, now consider
 2695 the proposal to come with us
 to the pool where the birch tree stands
 under which the treasure lies buried.’
 Reynaert said: ‘What you say is remarkable.
 Don’t you think I would not be overjoyed,
 2700 king, if I were in a position
 to go along with you,
 as both of us should like,
 without you, lord, committing a sin?
 No, it is as I shall openly declare
 2705 and tell you, even though it is disgraceful.
 When Ysingrijn in the devil’s name
 entered an order some time ago
 and his crown was shaved on becoming a monk,
 he found that the rations on which six monks lived
 2710 were not enough for him.
 He complained of hunger and moaned
 so much that I took pity on him.
 When he moaned and got weaker
 it distressed me, being his relative,
 2715 and I advised him to run away.
 That is why I have been excommunicated by the pope.
 Tomorrow as the sun rises
 I intend to go to Rome for an indulgence.
 From Rome I want to go to the Holy Land;
 2720 from there I shall certainly not return
 accompany the king to Kriekeputte, where it will soon become obvious that there is no trea-
 sure.
 2706 In the devil’s name implies insincerity.
 2719 *overzee*: literally ‘overseas’, that is, across the Mediterranean to the Holy Land.

- eer ic so vele hebbe ghedaen,
 coninc, dat ic met hu mach gaen
 thuwer eeren ende thuwer vromen,
 of ic te lande wedercome.
- 2725 Het ware een onscone dinc,
 souddi, heere coninc,
 maken huwe wandelinghe
 met eenen verwatenen ballinghe
 als ic nu bem, God betere mi!
- 2730 Die coninc sprac: 'Reynaert, zidi
 yet langhe verbannen?' Doe sprac Reynaert:
 'Ja ic, hets III jaer dat ic wart
 voer den deken Hermanne
 in vullen zeinde *tebannen*.'
- 2735 Die coninc sprac: 'Reynaert, nadat ghi zijt
 tebannen, men souts mi doen verwijt,
 Reynaert, liet ic hu met mi wandelen.
 Ic sal Cuwaerde ofte eenen andren
 toten scatte doen gaen met mi
- 2740 ende ic rade hu, Reynaert, dat ghi
 niet ne laet, ghi ne vaert
 dat ghi hu van den banne claert.'
 'So ne doe ic,' sprac Reynaert.
 'Ic ga morghin te Rome waert,
 gaet na den wille mijn.'
- 2745 Die coninc sprac: 'Ghi dinct mi zijn
 bevaen in arde goeden dinghen.
 God jonne hu dat ghijt moet vulbringhen,
 Reynaert, alse hu ende mi
- 2750 ende ons allen nutte zi.'
 Doe dese tale was ghedaen,
 doe ghinc Nobel die coninc staen
 up eene hoghe stage van steene, [209ra]

2725-34 According to Reynaert he was sentenced by the full ecclesiastical court, where his excommunication was imposed by deacon Herman. This means that the fox has incurred a major excommunication or anathema: he has been cursed and is excluded totally from the ecclesiastical community. It is not known if there is a historical person associated with the deacon. On account of the excommunication the fox not only has to go to Rome – the pope is the only person who can absolve from excommunication – he also cannot possibly accompany Nobel before

until I have done so much,
king, that I can associate with you
to your honour and advantage,
if I return to this country.

2725 It would not be very nice,
Lord King, if you should
go about with
someone who has been excommunicated
as I am now, God help me!

2730 The king said: 'Reynaert, have you been
under a ban for a long time?' Then Reynaert said:
'Certainly, it has been three years since
I was banished in the presence of deacon Herman
and the full ecclesiastical court.'

2735 The king said: 'Reynaert, as you have been put
under a ban, I would be reproached, Reynaert,
for allowing you to associate with me.
I shall make Cuwaert or someone else
go to the treasure with me

2740 and I advise you, Reynaert,
do not fail to depart
so that you may have the ban lifted.'
'I will not fail to do so,' said Reynaert.

2745 'I shall go to Rome tomorrow,
if it goes as I have planned.'
The king said: 'You appear to be
full of very good intentions.

God give that you may achieve this,
Reynaert, for the sake of you and me
2750 and everybody else.'

When this conversation had ended,
King Nobel went to stand upon
a high stone stage,

departing to retrieve the treasure. Any contact with a banned person was strictly forbidden.

2751-95 Before the assembled court, Nobel pardons the fox (2777-79). The king twists Reynaert's account of his excommunication and the resulting journey to the pope in Rome. The king remains silent about Reynaert's excommunication, but tells the animals that, as part of the reconciliation, Reynaert is going on a pilgrimage for the expiation of his sins (2787-95). He also does not mention that in reality he has promised to pardon the fox in return for a treasure.

daer hi up plach te stane alleene
 2755 als hi sat in zijn hof te dinghe.
 Die dieren saten teenen ringhe
 al omme ende omme in dat gras,
 nadien dat elc gheboren was.
 Reynaerd stont bi der coninghinne,
 2759a *die hi te recht wel mochte mynnen.*
 2760 'Bidt voer mi, edele vrouwe,
 dat ic hu met lieve wederscauwe.'
 Soe sprac: 'Die Heere daert al an staet,
 doe hu van zonden vul aflaet.'
 Die coninc entie coninghinne
 2765 ghinghen met eenen bliden zinne
 voer haer diere aarme ende rike.
 Die coninc, die sprac vriendelike:
 'Reynaert es hier commen te hove
 ende wille, dies ic Gode love,
 2770 hem betren met al zinen zinnen.
 Ende mijn vrouwe de coninghinne
 hevet so vele ghebeden voer hem
 dat ic zijn vrient worden bem
 ende hi versoent es jeghen mi
 2775 ende ic hem hebbe ghegheven vry
 beede lijf ende lede.
 Reynaerde ghebedic vullen vrede.
 Anderwaerf ghebedic hem vrede
 ende derde waerven mede,
 2780 ende ghebiede hu allen bi huwen live
 dat ghi Reynaerde ende zinen wive
 ende zinen kindren eere doet,
 waer si commen in hu ghemoet,
 sijt bi nachte, zijt bi daghe.
 2785 In wille meer gheene claghe
 van Reynaerts dinghen horen.
 Al was hi rouckeloes hiervoren,

2768-86 Nobel announces that he is reconciled with Reynaert. He has quashed the fox's conviction and has pardoned him. However, there is something wrong here: the king arranges the reconciliation for himself alone. Although Reynaert has been charged by a

where he normally only stood
 2755 when he presided over a lawsuit at his court.
 The animals sat in a circle
 round about in the grass,
 each according to his birth.
 Reynaert stood near the queen,
 2759a to whom he had every reason to be grateful.
 2760 – ‘Pray for me, noble lady,
 that I may safely see you again.’
 She said: ‘May the Lord who rules everything,
 give you full absolution for your sins.’
 The king and the queen
 2765 took up their positions full of good cheer
 before the animals, poor and rich.
 The king said graciously:
 ‘Reynaert has come to our court here,
 and intends, for which I praise God,
 2770 to mend his ways wholeheartedly.
 And my lady the queen
 has taken his part to such an extent
 that I have become his friend
 and he is reconciled with me
 2775 and I have given him the free use
 of his body and his limbs.
 I proclaim full peace for Reynaert.
 Once more I command peace for him,
 and also a third time,
 2780 and I order all of you, at the peril of your lives,
 to honour Reynaert and his wife
 and his children,
 wherever you meet them,
 whether it be by night or by day.
 2785 I do not wish to hear
 any more complaints about Reynaert’s actions.
 Even though he was callous in the past,

number of animals, none of them receives satisfaction for having suffered proven wrongs.
 Impelled by his craving for the treasure, Nobel acts selfishly (see pp. 25-26).
2775-76 This means that Reynaert has been discharged from prosecution.

hi wille hem betren, ic segghe hu hoe:
 Reynaert wille maerghin vroe
 2790 palster ende scerpe ontfaen
 ende wille te Roeme gaen
 ende van Rome danen wille hi overzee
 ende dan commen nemmermee
 eer hi heeft vul af laet
 2795 van alre zondeliker daet.' [209rb]

Dese tale hevet *Tyselijn* vernomen
 ende vloech danen dat hi es comen
 ende hi vant die III ghesellen.
 Nu hoert wat hi hem sal tellen!
 2800 Hi sprac: 'Keytive, wat doedi hier?
 Reynaert es meester bottelgier
 int hof ende moghende utermaten.
 Die coninc heeftene quite ghelaten
 van alle sinen mesdaden
 2805 ende ghi zijt alle III verraden.'
 Isingrijn began andwoerden
 te Tielceline met corten woerden:
 'Ic wane ghi lieghet, heere raven.'
 Mettien woerde began hi scaven
 2810 ende Brune die volchde mede.
 Si ghinghen recken hare lede
 loepende *tes* coninx waert.
 Tybeert bleef zeere vervaert
 ende hi bleef sittende up die galghe.
 2815 Hi was van sinen ruwen balghe
 in zorghen so groet utermaten
 dat hi gherne wille laten
 sine oeghe varen over niet
 2820 die hi in spapen scuere liet,
 indien dat hi verzoent ware.

