par mi le cuer d'un amoreus talent;
oncore i est li cous que j'en reçui.

Li cous fu granz, il ne fet qu'enpoirier,
ne nus mires ne m'en porroit saner,
35 se cele non qui le dart fist lancier.
Se de sa main i daignoit adeser,
biën en porroit le coup mortel oster
a tout le fust, dont j'ai grant desirrier;
mès la pointe du fer n'en puët sachier,
40 qu'ele brïsa dedenz au cop doner.

Dame, vers vous n'ai autre messagier
par cui vous os mon corage envoier
fors ma chançon, se la volez chanter.\footnote{Dante cites this song for praise in DVE I, ix.}

32

Tuit mi desir et tuit mi grief torment
viennent de la ou sont tuit mi pensé.
Grant poor ai, pour ce que toute gent
qui ont veü son gent cors acesmé
5 son si vers li de bone volenté.
Nès Deus l'aime, gel sai a escient;
grant merveille est, quant il s'en suesfre tant.

Touz esbahiz m'obli en merveillant
ou Deus trouva si estrange biauté;
10 quant il la mist ça jus entre la gent,
mult nous en fist grant debounereté.
Trestout le mont en a enluminé,
qu'en sa valor sont tuit li bien si grant;
nus ne la voit ne vous en die autant.
a longing for love into my heart;
the wound I received there is still fresh.

The wound was great and can only get worse,
nor can any doctor cure me
except her who shot the arrow.
If she deigns to touch it with her hand,
she would take away that mortal wound—
at least the shaft, which I greatly want.
But she cannot draw out the iron point,
for that broke off inside my heart when the arrow struck.

Lady, I have no other messenger to you
with whom I dare send you my heart
except my song, if you consent to sing it.¹

All my desires and all my heavy torments
come from the one place where all my thoughts reside.
I am much afraid, because everyone
who has seen her noble figure adorned
is much inclined toward her.
God himself loves her, I know.
It is a great wonder how He does without her.

In great unrest I forget myself wondering
where God found such strange beauty;
when he set her down here among mankind
it was a great act of kindness for us.
He lit the whole world with her light,
for every virtue is present in her worth.
No one who sees her would tell you less.
Bone aventure aviengne fol espoir,
qui mainz amanz fet vivre et resjoîr!
Desperance fet languir et doloir,
et mes fous cuers me fet cuidier guerir;
si’il fust sages, il me feîst morir.
Pour ce fet bon de la folie avoir,
qu’en trop grant sens puêt il bien meschoir.

Qui la voldroit souvenant ramentevoir,
ja n’avoit mal ne l’esteîst guerir,
car ele fet trestoz ceus melz valoir
cui ele veu belement acollir.
Deus! tant me fu grief de li departir!
Amors, merci! Fetes li a savoir:
Cuers qui n’ainme ne puêt grant joie avoir.

Souviengne vous, dame, du douz acueil
qui ja fu fez par si grant desirrier,
que n’orent pas tant de pouoir mi oeil
que je vers vous les osasse lancier;
de ma bouche ne vos osai prîer,
ne poi dire, dame, ce que je vueil;
tant fuî coarz, las, chetis! q’or m’en dueil.

Dame, se je vos puis mès aresnier,
je parlerai mult melz que je ne sueil,
s’Amors me let, qui trop me maine orgueil.

Chançon, va t’en droit a Raoul ¹ noncier
qu’il serve Amors et face bel acueil
et chant souvent com oiselez en brueil.