2801 *meester bottelgier*: 'master butler.' In other words: 'Reynaert calls the shots at court'.

he intends to better his life, I shall tell you how:
 Reynaert will early tomorrow morning
 2790 receive the pilgrim's staff and scrip
 and will go to Rome
 and from Rome across the sea
 and will certainly not return
 before he has been given complete absolution
 2795 for all his sins.'

Revenge and flight

Tiecelein heard these words
 and he flew to where he had come from
 and he found the three friends.
 Now hear what he will tell them!
 2800 He said: 'Wretches, what are you doing here?
 Reynaert is master butler
 at court and extremely powerful.
 The king has pardoned him
 of all his crimes
 2805 and all three of you have been betrayed.'
 Ysingrijn turned on Tiecelyn
 and gave a curt reply:
 'I reckon you're lying, Lord Raven.'
 With these words he ran off
 2810 and Bruun followed suit.
 They went as fast as their legs
 could carry them towards the king's court.
 Tybeert stayed behind, very frightened,
 and he stayed where he sat on top of the gallows.
 2815 He was so extremely worried
 about saving his skin
 that he was quite prepared
 to leave his eye unavenged
 that he had lost in the priest's barn,
 2820 if he might be reconciled with Reynaert.

2815 *sinen ruwen balghe*: literally: 'his rough pelt'.

Hi ne wiste wat doen van vare
 dan hi ghinc sitten up die micke.
 Hi claechde vele ende arde dicke,
 dat hi Reynaerde ye bekinde.
 2825 Isingrijn quam met groeten gheninde
 ghedronghen voer de coninghinne
 ende sprac met eenen fellen zinne
 te Reynaert waert so verre
 dat die *coninc* wart al erre
 2830 ende hiet Ysingrine vaen
 ende Brune. Alsoe saen
 worden si ghevanghen ende ghebonden.
 Ghi ne saghet nye verwoedde honden
 doen meer lachters dan men hem dede,
 2835 Ysingrine ende Brunen mede!
 Men voerese als leede gaste.
 Men bantse beede daer so vaste [209va]
 dat si binnen eere nacht
 met gheenrande cracht
 2840 een let niet en mochten roeren.
 Nu hoert hoe hise voert sal voeren,
 Reynaert, die hem was te wreet!
 Hi dede dat men Brunen sneet
 van sinen rugghe een velspot af,
 2845 dat men hem teere scerpen gaf,
 voets lanc ende voets breet.
 Nu ware Reynaert al ghereet,
 haddi IV verssche scoen.
 Nu hoert wat hi sal doen,
 2850 hoe hi sal IV scoen ghewinnen!
 Hi ruunde toter coninghinnen:
 ‘Vrauwe, ic bem hu peelgrijn.
 Hier es mijn oem, Ysingrijn.
 Hi hevet IV vaste scoen.

2825-40 Bruun and Ysingrijn are taken prisoner without a trial and are badly maltreated. The king perverts the law.

2841-96 Nobel has announced that, as part of the reconciliation, Reynaert will undertake a pilgrimage. The fox (who himself had not mentioned a pilgrimage explicitly) uses this new development to revenge himself on his enemies. At Reynaert's suggestion the

He was so scared that he knew nothing better
to do than to sit on the pole.

He deeply regretted all the time
that he had ever got to know Reynaert.

2825 Ysingrijn pushed his way very roughly
to a place before the queen
and uttered with a fierce demeanour
such coarse accusations of Reynaert
that the king was roused to great anger
2830 and had Ysingrijn taken prisoner
and Bruun too. Straightaway
they were apprehended and tied up.
You never saw rabid dogs
more deeply humiliated than they did them,
2835 Ysingrijn and Bruun also!
They were treated like hateful foes.
They were tied up so tightly there
that the entire night
they were unable to move
2840 so much as a single limb.

Now hear what more he will do to them,
Reynaert, who treated them very cruelly!
He got them to cut from Bruun's back
a piece of skin
2845 that was given him by way of a scrip,
a foot long and a foot broad.
Now Reynaert would be quite ready,
provided he had four new shoes.

2850 Now hear what he will do,
how he will obtain four shoes!
He whispered to the queen:
'Lady, I am your pilgrim.
Here is my uncle, Ysingrijn.
He has four stout shoes.

prisoners, as well as Haersint, are partly flayed to provide Reynaert with suitable attributes for his journey. In a creative way the author of *Van den vos Reynaerde* makes use here of a well-known motif from the literary tradition: the wolf who, on the fox's advice, has to give up his skin to cure the sick king lion (see pp. 10-11).

- 2855 Helpt mi dat icse an mach doen.
 Ic neme hu ziele in mine plecht.
 Het es peelgrins recht
 dat hi ghedincket in sine ghebeden
 al tgoet dat men hem noyt dede.
- 2860 Ghi moghet hu ziele an mi scoyen.
 Doet Haersenden, miere moyen,
 gheven twee van haren scoen.
 Dit moghedi wel met eeren doen:
 so blivet thuus in haer ghemac.’
- 2865 Gherne die coninghinne sprac:
 ‘Reynaert, ghi ne mochtet niet *onbaren*,
 ghi ne hebt scoen: ghi moetet varen
 huten lande in des Gods ghewout,
 over berghe ende int wout
- 2870 ende terden struke ende steene.
 Dinen aerbeit wert niet cleene;
 hets dijn noet dattu hebs scoen.
 Ic wilre gherne mijn macht toe doen.
 Die Ysingrijns waren hu wel ghemicke:
- 2875 si zijn so vaste ende so dicke
 die Ysingrijn draghet ende zijn wijf.
 Al sout hem gaen an haer lijf,
 elkerlijc moet hu gheven twee scoen
 daer ghi hu vaert mede moet doen.’ [209vb]
- 2880 Dus hevet die valsche peelgrijn
 beworven dat dher Ysingrijn
 al toten knien hevet verloren
van beede sine voeten voren
 dat vel algader toten claeuwen.
- 2885 Ghi ne saecht noint voghel braeuwen
 die stilre hilt al sine leden
 dan Ysingrijn de zine dede,
 doe men so jammerlike ontscoyde
 dat hem dat bloet ten teen afvloyde!

2885-87 To tame and train a newly caught falcon it would have its eyes ‘seeled’: ‘Seeling consisted of putting one neat stitch through the lower eyelids with a linen thread and tying the ends over the head (or [...] stitching through the upper lids and tying under the beak’). This was commonly done before transportation by the merchants, so as to keep the birds

2855 Help me, so I can put them on.
 I shall take your soul into my care.
 It is a pilgrim's duty
 to remember in his prayers
 all the good that was ever done for him.
 2860 You may benefit your soul by giving me shoes.
 Have Haersint, my aunt,
 give two of her shoes.
 You may do this in all decency:
 she will stay quietly at home.'
 2865 Full of good will the queen spoke:
 'Reynaert, you should not lack
 shoes: you have to travel
 in foreign lands, in God's care,
 across mountains and through woods,
 2870 and over stumps and stones.
 Yours is not an easy task,
 so that it is necessary for you to have shoes.
 I will be pleased to use my influence to get them.
 Ysingrijn's would suit you well:
 2875 they are very strong and robust,
 the ones that Ysingrijn and his wife wear.
 Even if it cost them their lives,
 each of them must give you two shoes
 with which you will be able to make your journey.'
 2880 In this way did the false pilgrim
 achieve that Lord Ysingrijn
 lost the skin of both his front paws
 from his knees
 all the way down to his nails.
 2885 You never saw a bird having its eyelids
 stitched together make less of a stir
 than Ysingrijn moved his limbs
 when he was divested so pitifully of his shoes
 that the blood ran down from his toes!

calmer' (Cummins 1988, 200). It is not clear whether the narrator means here that the wolf tries to keep as still as possible to avoid even more pain, or that he resists vehemently. In the second case the author's comment is ironic.

2890 Doe Ysingrijn ontscoyt was,
 moeste gaen ligghen up dat gras
 vrouwe Hersvint die wulfinne
 met eenen wel drouven zinne
 ende liet haer afdoen dat vel
 2895 ende die claeuwen also wel
 bachten van beede haren voeten.
 Dese daet dede wel soeten
 Reynaerde sinen drouven moet.
 Nu hoert wat claghen hi noch doet!
 2900 ‘Moye,’ seit hi, ‘moye,
 in hoe meneghen vernoye
 hebdi dor minen wille ghewesen!
 Dats mi al leet, sonder van desen
 eist mi lief. Ic segghe hu twi.
 2905 Ghi zijt, des ghelovet mi,
 een die liefste van minen maghen.
 Bedi sal ic hu scoen andraghen.
 God weet dats al huwe bate.
 Ghi sult an hoghen aflate
 2910 deelen ende an al dat perdoen,
 lieve moye, dat ic in hu scoen
 sal bejaghen overzee.’
 Vrouwe Hersvinden was so wee
 dat so cume mochte spreken:
 2915 ‘Ay, Reynaert, God moete mi wreken
 dat ghi over ons siet huwen wille!’
 Ysingrijn balch ende zweech stille
 ende zijn gheselle Brune, neware
 hem was te moede arde zware.
 2920 Si laghen ghebonden ende ghewont.
 Hadde oec doe ter selver stont [210ra]
 Tybeert die cater ghewesen daer,

2897-98 What is meant here is that Reynaert was in a very good mood. Cf. also the note to 2990-94.

2899-2912 In accordance with his earlier behaviour towards the animals that he tricked, Reynaert again taunts his victim: he pretends that he will give the she-wolf a share in the indulgences he will acquire, as he will be wearing the shoes she ‘gave’ him on his pilgrimage. He also calls Haersint *moye* (‘aunt’, 2900, 2911) and one of his favourite relatives (*maghen*, 2906),

2890 When Ysingrijn had been unshoed,
 Lady Haersint, the she-wolf,
 had to lie down on the grass,
 looking very sad,
 and had the skin stripped off
 2895 as well as the nails
 of her back feet.
 This action was balm to
 Reynaert's distressed mood.
 Now hear how he proceeds to lament!
 2900 'Aunt,' he said, 'aunt,
 how much misery
 you have had to endure on my account!
 I am very sorry, but in this case
 it pleases me. I shall tell you why.
 2905 You are, I assure you,
 one of my dearest relatives.
 For that reason I will wear your shoes.
 God knows you will benefit by it.
 You will share in the papal indulgences
 2910 and in the full pardon,
 dear aunt, that I will acquire in your shoes
 in the Holy Land.'
 Lady Haersint was in so much pain
 that she could hardly speak:
 2915 'Oh, Reynaert, may God avenge me
 for you imposing your will on us!'
 Ysingrijn was furious and remained silent,
 like his companion Bruun,
 but they were utterly despondent.
 2920 They lay bound and injured.
 If at that time Tybeert the cat
 had been there,

thus alluding once again to the supposed family relationship between himself and his 'uncle' Ysingrijn. By admitting that she has had much to bear from him, the fox probably refers to their adultery and her rape (see pp. 32-33).

2920-25 Reynaert has cruelly revenged himself on his opponents and if the opportunity had presented itself, he would have treated Tybeert in a similar manner. Reynaert's unlimited thirst for revenge provides a sharp contrast with his appearance as a penitent pilgrim.

ic dar wel segghen over waer:
 hi hadde so vele ghedaen tevoren,
 2925 hi ne waers niet bleven sonder toren!
 Wat helpt dat ict hu maecte lanc?
 Des ander daghes voer de zonneupganc
 dede Reynaert zijn scoen *smaren*,
 die Ysingrijns *tevoren waren*
 2930 ende zijns wijfs vrouwe Hersenden,
 ende hadse vaste ghedaen benden
 om zine voeten ende ghinc
 daer hi vant den coninc
 ende zijn wijf die coninghinne.
 2935 Hi sprac met eenen soeten zinne:
 ‘Heere, God gheve hu goeden dach
 ende mier vrouwen, die ic mach
 prijs gheven met rechte.
 Nu doet Reynaert gheven, huwen knechte,
 2940 palster ende scerpe ende laet mi gaen.’
 Doe dede die coninc haesten saen
 den capelaen, Belin de ram.
 Ende als hi bi den coninc quam,
 sprac die coninc: ‘Hier es
 2945 dese peelgrijn; leest hem een gheles
 ende ghevet hem scaerpe ende staf.’
 Belin den coninc andwoerde gaf:
 ‘Heere, in dar des doen niet.
 Reynaert hevet selve beghiet
 2950 dat hi es in spaes ban.’
 Die coninc sprac: ‘Belin, wats dan?

2927 At the crack of dawn on the third day Reynaert prepares himself for his departure as a pilgrim. This means that the fox’s mendacious story, his pardon as well as the imprisonment and maltreatment of Bruun and the two wolves took place on the evening of the second day.

2941-84 In accordance with medieval tradition Nobel wants to have the attributes for the pilgrimage consecrated before they are handed to Reynaert (cf. the ‘*Benedictio peregrinorum ad loca sancta prodeuntium*’ in the *Rituale Romanum*, Tit. VIII, Cap. XI, dating prior to Vaticanum II). However, Reynaert has incurred a major excommunication which excludes him from all sacraments. It is for this reason that Belin initially objects to the king’s request (how the ram knows that the fox has been excommunicated is not explained). As Nobel wishes to hide the true reason for this reconciliation with the fox – the treasure – it is in his

I dare say this with certainty:
 he had earlier done so much
 2925 that he would not have escaped distress!
 What use would it serve if I told you more?
 The next day before dawn
 Reynaert had his shoes greased
 which earlier had belonged to Ysingrijn
 2930 and his wife Lady Haersint,
 and had them tied securely
 round his feet and went
 to where he found the king
 and his wife the queen.
 2935 He said gently:
 ‘Lord, may God grant you a good day
 and my lady, whom I have
 every reason to praise.
 Now let Reynaert, your servant, be given
 2940 staff and scrip and let me depart.’
 Then the king made
 the chaplain, Belin the ram, come hastily.
 And when he arrived before the king,
 the king said: ‘Here is
 2945 this pilgrim; read him a lesson
 and give him scrip and staff.’
 Belin answered the king:
 ‘Lord, I am not allowed to do this.
 Reynaert himself has admitted
 2950 that he is under a papal ban.’
 The king said: ‘Belin, so what?’

best interests to present Reynaert as a pilgrim who wishes to atone for his sins as a form of reconciliation. For that reason he finds Belin’s objection about Reynaert’s excommunication irksome. The king finds a way out by referring to a certain master Jufroet, who is said to teach that a sinner feeling perfect contrition may have the guilt of mortal sin removed purely by the *intention* of confessing his sins and undertaking a pilgrimage to the Holy Land (in other words, prior to departure and without intercession of the Church). It is not clear which theologian Nobel has in mind here. It has been suggested that the Benedictine abbot Goffridus Vindociniensis (ca. 1070-1132), who wrote about confession, is meant. Another possibility is that Willem had Geoffrey Ridel in mind, the theological adviser of King Henry II of England (1154-1189), who was excommunicated repeatedly.

2945 *gheles*: a text from the Bible or a prayer.

Meester Jufroet doet ons verstaen:
 hadde een man alleene ghedaen
 also vele zonden also alle die leven
 2955 ende wildi aercheit al begheven
 ende te biechten gaen
 ende penitencie daerof ontfanen,
 dat hi overzee wille varen,
 hi mochte hem wel selve claren.'
 2960 Belin sprac ten coninc echt:
 'Ic en doere toe crom no recht
 van gheesteliker dinc altoes,
 ghi ne wilt mi quiten scadeloes [210rb]
 jeghen bisscop ende jeghen den deken.'
 2965 Die coninc sprac: 'In VIII weken
 so ne wane ic hu bidden so vele.
 Oec haddic liever dat huwe kele
 hinghe dan ic hu heden bat.'
 Ende also Belin hoerde dat,
 2970 dat die coninc balch te hem waert,
 wart Belin so vervaert
 dat hi beefde van vare
 ende ghinc ghereeden zine autare
 ende began zinghen ende lesen
 2975 al dat hem goet dochte wesen.
 Doe Belin die capelaen
 oemoedelike hadde ghedaen
 dat ghetijde van den daghe,
 doe hinc hi an zine craghe
 2980 eene scaerpe van Bruuns velle.
 Oec gaf hi den fellen gheselle
 den palster in de hant daerbi,
 te zinen ghevoughe. Doe was hi
 al ghereet te ziere vaert.
 2985 Doe sach hi ten coninc waert.
 Hem liepen die gheveinsde tranen
 neder neven zine granen
 also oft hi jammerlike in sine herte
 van rauwen hadde grote smerte.

Master Jufroet teaches us:
if a man had committed all on his own
as many sins as all living people together,
2955 and if he wanted to renounce his wicked ways
and go to confession
and accept as a penitence
to go to the Holy Land,
he might still be absolved.’
2960 Then Belin said to the king:
‘I will in no way
perform any kind of religious rite,
unless you are prepared to clear me
with the bishop and with the deacon.’
2965 The king said: ‘In the next eight weeks
I don’t expect to ask this much of you.
And also I would sooner see you hanged
than ask you for anything today.’
And when Belin heard
2970 that the king was angry with him,
Belin became so frightened
that he trembled with fear
and went to prepare his altar
and began to sing and read
2975 all that he considered suitable.
When Belin the chaplain
had meekly performed the service
proper to that time of day,
he hung around Reynaert’s neck
2980 a scrip made of Bruun’s skin.
He also gave the scoundrel
the staff in his hand with it,
for his use. Then he was
fully prepared for his journey.
2985 Then he looked at the king.
The bogus tears ran down
along his whiskers
as if in his heart he was terribly upset
and suffering great distress.