¹ Raoul de Soissons, nobleman and poet, born some time after 1210.
15 Good luck to foolish hope!
   for hope lets a lover live and rejoice.
Despair makes me suffer and pine away,
but my heart, in its foolishness, makes me believe in my recovery;
now if the heart were wise, it would make me die.
20 Therefore it is good to be a little foolish,
   for with too much good sense, things can go badly.
   Anyone who would call her to mind again and again
   would suffer no disease and need no remedy,
   for she makes everyone stronger and worth more
   whom she is willing to welcome.
25 God, how bitter it was to part from her!
   Love, have pity, let her know:
   a heart that does not love cannot know great joy.
   Lady, remember when you received me gently:
30 my desire was so great,
   my eyes did not have such strength
   that I could dare turn them toward you;
   I did not dare open my mouth to pray for love,
   I cannot tell you, my lady, what I want,
35 I am such a coward, weary, so wretched! and now I suffer for it.
   Lady, if I can speak with you again,
   I will speak much better than I do,
   if Love allows it, who treats me now with such disdain.
   Song, go straight to Raoul and tell him
40 to serve Love and receive her well
   and sing and sing like the birds in the woods.
Chançon ferai, que talenz m’en est pris,
de la meilleur qui soit en tout le mont.
De la meilleur? Je cuit que j’ai mespris.
S’elle fust teus, se Deus joie me dont,
5 de moi li fust aucune pitié prise,
qui sui touz siens et sui a sa devise.
Pitiez de cuer, Deus! que ne s’est assise
en sa biauté? Dame, qui merci proi,
*Je sent les mauz d’amer por vos.*
10 *Sentez les vos por moï*

Douce dame, sanz amor fui jadis,
quant je choisi vostre gente façon;
et quant je vi vostre tres biau cler vis,
si me raprist mes cuers autre reson:
15 De vos amer me semont et justise,
a vos en est a vostre commandise.
Li cors remaint, qui sent felon juïse,
se n’en avez merci de vostre gré.
*Li douz mal dont j’atent joie*
20 *m’ont si grevé*
*morz sui, s’ele m’i delaie.*

Mult a Amors grant force et grant pouoir,
qui sanz reson fet choisir a son gré.
Sanz reson? Deus! je ne di pas savoir,
25 car a mes euz en set mes cuers bon gré,
qui choisièrent si tres bele semblance,
dont jamès jor ne ferai desevrance,
ainz sousfrirai por li grief penittance,
tant que pitiez et merciz l’en prendra.

30 *Diré vos qui mon cuer enblé m’a?*
*Li douz ris et li bel oeil qu’ele a.*
I shall make a song, for the desire has come on me,  
about the best one in the world.  
The best? I guess I'm wrong.  
If she were the best, so God give me joy,  
5 some bit of pity would have taken hold in her  
for me, who am all hers and at her will.  
The heart's pity—God! why has it not settled  
in her beauty? Lady of whom I crave mercy,  
*I feel the pains of love for you,*  
10 *now feel such things for me!*

Sweet lady, once I was free of love,  
and then I picked out your gentle ways;  
and when I saw your beautiful bright face,  
my heart had still another cause;  
15 now it summons me and directs me to love you,  
it has gone into your power.  
My body will perish suffering cruel punishment,  
unless you are pleased to take pity on its state.  
*The sweet pains in which I look for joy*  
20 *have so weighed down on me,*  
*I am dead if my lady makes me wait.*

Love has great power, great force  
which makes you search things out without reason, at her  
pleasure.  
Without reason? God, I'm not making any sense:  
25 *my heart gives thanks to my eyes*  
for seeking out a form so beautiful,  
which I shall never part from,  
no, I shall suffer heavy penance for her sake,  
till pity and mercy take hold in her.  
30 *Shall I tell you who stole away my heart?*  
*The beautiful eyes and sweet smile of her.*
Douce dame, s'il vos plesoit un soir,
m'avriez vos plus de joie doné
c'onques Tristans, qui en fist son pouoir,
n'en pout avoir nul jor de son aé;
la moie joie est tornée a pesance.
Hé, cors sanz cuer! de vos fet grant venjance
cele qui m'a navré sanz defiance,
et ne por quant je ne la lerai ja.

40 L'en doit bien bele dame amer
et s'amor garder, qui l'a.

Dame, por vos vueil aler foloiant,
que je en aim mes maus et ma dolor,
qu'après les maus la grant joie en atent
que je avrai, se Deu plest, a brief jor.
Amors, mercil ne soiez oublíée!
S'or me failliez, c'iert traizon doublée,
que mes granz maus por vos si fort m'agree.
Ne me metez longuement en oublí

50 Se la bele n'a de moi merci,
je ne vivrai mie longuement ensi.

La grant biautez qui m'esprent et agree,
qui seur toutes est la plus desirree,
m'a si lacié mon cuer en sa prison.

55 Deus! je ne pens s'a li non.
A moi que ne pense ele donc?¹

34

Coustic est bien, quant on tient un prison,
qu'on ne le veut oir ne escouter,

¹This song is built on six varying refrains, none of which was composed by Thibaut. The scheme of each strophe is 10ababcxx plus refrain. Each refrain provides the rhyme demanded by x (Wallensköld).
Sweet lady, you could if you wanted to,
one night, give me greater joy
than ever Tristan, who struggled hard for it,
could win even once in his life.
Now my joy is turned to grief.
Alas, body without its heart, how she has punished you,
she wounded me without ever calling out a challenge.
And yet I shall not leave.

A man must love a beautiful lady,
and guard, if he gets it, her love.

Lady, for you I willingly do crazy things,
for I love my pains and suffering for your sake,
for after my pains I await that great joy of you
that I shall have, God willing, very soon.
O Love, mercy! do not forget!
If you fail me now, it will be a double treason,
for my great suffering for you is my great pleasure.
Do not send me into long oblivion.

If my beautiful does not pity me,
I shall not, as I am, long live on.

Her great beauty, which burns and pleases me
and above all others is most desired,
has bound up, in her prison, the heart of me.

God! I have no thought except for her.
Why, then, has she no thought for me? ¹

It is common for a man who holds a prisoner
to be unwilling even to listen to him speak,
car nule riens ne fet tant cuer felon  
con grant pouoir, qui mal en veut user.
5   Pour ce, dame, de moi m'estuet douter,  
car je n'i os parler de raençon  
n'estre ostagiez s'en bele guise non.  
Après tout ce ne puis je eschaper.

D'une chose ai au cuer grant soupeçon,  
10  et c'est la riens qui plus me fet douter:  
que tant de genz li vont tout environ.  
Je sai de voir que c'est por moi grever;  
adès dient: “Dame, on vos veut guiler;  
ja par amors n'amera riches hom”.

15   Mès il mentent, li losengier felon,  
car qui plus a, melz doit amors garder.

Se ma dame ne veut amer nului,  
moi ne autrui, cinq cenz merciz l'en rent,  
qu’assez i a d’autres que je ne sui  
20  qui la prient de faux cuer baudement.  
Esbaudise fet gaaingnier souvent,  
mès ne sé riens, quant je devant li sui;  
tant ai de mal et de paine et d’ennui,  
quant me couvient dire: “A Dieu vous conmant!”

25   Vous savez bien qu’en ne conoist en lui  
ce qu’en conoist en autrui plainement.  
Ma grant folie onques jor ne conui,  
tant ai amé de fin cuer loiaument;  
mès une riens m’i fet alegement:

30   qu’en esperance ai un pou de refui.  
Li oiselez se va ferir el glui,  
quant il ne peut trouver autre garant.

Souvent m’avient, quant je pens bien a li,  
qu’a mes dolors une douçors me vient
for nothing makes a heart so cruel
as great power which it wants to make bad use of.

Therefore, Lady, I must fear for myself,
for I do not dare speak to you about ransom
or be freed for hostages, except with great eloquence.
I cannot, after all, escape this prison.

One thing puts a great worry in my heart,
it's the thing that makes me most afraid:
so many people go to her from all around.
I know well enough it is all to do me harm.
They keep on telling her, "Madame, he's trying to trick
you;

a man that rich and noble never makes love with true
love."

But they are lying, those cruel slanderers,
for if a man has more, he must be better at attending to

love.

If my lady does not want to love anyone,
neither me nor anyone else, I will give her five hundred
thanks for it,
for there are plenty of others unlike myself

who ask boldly for her love with an empty heart.

Boldness is often the only way to victory,
but I can't do a thing when I am in her presence;
I suffer such great unease and pain and irritation
when I'm supposed to say hello.¹

You know, of course, one never sees in himself
what he can see quite clearly in another.
My own great foolishness I never see,
I have loved so deeply with a true and loyal heart.
But there is one thing that gives me some relief:

I have found, in hope, a bit of refuge.
Thus the bird hurtles right into the trap²
when it cannot find another shelter.

Often when I think of her it happens,
with my pains a sweetness comes

¹ Literally, "I commend you to God."
² Literally, "into the birdlime."
35 si granz au cuer que trestouz m'entroublè,
et m'est a vis qu'entre ses braz me tient;
et après ce, quant li sens me revient
et je voi bien qu'a tout ce ai failli,
lors me courrouz et ledange et maudi,
40 car je sai bien que il ne l'en souvient.