2990 Dit was bedi ende anders niet
 dat hi hem allen die hi daer liet
 niet hadde beraden al sulke pine
 alse Brunen ende Ysingrine,
 haddet moghen ghevallen!
 2995 Nochtan stont hi ende bat hem allen
 dat si over hem bidden souden
 also ghetrouwelike *alsi wouden*
 dat hi over hem allen bade.
 Dat orlof nemen dochte hem spade,
 3000 want hi gherne danen ware.
 Hi was altoes zeere in vare
 als die hem selven sculdich weet.
 Doe sprac die coninc: 'Mi es leet,
 Reynaert, dat ghi dus haestich zijt.'
 3005 'Neen, heere, het es tijt! [210va]
 Men sal gheene weldaet sparen.
 Huwen orlof, ic wille varen.'
 Die coninc sprac: 'Gods orlof.'
 Doe gheboet die coninc al dat hof
 3010 met Reynaerde huutwaert te ghane,
 sonder alleene die ghevane.
 Nu wart Reynaert peelgrijn,
 ende zijn oem Ysingrijn
 ende Brune die ligghen ghebonden
 3015 ende ziec van zeeren wonden.
 Mi dinct ende ic wane des,
 dat niement so onspellic es
 tusschen Pollanen ende Scouden,
 die hem van lachene hadde onthouden
 3020 *dor* rauwe die hem mochte gheskien,
 hadde hi Reynaerde doe ghesien!
 Hoe wonderlic hi henenghinc
 ende hoe ghemackelic dat hem hinc

2990-94 Reynaert is crying mock tears (*gheveinsde tranen*, 2986). He pretends to be very sad now that the time of his departure as a pilgrim approaches (cf. also 3051-52). The narrator addresses his public with the ironic comment that Reynaert is crying purely because he is disappointed that he has not succeeded in harming more courtiers than just Bruun and Ysingrijn. Cf. also the note to 2897-98 and below.

2990 This was for no other reason
 than that he had not caused as much harm
 to all those he left behind
 as he had to Bruun and Ysingrijn,
 if that had been possible!
 2995 Nevertheless, standing there, he requested them all
 to pray for him
 as sincerely as they wished
 him to pray for all of them.
 The farewells took too long to his mind,
 3000 for he was eager to get away from there.
 He was constantly afraid,
 because he was aware of his guilt.
 Then the king said: 'I regret,
 Reynaert, that you are in such a hurry.'
 3005 – 'No, lord, it is time!
 One should not put off a good deed.
 With your permission, I wish to depart.'
 The king said: 'Go with God.'
 Then the king ordered the entire court
 3010 to accompany Reynaert outside,
 with the exception of the prisoners.
 Now Reynaert has turned pilgrim
 and his uncle Ysingrijn
 and Bruun lie tied up
 3015 and suffering from painful wounds.
 I am convinced that
 there is no one so downhearted
 between Poland and Schouwen
 because of a disaster that had befallen him,
 3020 or he would have laughed
 on seeing Reynaert then!
 How amazing his departure was
 and how naturally did

3016-21 In this aside the narrator makes a distinction between the here-and-now of the fictional action and the *doe* (then, 3021) of the story. His public realizes that it cannot participate in the story, and cannot see the ludicrously attired fox anymore than the most miserable person between Poland and Schouwen can see him. The two regions symbolize the extreme east (Poland) and west (Schouwen was an island in the county of Zeeland).

scaerpe ende palster omme den hals
 3025 ende die scoen als ende als
 die hi drouch an zine been
 ghebonden, sodat hi sceen
 een peulgrijn licht ghenouch!
 Reynaerts herte binnen louch,
 3030 dordat si alle met hem ghinghen
 met so groter zameninghen
 die hem tevoren waren wreet.
 Doe sprac hi: 'Coninc, mi es leet
 dat ghi so verre met mi gaet.
 3035 Ic vruchte het mach hu wesen quaet.
 Ghi hebt ghevaen II mordenaren.
 Ghevalt dat si hu ontvaren,
 ghi hebt hu te wachtene meer
 dan ghi noint hadt eer.
 3040 Blijft ghesont ende laet mi gaen.'
 Na dese tale ghinc hi staen
 up sine II achterste voeten
 ende maende die diere, cleene ende grote,
 dat si alle voer hem baden,
 3045 of si alle an sine weldaden
 recht deel nemen wouden.
 Si seiden alle dat si souden [210vb]
 sijns ghedincken in haer ghebede.
 Nu hoert voert wat Reynaert dede!
 3050 Daer hi van den coninc sciет,
 so drouvelic hi hem gheliet
 dat hem somen zeere ontfaremde.
 Cuwaert den haze hi becaremde:
 'O wy, Cuwaert, sullen wi sceeden?
 3055 Of God wilt, ghi sult mi gheleeden
 ende mijn vrient Belin de ram.

3049-3138 The false pilgrim manages to lure two tame animals from the court to Manpertuus, where Reynaert is to say farewell to his wife and children. Cuwaert the hare enters the den at Reynaert's request to help comfort the fox's wife. Cuwaert does, indeed, offer solace, but does so physically rather than verbally: the fox takes him by the throat and kills him. Reynaert's confrontations with Cuwaert show how the story will develop: evil will reign supreme. At the time of their first encounter Reynaert's tuition as a pseudo-

the scrip and staff hang around his neck
 3025 and did he wear all the shoes
 that he had tied around his legs,
 so that he might quite easily
 have been taken for a pilgrim!
 Reynaert laughed in his heart,
 3030 because all those who went with him
 in such a large gathering
 had earlier been ill-disposed towards him.

Then he said: 'King, it worries me
 to have you come with me so far.
 3035 I fear that it may do you harm.
 You have caught two criminals.
 If it should be so that they escape,
 you will have to be on your guard
 more than ever before.
 3040 Take care and let me go.'
 After these words he raised himself
 on his two back legs
 and urged all the animals, small and large,
 to pray for him,
 3045 if they all wished to profit
 by his good works.
 They all said that they would
 remember him in their prayers.

Now hear what Reynaert did next!
 3050 When he took leave of the king,
 he pretended to be so sad
 that some took great pity on him.
 He moaned to Cuwaert the hare:
 'Alas, Cuwaert, must we part?
 3055 God willing, you will accompany me
 with my friend Belin the ram.

cleric had not yet had the desired result; on the contrary, the failed murder attempt was one of the charges that led to the institution of legal proceedings. However, by the end of the story, Reynaert, this time in the guise of a false pilgrim, has conquered all problems. He does not let the hare escape a second time once he has it in his den. Belin the ram is waiting outside; his services will be abused by Reynaert to let Nobel know that he has been deceived.

Ghi twee, ghi ne daedt mi noint gram.
 Ghi moet mi bet voertbringhen.
 Ghi zijt van zoeter wandelinghen
 3060 ende onberoupen ende goedertieren
 ende ombeclaghete van allen dieren.
 Ghestade es huwer beeder zede,
 als ic doe ten tijden dede
 als ic clusenare was.
 3065 Hebdi lovere ende gras,
 ghi ne doet negheenen heesch
 noch om broet no om vleesch
 noch om sonderlinghe spijsen.
 Met aldusghedanen prijse
 3070 hevet Reynaert dese II verdoort,
 dat si met hem ghinghen voort
 totedat hi quam voer zijn huus
 ende voer de porte van Manpertuus.
 Alse Reynaert voer de porte quam,
 3075 doe sprac hi: 'Belin, neve ram,
 ghi moet alleene buten staen.
 Ic moet in mine veste gaen;
 Cuaert sal ingaen met mi.
 Heere Belin, bidt hem dat hi
 3080 troeste wel vrouwe Hermelinen
 met haren cleenen welpkinen,
 als ic orlof an hem neme.'
 Belin sprac: 'Ic bids heme
 dat hise alleene troeste wale.'
 3085 Reynaert ghinc met scoenre tale
 so smeeken ende losengieren
 in so menegher manieren
 dat hi bi barate brochte
 Cuwaerde in sine haghedochte. [211ra]
 3090 Als si in dat hol quamen,
 Cuaert ende Reynaert tsamen,
 doe vonden si vrouwe Hermelinen
 met haren cleenen welpkinen.

3075 *neve*: the form of address is used as a sign of friendship. See also 1278.

You two, you never gave me cause for anger.
 You must see me on my way.
 You are agreeable company
 3060 and of good repute and kindhearted
 and none of the animals complains of you.
 Steady is the way you both live,
 just as I did in the time
 when I was a hermit.
 3065 So long as you have leaves and grass,
 you do not hanker at all
 after bread or meat
 or dainty food.'
 With praise like this
 3070 has Reynaert misled the two,
 so that they accompanied him
 until he arrived at his house
 and before the gate of Manpertuus.
 When Reynaert arrived at the gate
 3075 he said: 'Belin, cousin ram,
 you must wait here outside by yourself.
 I must go into my fortress;
 Cuwaert will come in with me.
 Lord Belin, impress upon him that he
 3080 offers suitable comfort to Lady Hermeline
 and her little cubs,
 when I say goodbye to them.'
 Belin said: 'I appeal to him
 to comfort every one of them.'
 3085 Talking smoothly, Reynaert wheedled
 and cajoled so much
 and in so many ways
 that he deceived Cuwaert
 into coming with him into his den.
 3090 When they entered the hole,
 Cuwaert and Reynaert together,
 they found Lady Hermeline there
 with her small cubs.

3095 Die was in zorghen ende in vare,
 want so waent dat Reynaert ware
 verhanghen. Ende so vernam
 dat hi weder thuuswaert quam
 ende palster ende scerpe drouch;
 dit dochte haer wonders ghenouch.
 3100 So was blide ende sprac saen:
 ‘Reynaert, hoe sidi ontgaen?’
 3101 a *Reynart sprac: ‘Ic was gevaen,*
 3101 b *mar die coninc hi lijt mi gaen.*
 Ic bem worden peelgrijn.
 Heere Brune ende heere Ysengrijn
 sijn worden ghisele over mi.
 3105 Die coninc hevet, danc hebbe hi,
 Cuaerde ghegheven in rechter zoene
 al onsen wille mede te doene.
 Die coninc die lyede das
 dat Cuaert die eerste was
 3110 die ons verriet jeghen hem.
 Ende bi der trauwen die ic bem
 sculdich hu, vrouwe Hermeline:
 Cuaerde naket eene groete pine.
 Ic bem up hem met rechte gram!’
 3115 Ende also dat Cuaert vernam,
 keerdi hem omme ende waende vlien,
 maer dat ne conste hem niet ghescien,
 want Reynaert hadde hem ondergaen
 die porte ende ghegreepene saen
 3120 bi der kelen mordadelike.
 Ende Cuaert riep ghenadelike:
 ‘Helpt mi, Belin! Waer sidi?
 Dese peelgrijn verbijt mi!’
 Dat roupen was sciere ghedaen,
 3125 bedi Reynaert hadde saen

3101a-3110 Reynaert answers Hermeline’s question with a number of half-truths. It is right that he has become a pilgrim, but in actual fact he pretended to have been excommunicated and needing to go to the pope. The bear and wolf really have been caught, but the information that they have offered themselves as hostages so that Reynaert might go on a pilgrimage, is false. Earlier the king had ordained on pain of death that the fox and his family

3095 She was worried and afraid,
 for she thought that Reynaert
 had been hanged. And then she saw
 that he came home again
 and was carrying staff and scrip;
 it struck her as a great marvel.
 3100 She was glad and said at once:
 'Reynaert, how did you escape?'
 3101 a Reynaert said: 'I was caught,
 3101 b but the king let me go.
 I have become a pilgrim.
 Lord Bruun and Lord Ysingrijn
 have become hostages for me.
 3105 The king has – thanks be to him –
 presented Cuwaert as lawful peace offering,
 to do with as we please.
 The king acknowledged
 that Cuwaert was the first
 3110 to accuse us falsely before him.
 And by the loyalty that I owe
 you, Lady Hermeline:
 Cuwaert awaits grievous punishment.
 I have every reason to be angry with him!'

3115 And when Cuwaert heard that,
 he turned round and wanted to flee,
 but he could not do it
 for Reynaert had cut off the way
 to the gate and seized him at once
 3120 by the throat with murderous intent.
 And Cuwaert shouted pitifully:
 'Help me, Belin! Where are you?
 This pilgrim is biting me to death!'
 The shouting soon ceased,
 3125 for Reynaert had straightaway

should be honoured (2780-84), which in Reynaert's interpretation means that the king has made a gift of Cuwaert to the fox and his family. Cuwaert's earlier mention of the counterfeiter at Kriekeputte (2667-71) is blown up by Reynaert to a betrayal of his case. Reynaert's cryptic account results in dramatic irony: the audience knows more than does Hermeline. This is amusing and accentuates the perversion of Reynaert's verbal skills.

sine kele ontwee ghebeten.
 Doe sprac Reynaert: 'Nu gaen wi heten
 desen goeden vetten hase.'
 Die welpine liepen ten *ase*
 3130 ende ghinghen heten al ghemeene. [211rb]
 Haren rauwe was wel cleene
 dat Cuaert hadde verloren tlijf.
 Ermeline, Reynaerts wijf,
 hat dat vleesch ende dranc dat bloet.
 3135 Ay, hoe dicke *bat* so goets
 den coninc, die dor sine doghet
 die cleene welpkine hadde verhoghet
 so wel met eenen goeden male.
 Reynaert sprac: 'Hi jans hu wale.
 3140 Ic weet wel, moet die coninc leven,
 hi soude ons gherne ghiften gheven
 die hi selve niet ne woude
 hebben om VII maerc van goude.'
 'Wat ghiften es dat?' sprac Hermeline.
 3145 Reynaert sprac: 'Hets eene lijne
 ende eene vorst ende twee micken.
 Maer maghic, ic sal hem ontscricken,
 hopic, eer lijden daghen twee,
 dat ic omme zijn daghen mee
 3150 ne gave dan hi omme tmijn.'
 Soe sprac: 'Reynaert, wat mach dat zijn?'
 Reynaert sprac: 'Vrauwe, ic secht hu.
 Ic weet een wildernesse nu
 van langhen haghende ende van heede
 3155 ende die so nes niet onghereede
 van goeden liggene ende van spijsen.
 Daer wonen hoenre ende pertrijzen
 ende menegherande vogheline.

3134 As Cuwaert, according to Reynaert, had been delivered to him as lawful peace offering (*in rechter zoene*, 3106), this line appears to associate the consumption of the dead hare in a suggestive way with Christ's death on the cross, presented during the Last Supper as a sacrifice and celebrated as such in the Catholic mass (through the consecration and consumption of bread and wine in which Christ's broken body and spilled blood are substantially present).
3130-99 Reynaert realizes that King Nobel will exact revenge when he finds out that he has

bitten his throat asunder.
 Then Reynaert said: 'Now let us eat
 of this good, fat hare.'
 The cubs ran to the food
 3130 and started to eat together.
 They did not in the least regret
 that Cuwaert had lost his life.
 Hermeline, Reynaert's wife,
 ate of the flesh and drank the blood.
 3135 Ah, how often did she wish the king
 well, who, in his generosity,
 had so delighted the little cubs
 with a delicious meal.
 Reynaert said: 'He is very pleased for you.
 3140 I am sure that if the king lives,
 he would gladly give us a present
 that he himself would not like to
 receive for seven gold marks.'
 'What gift is that?' said Hermeline.
 3145 Reynaert said: 'It is a rope
 with a crossbeam and two poles.
 But if I can, I hope to escape him
 before two days are past,
 so that I need care for his summons no more
 3150 than he does for mine.'
 She said: 'Reynaert, what does this mean?'
 Reynaert said: 'Lady, I shall tell you.
 I can think of a wilderness
 with high bushes and heather,
 3155 and where there is no lack
 of suitable resting places and food.
 Fowls and partridges live there
 and all kinds of small birds.

been deceived (3140-50 and cf. 1372-84, 2534-37, 3319-20, 3420-24, 3447-51). That is why Reynaert will depart for a new wilderness with his family, out of reach of Nobel's court (cf. 3317-29).
3145-46 It concerns the constituent parts of a gallows.
3152-64 The fox presents the landscape to his wife as a paradise. This holds true only from a predator's perspective, for other animals risk their lives there. For the world of the court such a landscape is a *locus terribilis* (cf. the note to 2574-93).