Bele du tout et dure de merci,
se mi travail ne sont par vous meri,
mult vivrai mal, s'a vivre me couvient.

35

Ausi comne unicomne sui
qui s’esbahist en regardant,
quant la pucele va mirant.
Tant est liee de son ennui,
pasme en chiet en son giron;
lors l’ocit on en traizon.¹
Et moi ont mort d’autel semblant
Amors et ma dame, por voir:
mon cuer ont, n’en puis point ravoir.

10 Dame, quant je devant vous fui
et je vous vi premierement,
mes cuers aloit si tressaillant
qu’il vous remest, quant je m’en mui.
Lors fu menez sanz raençon
15 en la douce chartre en prison
dont li piler sont de talent

¹“The Unicorn ... is a very small animal like a kid, excessively swift, with one horn in the middle of his forehead, and no hunter can catch him. But he can be trapped by the following stratagem.
“A virgin girl is led to where he lurks, and there she is sent off by herself into the wood. He soon leaps into her lap when he sees her, and embraces her, and hence he gets caught.” (The Bestiary, translated by T. H. White)
THIBAULT DE CHAMPAGNE

35 into my heart, so great that I completely forget myself, and then it seems to me she holds me in her arms; and afterwards, when my sense returns and I see clearly I have missed all that, then I rage and speak insults against myself, for I realize she has no thought for me.

Beautiful in all things, hard in mercy, if you do not reward my pains, I shall live very badly, if I am meant to live.

35

I am like the unicorn astonished as he gazes, beholding the virgin. He is so rejoiced by his chagrin, he falls in a faint in her lap; then they kill him, in treachery.¹ Now Love and my lady have killed me just that way: they have my heart, I cannot get it back.

Lady, when I was around you and saw you for the first time, my heart leaped over so, it stayed with you when I went away. Then I was led without ransom into sweet captivity in prison, where the pillars are made of Desire,
et li huis sont de biau veoir
et li anel de bon espoir.

De la chartre a la clef Amors
et si a mis trois portiers:
Biau Senblant a non li premiers,
et Biautez cele en fet seignors;
Dangier a mis a l'uis devant,
un ort, felon, vilain, puant,

qui mult est maus et pautoniers.
Cil troi sont et viste et hardi:
mult ont tost un homme saisi.

Qui porroit sousfrir les tristors
et les assauz de ces huissiers?

Onques Rollanz ne Oliviers
ne vainquirent si granz estors;
il vainquirent en conbatant,
mès ceus vaint on humiliant.
Sousfrirs en est gonfanoniers;
en cest estor dont je vous di
n'a nul secors fors de merci.

Dame, je ne dout mès riens plus
que tant que faille a vous amer.
Tant aï apris a endurer
que je sui vostres tout par us;
et se il vous en pesoit bien,
ne m'en puis je partir pour rien
que je n'aire le remembrer
et que mes cuers ne soit adês
en la prison et de moi près.

Dame, quant je ne sai guiler,
merciz seroit de seson mès
de soustener si greveus fès.
the gates of Pleasant Sight,
the chains of Good Hope.

Love holds the key to the prison
and has set three watchmen there:
the name of the first is Kindly Look,
and Love makes Beauty their chief;
and has put Rejection at the outer gate,
a dirty, cruel, vulgar, stinking,

vicious scoundrel.
These three are nimble and strong,
they have fallen many times suddenly on a man.

Who could withstand the strategies
and the assaults of these watchmen?

Never did Roland or Olivier
conquer with such great onslaughts:
they conquered by striking blows in combat,
but these you conquer by humbling yourself.
Suffering is their standard-bearer;

In this assault I'm telling you of
there is no rescue outside of pity.

Lady, I fear nothing more
than failing in my love for you.
I have learned so well to bear up
that I am yours by habit.

And if even that annoys you,
I do not know how to go away
so that I would not always have the memory
and my heart would not always be

in prison, though with me.

Lady, as I do not know how to deceive,
mercy now would be seasonably given,

to help me bear so grave a burden.
Une chose, Baudoyn, vos demant:
s'il avenoit a fin, leal ami,
qui sa dame a amée longuement
et proiee tant qu'elle en a merci
et li mande que parler veinge a li
tout por sa volenté faire,
que fera il tot avant por li plaire,
quant li dira: "Beaus amis, bien veingniez"?
Baisera il ou sa bouche ou ses piez?