- Wildi doen, vrouwe Ermeline,
 3160 dat ghi gaen wilt met mi daer?
 Wi moghen daer wonen VII jaer
 (willen wi), wandelen onder die scade
 ende hebben daer groete ghenade,
 eer wi worden daer bespied.
 3165 Al seidic meer, in loghe niet.'
 'Ay, Reynaert,' sprac vrouwe Hermeline,
 'dit dinct mi wesen eene pine
 die algader ware verloren.
 Nu hebdi dit lant verzworen
 3170 in te wonen nemmermee,
 eer ghi comt overzee;
 ende hebt palster ende scerpe ontfaen.'
 Reynaert andwoerde vele saen: [211va]
 'So meer ghezwoeren, so meer verloren.
 3175 Mi seide een goet man hier tevoren
 in rade dat hi mi riet:
bedwongene trauwe ne diedet niet.
 Al vuldade ic dese vaert,
 en holpe mi niet,' sprac Reynaert.
 3180 'In waers een ey niet te bat.
 Ic hebbe den coninc eenen scat
 belovet die mi es onghereet,
 ende als hi des de waerheit weet
 ende hi bi mi es bedroghen,
 3185 dat ic hem al hebbe gheloghen,
 so sal hi mi haten vele meere
 dan hi noint dede eere.
 Daerbi peinsic in minen moet:
 dat varen es mi also goet
 3190 alse dit bliven,' sprac Reynaert.
 'Ende Godsat hebbe mijn rode baert,
 ghedoe hoe ic ghedoe,
 of mi troestet mee daertoe
 no die cater no die das,
 3195 no Bruun, die na mijn oem was,

3180 The literal meaning of *ey* is 'egg'.

Will you agree, Lady Hermeline,
 3160 to go there with me?
 We can live there for seven years,
 if we like, walk in the shadow
 and do very well there,
 before we would be found out.
 3165 If I said more about it, I would not lie.'
 'Oh, Reynaert,' Lady Hermeline said,
 'this seems to me
 altogether a waste of effort.
 You have just forsworn this land,
 3170 never to live in it again,
 until you return from the Holy Land,
 and you have received the staff and scrip.'
 Reynaert answered at once:
 'The more you swear, the more you lose.
 3175 A wise man once told me
 when he gave me some advice:
 under duress a promise means nothing.
 If I were to accomplish this journey,
 it would not help me,' said Reynaert.
 3180 'It would not benefit me one bit.
 I have promised the king a treasure
 which I do not possess,
 and once he knows the truth about it
 and how he has been deceived by me,
 3185 and that I have told him a pack of lies,
 he will hate me far more
 than he ever did before.
 That is why I think
 that going away will benefit me as much
 3190 as staying,' said Reynaert.
 'And may my red beard be damned,
 whatever my circumstances,
 if I should ever be persuaded again
 by the cat or the badger
 3195 or by dear uncle Bruun,

no dor ghewin no dor scade,
 dat ic in sconinx ghenade
 ne comme, dat ic leve lancst!
 Ic hebbe leden so meneghen anxt.’
 3200 So zeere balch die ram Belijn
 dat Cuaert, die gheselle zijn,
 in dat hol so langhe merrede.
 Hi riep als die hem zeere errede:
 ‘Cuaert, lates den duvel wouden!
 3205 Hoe langhe sal hu daer Reynaert houden?
 Twi ne comdi huut ende laet ons gaen?’
 Alsoe Reynaert dit hadde verstaen,
 doe ghinc hi hute tote Beline
 ende sprac al stillekine:
 3210 ‘Ay heere, twi so belghedi?
 Al sprac Cuwaert jeghen mi
 ende jeghen ziere moyen,
 waeromme mach hu dus vernoyen?
 Cuaert dede mi verstaen,
 3215 ghi moghet wel sachte voeren gaen, [211vb]
 ne wildi hier niet langher zijn.
 Hi moet hier merren een lettelkijn
 met siere moyen Hermelinen
 ende met haren welpkinen,
 3220 die seere weenen ende mesbaren
 omdat ic hem sal ontfaeren.’
 Belin sprac: ‘Nu secht mi,
 heere Reynaert, wat hebdi
 Cuaerde te leede ghedaen?
 3225 Also als ic conste verstaen,
 so riep hi arde hulpe up mi.’
 Reynaert sprac: ‘Wat sechdi?
 Belin, God moete hu beraden!
 Ic segghe hu wat wi doe daden.
 3230 Doe ic in huus gheganghen quam
 ende Ermeline an mi vernam
 dat ic wilde varen overzee,
 ten eersten wart haer so wee
 dat so langhe in ommacht lach.

or by the prospect of profit or loss
 to surrender myself to the king's
 mercy, as long as I live!
 I have suffered so many fears.'

3200 The ram Belin became very angry
 that Cuwaert, his companion,
 tarried so long in that hole.
 Very annoyed, he shouted:
 'Cuwaert, let the devil see to it!
 3205 How long is Reynaert going to keep you there?
 Why don't you come out so we can go?'
 When Reynaert had heard this,
 he went outside to Belin
 and said softly:

3210 'Ah, lord, why are you annoyed?
 If Cuwaert spoke with me
 and with his aunt,
 why should that irritate you so?
 Cuwaert gave me to understand
 3215 that you may go ahead slowly,
 if you no longer wish to stay here.
 He has to remain here just a little while
 longer with his aunt Hermeline
 and with her cubs,

3220 who are weeping and wailing loudly
 because I shall leave them.'
 Belin said: 'Now tell me,
 Lord Reynaert, what wrong have you
 done to Cuwaert?

3225 In so far as I could hear it,
 he called me urgently to come to his rescue.'
 Reynaert said: 'What are you saying?
 Belin, may God help you!
 I shall tell you what we were doing then.

3230 As I entered my house
 and Hermeline heard from me
 that I intended to go to the Holy Land,
 she was at once so overcome
 that she lay unconscious for a long time.

- 3235 Ende alse Cuaert dat ghesach,
doe riep hi: “*Bellijn*, helet vry,
com hare, ende helpt mi
miere moyen laven; so es in ommacht!”
Dat riep hi met groeter cracht.
- 3240 Dit waren die woerde ende niet hel.’
‘Entrauwen, ic verstont oec wel
dat Cuaert dreef groet mesbare.
Ic waende hem yet mesvallen ware.’
Reynaert sprac: ‘Belin, neent niet.
- 3245 Mi ware *liever mesquame* yet
minen kindren of minen wive
dan mijns neven Cuwaerts live.’
Reynaert sprac: ‘Vernaemdi yet
dat mi de coninc ghistren hiet
- 3250 voer arde vele hoeghe liede,
als ic huten lande sciede,
dat ic hem een paer lettren screve?
Suldijt hem draghen, Belin neve?
Het es ghescreven ende al ghereet.’
- 3255 Belin sprac: ‘Ende ic ne weet.
Reynaert, wistic hu ghedichte
dat ghetrauwe ware, ghi mochtet lichte [212ra]
ghebidden dat ict den coninc
droughe, haddic eeneghe dinc
- 3260 daer icse mochte in steken.’
Reynaert sprac: ‘Hu ne sal niet ghebreken.
Eer des coninx lettren hier bleven,
ic soude hu dese scerpe eer gheven,
heere Belin, die ic draghe
- 3265 ende hanghense an huwe craghe
ende des conincs lettren daerin.
Ghi sulter af hebben groet ghewin,
des conincs danc ende groet eere.
Ghi sult den coninc minen heere
- 3270 harde willecomme zijn.’
Dit loofde mijn heere Belijn.
Reynaert ghinc in die aghedochte
ende keerde weder ende brochte

3235 And when Cuwaert saw this,
 he called: "Belin, noble hero,
 come here and help me
 rouse my aunt. She has fainted!"
 That is what he shouted as loudly as he could.
 3240 These were his words and nothing else.'
 – "Truly, I clearly also heard
 Cuwaert wailing loudly.
 I thought something awful had happened to him.'
 Reynaert said: 'Belin, no, certainly not.
 3245 I would sooner that something happened
 to my children or to my wife
 than to my cousin Cuwaert's life.'
 Reynaert said: 'Did you happen to hear
 that the king asked me yesterday
 3250 in the presence of very many nobles
 to write him a letter
 when I left the country?
 Would you take it to him, cousin Belin?
 It has been written and is quite finished.'
 3255 Belin said: 'I don't really know.
 Reynaert, if I knew that your writing
 was trustworthy, you would not need
 to press me to take it to the king,
 if I had something
 3260 to put it in.'
 Reynaert said: 'You will lack for nothing.
 Rather than that the letter to the king should
 stay here, I would give you this scrip,
 Lord Belin, that I wear,
 3265 and hang it round your neck,
 with the letter to the king in it.
 You will reap great benefit from it,
 the king's gratitude and much honour.
 You will be most welcome
 3270 with my lord the king.'
 This my Lord Belin promised to do.
 Reynaert went back into his hole
 and returned and brought