"Sire, je lo que il premierement
en la bouche la baist, car je vos di
que de baiser la boche au cuer descent
une doucours dont sunt tuit acompli
li grant desir par qu'il s'entraînement si;

Et joie qui cuer esclaire
ne peut celer l'eau amis ne taire,
aïnz li semble qu'il soit toz alegiez,
quant de la boche a sa dame est baisiez."

Baudoyn, voir! je n'en mentirai ja:
qui sa dame vuët tout avant baiser
en la bouche, de cuer onques n'ama;
qu'ainsi baise on la fille a un bergier.
J'aing mieuz baiser ses piez et merçier
que faire si grant outrage.

L'en doit coidier que sa dame soit sage,
et sens done que granz humilitez
doit vien valoir a estre mieuz amez.

1 "Baudoyn" has not been identified with certainty.
One thing I ask you, Baudoin: 

if it should happen to a true, loyal lover 
who has long loved his lady 
and prayed her have mercy on him till finally 
she sends for him to come and speak with her, 
all in order to do his pleasure, 
what should he do first of all to please her 
when she says, "Sweet Friend, welcome"?
Should he kiss her mouth first, or her feet?

"Lord, I advise him first of all 
to kiss her on the mouth, for I tell you, 
from kissing the mouth there descends to the heart 
a sweetness which fulfills 
all the great desires with which they love each other; 
and a joy lights up the heart 
no loyal lover can conceal or silence; 
no, he feels all relieved, 
when he kisses the mouth of his lady."

Baudoin, listen, I won't lie about this: 

whoever wants to kiss his lady before anything else 
on the mouth never loved from the heart; 
because that is how you kiss a shepherd’s daughter. 
I'd rather kiss her feet and say thanks 
and not commit such an outrage.

One must believe his lady is wise, 
and good sense tells us that deep humility 
must do a lot to make one loved.
"Sire, j'ai bien ô dire pieç'a
qu'umilez fait l'amant avancièr,
et puis qu'Amors par humilité l'a
tant avancié que rende le loier,
qu'il ait cele que tant aimée et tient chier,
je di qu'il feroit folage
s'en la bouche ne li feïst hommage,
car j'oï dire, et vos bien le savez:
qui bouche lait por piez, c'est nicetez."

Bauðoïn, voir! ice ne di je pas
qu'en sa bouche laist por ses piez avoir,
mais baisier vuil ses piez eneslepas
et puis après sa bouche a mon voloir
et son beau cors, c'on ne tient mie a noir,
et ses beaus eulz et sa face
et son chief blont, qui le fin or efface.
Mais vos estes bauz et desmesurez,
si semble bien que pou d'amour savez.

"Sire, bien est et recreanz et las
qui congïë a de baisier et d'avoir
le douz solaz dou cors lonc, graille et gras
et met douçour de bouche en nonchaloir
por piez baisier; ne fait mie savoir.
Ja Deus ne doïnt que il face
jamës chose par guoi il ait sa grace,
que mil tanz est li baisiers savorez
de la bouche que cil des piez assez!"

Bauðoïn, cil qui tant chace
que il ataint, bien se tient a eschace,
quant a sez piez ne chïet toz enclinez;
je di qu'il est deables forsennez.
"Lord, certainly I have heard for a long time that humility helps the lover advance; but when Love, because of his humility has advanced him so far that she gives him his reward and he has her whom he loves so much and holds dear, then I say he'd be acting like a fool if he did not do her homage on the mouth, for I have also heard, and you know it well: whoever bypasses the mouth for the sake of the feet has done something stupid."

Baudoin, listen, I do not say that one should bypass the mouth to get to her feet, but I want to kiss her feet right away and then, afterwards, her mouth, as I like, and her beautiful body, which no one could call unpleasant, and her beautiful eyes, and her face, and her blond head, which turns fine gold into nothing. But you are rash and do things out of order, and I don't think you know very much about love.

"Lord, any man must be fainthearted and a loser who, having leave to kiss and to enjoy the sweet solace of that body long, slender, plump, treats the sweetness of the mouth with such indifference in order to kiss feet; that makes no sense. God never let such a man do anything that wins his lady's grace. For a kiss is a thousand times more sweet on a lady's mouth than on her feet."