3275 sinen vrient Beline jeghen
 dat hoeft van Cuaerde ghedreghen,
 in die scerpe ghesteken,
 ende hinc bi sinen quaden treken
 die scerpe Belin an den hals;
 ende beval hem als ende hals
 3280 dat hi die lettren niet ne soude
 besien, of hi gherne woude
 den coninc teenen vrienden maken.
 Ende seide hem dat die lettren staken
 in die scerpe verholenlike
 3285 ende of hi wesen wilde rike
 ende sinen heere den coninc hadde lief,
 dat hi seide dat desen brief
 bi hem alleene ware ghescreven
 ende hiera raet toe hadde ghegheven.
 3290 Die coninc souts hem weten danc.
 Dat hoerde Belin ende spranc
 van der stede daer hi up stoet
 meer dan eenen halven voet,
 so blide was hi van der dinc,
 3295 die hem te toerne sint verghinc!
 Doe sprac *Belin*: '*Reynaert* heere,
 nu weet ic wel dat ghi doet eere
mi selven ende die zijn int hof.
 Men saels *mi* spreken groeten lof, [212rb]
 3300 als men weet dat *ic can* dichten
 met sconen woerden ende met lichten,
 al si dat ics niet ne can.
 Men seit dicken: hets menich man
 groete eere ghesciet, dat hem God jonste,
 3305 van dinghen die hi lettelt conste.'
 Hierna sprac Belin: '*Reynaert*,
 wats hu raet? Wille Cuaert
 met mi weder te hove gaen?'
 'Neen hi,' sprac *Reynaert*, 'hi sal hu saen
 3310 volghen bi desen selven pade.
 Hi ne hevet noch negheene stade.
 Nu gaet voren met ghemake.

his friend Belin
 3275 Cuwaert's head,
 inserted into the scrip,
 and hung, evil minded as ever,
 the scrip round Belin's neck
 and strongly impressed upon him
 3280 that he should not look at the letter
 if he wished
 to befriend the king.
 And he told him that the letter
 had been put deep down in the scrip
 3285 and if he wanted to do well
 and if he loved his lord the king,
 then he had to say that this letter
 had been written by himself alone
 and that it had been his idea.
 3290 The king would be very grateful to him.
 Belin heard this and jumped up
 from the place where he stood
 more than half a foot,
 so glad was he about this affair
 3295 that later turned out so badly for him!
 Then Belin said: 'Lord Reynaert,
 now I am certain that you honour
 me and the members of the court.
 I shall be praised highly
 3300 when it becomes known that I can write
 with fine and plain words,
 even though I cannot really.
 It is often said: many acquire
 great honour – bestowed on them by God –
 3305 through skills they barely master.'
 Then Belin said: 'Reynaert,
 what do you advise? Should Cuwaert
 return with me to court?'
 'No,' said Reynaert, 'he will speedily
 3310 follow by the same route.
 He hasn't got time for it yet.
 Now go ahead and take it slowly.

Ic sal Cuaerde sulke sake
 ontdecken, die noch es verholen.’
 3315 ‘Reynaert, so blivet Gode volen,’
 sprac Belin ende dede hem up de vaert.
 Nu hoert wat hi doet, Reynaert!
 Hi keerde in sine haghedochte
 ende sprac: ‘Hier naect ons gherochte,
 3320 bliven wi hier, ende grote pine.
 Ghereet hu, vrouwe Hermeline,
 ende mine kindre also algader.
 Volghet mi; ic bem hu vader.
 Ende pinen wi ons dat wi ontfaren.’
 3325 Doe ne was *daer* gheen langher sparen.
 Si daden hem alle up die vaert:
 Ermeline ende heere Reynaert
 ende hare jonghe welpkine;
 dese anevaerden die woestine.
 3330 Nu hevet Belin die ram
 soe gheloepen dat hi quam
 te hove een lettelt na middach.
 Als die coninc Belin ghesach,
 die de scerpe wederbrochte
 3335 daer Brune die beere so onsochte
 tevoren omme was ghedaen,
 doe sprac hi te Belin saen:
 ‘Heere Belin, wanen comedi?
 Waer es Reynaert? Hoe comt dat hi
 3340 dese scerpe niet met hem draghet?’
 Belin sprac: ‘Coninc, ic maghet
 hu segghen also ict weet. [212va]
 Doe Reynaert al was ghereet
 ende hi den casteel rumen soude,
 3345 doe seide hi mi dat hi hu woude
 een paer lettren, coninc vry,
 senden ende doe bat hi mi

3313-14 Reynaert’s words are ambiguous. He states that he will reveal a secret to Cuwaert, but his words may also mean that he will reveal a secret to the king by means of the hare (i.e. that there is no treasure).

I shall make Cuwaert reveal something
that as yet is hidden.'

3315 'Reynaert, may God keep you,'
said Belin and went on his way.

Now hear what Reynaert does!

He returned to his den
and said: 'Problems are in store for us
3320 if we stay here, and much misery.

Get you ready, Lady Hermeline,
and all my children, too.

Follow me, I am your father.

And let us make every effort to escape.'

3325 Then they did not delay any longer.

They all went on their way:

Hermeline and Lord Reynaert

and their young cubs;

they departed for the waste land.

3330 Now Belin the ram has
made such good speed that he
reached the court shortly after noon.

When the king saw Belin,

who returned the scrip

3335 for which Bruun the bear
had earlier been maltreated so,
he said to Belin immediately:

'Lord Belin, where are you coming from?

Where is Reynaert? How come that he

3340 does not have this scrip with him?'

Belin said: 'King, I shall tell it you

as I understand it.

When Reynaert was quite ready

and was about to leave his fortress,

3345 he told me that he wanted to send
you, noble king, a letter

and then he asked me

to deliver it out of affection for you.

dat icse droughe dor huwe lieve.
3350 Ic seide meer dan VII brieve
soudic dor huwen wille draghen.
Doe ne conste Reynaert niet bejaghen
daer ic de brieve in draghen mochte.
Dese scerpe hi mi brochte
3355 ende die lettren daerin ghesteken.
Coninc, ghi ne horet noint spreken
van betren dichtre dan ic bem.
Dese lettren dichte ic hem,
gaet mi te goede of te quade.
3360 Dese lettren dichte ic bi minen rade,
aldus ghemaect ende ghescreven.’
Doe hiet hem die coninc gheven
den brief Botsaerde sinen clerc.
Dat was hi die ant werc
3365 bet conste dan yement die daer was.
Botsaert plach emmer dat hi las
die lettren die te hove quamen.
Bruneel ende hi die namen
die scerpe van den halse Belijns,
3370 die bi der dompheit zijns
hiertoe hadde gheseit so verre
dat hi snieme sal werden erre.
Die scerpe ontfinc Botsaert de clerc.
Doe moeste bliken Reynaerts werc,
3375 alse hi dat hoeft voerttrac,
Botsaert, ende sach dat:
‘Helpe, wat lettren zijn dit?
Heere coninc, bi miere wit,
dit es dat hoeft van Cuaerde!
3380 O wach, dat ghi noint Reynaerde,
coninc, ghetrauwet so verre!’
Doe mochte men drouve sien ende erre
dien coninc entie coninghinne.

3362-68 It is not clear what kind of animals Botsaert the clerk and Bruneel are supposed to be. Were these characters familiar to Willem’s public? It has been suggested that Botsaert might be a monkey or a boar; Bruneel is said to have been an ass.

I declared that for your sake I would gladly
 3350 carry more than seven letters.
 Then Reynaert was unable to find anything
 in which I might carry the letter.
 He brought me this scrip
 with the letter put inside it.
 3355 King, you never heard speak
 of a better writer than I am.
 This letter I wrote for him,
 whatever may befall me.
 This letter I composed to the best of my ability,
 3360 thus drawn up and put in writing.’
 Then the king ordered him to give
 the letter to Botsaert his clerk.
 He was better at that job
 than anyone who was present there.
 3365 Botsaert always used to read
 the letters that arrived at court.
 Bruneel and he lifted
 the scrip from around Belin’s neck,
 who, in his stupidity,
 3370 had been saying so much
 that he will soon regret it.
 Botsaert the clerk received the scrip.
 Then Reynaert’s doing had to come to light,
 as soon as Botsaert drew out
 3375 the head and saw it:
 ‘Help, what kind of a letter is this?
 Lord King, by my faith,
 this is Cuwaert’s head!
 Ah, woe, king, that you ever
 3380 put so much trust in Reynaert!’
 Then the king and queen
 could be seen to be sad and angry.
 The king stood there deeply affected

3372-80 Earlier in the story Reynaert had mocked and teased his victims Bruun, Tybeert and Haersint verbally. The lion, however, is made a fool of in a non-verbal manner by Reynaert when Cuwaert’s head is pulled from the bag.