Baudoin, whoever pursues so long till he gets what he wants behaves too proudly if he does not fall flat at her feet— I say he's a devil in his crazy conceit.
"Sire, cil cui Amors lace
60 ne puet muèr, quant il a leu n'espace
qu'asevir puist toutes ses volentez,
tost n'ait les piez por la boche oblïez."

37

L'autrier par la matinee
entre un bois et un vergier
une pastore ai trouvée
chantant por soi envoisiyer,
et disoit un son premier:
"Ci me tient li maus d'amor."
Tantost cele part m'en tor
que je l'oï desresnier,
si li dis sanz delaier:
10 "Bele, Deus vos dont bon jort!"

Mon salu sanz demoree
me rendi et sanz targier.
Mult ert fresche et coloree,
si m'i plot a acointier:
15 "Bele, vostre amor vous qier,
s'avroiz de moi riche ator."
Ele respon: "Tricheor
sont mès trop li chevalier.
Melz aim Perrin, mon bergier,
que riche honme menteor."

"Bele, ce ne dites mie;
chevalier sont trop vaillant.
Qui set donc avoir amie
ne servir a son talent
25 fors chevalier et tel gent?
Mès l'amor d'un bergeron
certes ne vaut un bouton.
"Lord, a man bound by love
cannot keep, when he has the place and time
to make all his joys complete,
from quickly forgetting, for the sake of the mouth, all
about the feet."

The other day in the morning
between some woods and an orchard
I found a shepherdess
singing for her pleasure;
it was a song about love in the spring:
"Here I feel the pain of love."
I turned in that direction right away
where I heard her speaking her mind
and said to her, without much ado,
"Beautiful, God give you good day."

She gave me my greeting
right back, without hesitating.
She was young, with good color,
and I wanted to know her.

"Beautiful, I want your love,
afterwards I'll give you something nice to put on."
She says, "Traitors
are what knights are, the lot of them.
I love Perrin, my own shepherd,
better than any rich and noble liar."

"Beautiful, don't say that;
knights are men you can count on.
For who knows how to have a little friend
and serve her as she likes
but a knight, and one of that class?
But the love of an insignificant shepherd,
that's really not worth a button.
Partez vos en a itant
et m'amiez; je vous creant:
de moi avrez riche don."

"Sire, par sainte Marie,
vous en parlez por noient,
Mainte dame avront trichie
cil chevalier soudoiant.

Trop sont faus et mal pensant,
pis valent de Guenelon.
Je m'en revois en meson,
que Perrinez, qui m'atent,
m'aime de cuer loiaument.

Abessiez vostre reson!"

G'entendi bien la bergiere,
qu'elle me veut eschaper.
Mult li fis longue proiere,
mès n'i poi riens conquerester.

Lors la pris a acoler,
et ele gete un haut cri:
"Perrinet, traï, traï!"
Du bois prenent a huper;
Je la lais sanz demorer,
seur mon cheval m'en parti.

Quant ele m'en vit alcer,
si me dist par ranposner:
"Chevalier sont trop hardil"

Seigneurs, sachiez: qui or ne s'en ira
en cele terre ou Deus fu morz et vis
et qui la croiz d'Outremer ne prendra,
Come on off to the side there
and make love with me. I promise you:
30 I'll give you something nice."

"You lord, by holy Mary
you're wasting your breath,
These knights are traitors,
how many ladies have they tricked!
They're all hypocrites, with nasty ideas,
they're worse than Ganelon.
I'm going home,
Perrinet is waiting for me,
he loves me with an honest heart.
40 Keep your proposition."

I got the idea this shepherdess
wants to escape me.
I made her a long speech full of prayer
but couldn't get anything there.
45 So then I tried to use a little force,¹
and she starts to rant and rave:
"Perrinet, help! He's raping me!" ²
The shouts start coming from the woods.
I dropped her one-two-three
50 and took off on my horse.

When she saw me running away,
she called out to embarrass me,
"Noble knights are very brave."

Lords, be sure of this: whoever does not now depart
for that land where God died and lived,
and does not take the cross of the Holy Land,

¹ Literally, "I started to embrace her, take her round the neck."
² Literally, "(I'm) betrayed!"