- [212vb]
- 3385 Die coninc stont in drouven zinne
 ende slouch zijn hoeft neder.
 Overlanc hief hijt weder
 up ende begonste werpen huut
 een dat vreeselicste gheloot
 dat noint van diere ghehoort waert.
- 3390 Ghene dieren waren vervaert.
 Doe spranc voert *Fyrapeel*,
 die lubaert. Hi was een deel
 des coninx maech; hi mocht wel doen.
 Hi sprac: 'Heere coninc lyoen,
 twi drijfdi dus groet onghevouch?
- 3395 Ghi mesliet hu ghenouch,
 al ware de coninghinne doot.
 Doet wel ende wijsheit groot
 ende slaect huwen rauwe een deel.'
- 3400 Die coninc sprac: 'Heere *Fierapeel*,
 mi hevet een quaet wicht so verre
 bedroghen dat ics bem erre,
 ende int strec gheleet bi barate,
 dat ic recht mi selven hate
- 3405 ende ic mine eere hebbe verloren.
 Die mine vriende waren tevoren,
 die stoute heere Brune ende heere Ysingrijn,
 die rovet mi een valsch peelgrijn.
 Dat gaet miere herten na so zeere
- 3410 dat het gaen sal an mine eere
 ende an mijn leven, het es recht!'
 Doe sprac *Fyrapeel* echt:
 'Es ghedaen mesdaet, men saelt zoenen.
 Men sal den wulf enten beere doen comen
- 3415 ende vrouwe Hersenden also wel
 ende betren hem hare mesdaet snel
 ende over haren toren ende over hare pine
 versoenen metten ram Beline,
 nadat hi selve heeft ghelyet

3412-21 Nobel has wronged his mightiest vassals. According to *Fyrapeel* this calls for a reconciliation (3412). However, in the leopard's cynical mental world this does not apply to

and hung his head.
 3385 After a long time he lifted it again
 and began to raise
 the most terrifying sound
 that any animal was ever heard to make.
 The animals there were afraid.
 3390 Then forward sprang Fyrapeel,
 the leopard. He was a distant relative
 of the king; he was allowed to do so.
 He said: 'Lord King Lion,
 why are you making such a row?
 3395 You are letting yourself go in a way
 as if the queen had died.
 Behave properly and sensibly
 and modify your distress somewhat.'
 The king said: 'Lord Fyrapeel,
 3400 I have been so terribly misled by a scoundrel
 that I am beside myself,
 and I have been trapped by a trick
 so that I now have every reason to hate myself
 and I have lost my honour.
 3405 A false pilgrim robbed me
 of those who were my friends before,
 bold Lord Bruun and Lord Ysingrijn.
 It make me very sad at heart
 that it will cost me my honour
 3410 and my life, and rightly so!'
 Then Fyrapeel spoke again:
 'Where wrong has been done, peace must be sought.
 The wolf and the bear will be sent for,
 as will Lady Haersint
 3415 and they will straightaway be compensated
 for the wrong done to them
 and for the distress and the pain they suffered
 by offering them the ram Belin, since he has admitted
 himself that he betrayed Cuwaert.

all animals. Belin, too, has – to Fyrapeel's mind at least – done wrong, but the ram has to pay for it with his life. At Nobel's court only the powerful will now survive: the law of the jungle.

- 3420 dat hi Cuaerde verriet.
 Hi heeft mesdaen, hi moet becoepen.
 Ende daerna sullen wi alle loepen
 na Reynaerde ende sulne vanghen
 ende sullen sine kele hanghen
- 3425 sonder vonnesse, hets recht!
 Doe andwoerde die coninc hecht: [213ra]
 ‘O wy, heere *Fyrapeel*,
 mochte dit ghescien, so ware een deel
 ghesocht den rauwe die mi slaet.’
- 3430 *Fyrapeel* sprac: ‘Heere, jaet.
 Ic wille gaen maken die zoene.’
 Doe ghinc *Fyrapeel* die coene
 daer hi die ghevanghene vant.
 Ic wane dat hise teerst ontbant!
- 3435 Ende daerna sprac hi: ‘Ghi heeren beede,
 ic bringhe hu vrede ende gheleede.
 Mine heere de coninc groet hu
 ende hem berauwet zeere nu
 dat hi jeghen hu heeft mesdaen.
- 3440 Hi biet hu *soene*, wildijt ontfaen,
 wie so blide si ofte gram.
 Hi wille hu gheven Belin den ram
 ende alle sheere Belins maghe
 van nu toten domsdaghe.
- 3445 Eist int velt, eist int wout,
 hebse alle in hu ghewout
 ende ghise ghewilleghelike verbit.
 Die coninc ontbiet hu voer al dit:
 dat ghi sonder eeneghe mesdaet

3423 The last line in the Dyck manuscript agrees with line 3423 in the redaction of the Comburg codex. This is one reason why the end of the Comburg redaction has been considered to be not original. However, this opinion now seems untenable. It is more likely that the last lines of the original poem are lacking from the Dyck redaction. See also the note to 3461-69.

3439-46 The leopard tries to reconcile the lion with the wolf and the bear by surrendering the ram and all its relatives to them for all eternity. This is reminiscent of the Messianic peace described in the Book of Isaiah (11, 6-7): ‘And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb: and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf and the lion, and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them. And the calf and the bear shall feed: their young ones shall rest together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.’ However, the four predators

3420 He has done wrong, he will pay for it.
 And next we shall all go
 after Reynaert and catch him
 and hang him by the throat
 without a trial, it's lawful!
 3425 Then the king answered to this:
 'Well, Lord Fyrapeel,
 if this could be done, then part
 of the distress that I suffer would be alleviated.'
 Fyrapeel said: 'Lord, certainly.
 3430 I shall go and effect the reconciliation.'
 Then brave Fyrapeel
 went to where he found the captives.
 I assume that he freed them first!
 And then he said: 'You lords, both of you,
 3435 I bring you peace and safe conduct.
 My lord the king greets you
 and now deeply regrets
 the harm that he has done you.
 He offers to recompense you, if you will agree,
 3440 whatever anyone else may think.
 He wants to give you Belin the ram
 and all Lord Belin's relatives
 from now until Doomsday.
 In the field or in the woods,
 3445 they will all be at your disposal
 and you may kill them as much as you like.
 The king especially wants you to know this:
 that you may, without committing any crime,
 harm and torment Reynaert

that are peaceful in Isaiah, agree in Willem's poem that they are justified in tearing apart the ram and his descendants till kingdom come. This is a cynical reversal, which indicates that in Nobel's world evil will reign for ever. At the leopard's proposal the king is reconciled with his highest vassals by infringing the rights of other vassals permanently. This spells the end of Nobel's feudal order (see pp. 25-27). Possibly there is another biblical motif which resonates here. Cuwaert and Belin function as the two goats from the Book of Leviticus, which are sacrificed on the day of atonement by the priest of the temple for the sins of the Jewish people. The first (Cuwaert) is killed in the temple (Manpertuus). The second, the actual scapegoat (Belin), is sent, laden with the iniquities of the people, into the wilderness to perish there (Lev. 16, 20-23).

- 3450 Reynaerde moghet toren ende quaet
doen ende alle zine maghen,
waer so ghise moghet belaghen.
Dese twee groete *vriheden*
wille hu die coninc gheven heden
- 3455 te vryen leene eewelike.
Ende hierbinnen wilt die coninc rike
dat ghi hem zweert vaste hulde.
Hi ne wille oec bi sinen sculde
nemmermeer jeghen hu mesdoen.
- 3460 Dit biedt hu de coninc lyoen.
Dit neemt ende leeft met ghenaden.
B i Gode, ic dart hu wel raden!
I singrijn sprac toten beere:
'**W** at sechdire toe, Brune heere?'
- 3465 – '**I** c hebbe liever in de rijssere
L igghen *dan hier* in dysere.
L aet ons toten coninc gaen
E nde sinen pays daer ontfaen.' [213rb]
M et *Fyrapeel* dat si ghinghen
E nde maecten pays van allen dinghen.

3461-69 The acrostichon BI WILLEME agrees with the information in the first line of the poem: its author is Willem. This is an argument in favour of the view that the end of the poem in the Comburg redaction is original.

3450 and all his relatives,
 wherever you can waylay them.
 These two great liberties
 does the king wish to bestow on you today
 to be at your free disposal for all eternity.
 3455 And in connection with this the mighty king
 wants you to do homage to him.
 He will never again
 knowingly wrong you.
 This is what King Lion offers you.
 3460 Accept it, and you will live in his favour.
By God, I would certainly recommend it!
 Y singrijn said to the bear:
 ‘**W**hat do you say, Lord Bruun?’
 – ‘**I** prefer lying in the bushes to
 3465 **L**ying here, clapped in irons.
Let us go to the king and
Enter into his peace.’
Moving along with Fyrapeel, they
Ended by making peace all round.

D a ihē scone mede bedroech
E n die gesellen sime
D at was eer ic mit rime
E n mine geselschap maecte valt
D ie mi gequilt hese menigē past
O wi sprac v̄ suete rijn
I icue gelspele suete hondelijn
V̄ gaue god war di nu hier
S h̄ souc orcontē vor dit dier
O ic scone wort waer te doene
D at ic nouc ne was so doene
D at ic enigē sake dede
D a ic dē cō mochte mede
T e mē waer belgē doen mit rechte
S aet wed ondgone knechte
S̄ prac v̄ haestelike anwart
O in here dē cō en hese tijt
H e geen die te spreke meer
C uart dede enē wed heer
E n ginc vā corinix rate dar
V̄ sprac cō here ist waer