

THE BOOK OF THE HEART SEIZED BY LOVE

(LE LIVRE DU COEUR D'AMOUR ÉPRIS)



RENÉ D'ANJOU

Translated into English by

A. S. KLINE

POETRY IN TRANSLATION

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This print edition is published by

Poetry In Translation (www.poetryintranslation.com),

in partnership with Amazon EU S.à.r.l.

(a Luxembourg company with registration number B-101818
and its registered office at 5 Rue Plaetis, L-2338, Luxembourg)

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BOUT THIS WORK

René of Anjou (1409–1480) was Duke of Anjou and Count of Provence from 1434 to 1480, and also reigned as King of Naples from 1435 to 1442. He spent his last years in Aix-en-Provence, and was known there as the Good King René. He was a great-grandson of John II of France, and his sister Marie married Charles VII of France. He was also for several years Duke of Bar and Duke of Lorraine. His younger daughter Margaret married Henry VI of England.

Twice wed, René took a lesser part in military and political affairs after his second marriage, devoting himself to the arts and domestic pursuits. An amateur painter himself, he sponsored a number of works in the Early Netherlandish style, employing Barthélemy d'Eyck as his court artist, developing, as patron, a school of fine arts in sculpture, painting, goldsmith's work and tapestry. He also revived a lapsed order of chivalry, the Order of the Crescent.

He exchanged verses with his kinsman, the poet Charles d'Orléans, was influenced by the works of Alain Chartier, and amongst other creative efforts, was the author of two allegorical works: a devotional dialogue, *Le Mortifiement de vaine plaisance* (The Mortification of Vain Pleasure, 1455), and the love quest translated here, *Le Livre du Coeur d'amour épris* (The Book of the Heart Seized by Love, 1457). This latter employs the conventions of Arthurian romance to create a detailed allegory of love with affinities to Guillaume de Lorris' original *Romance of the Rose*, developing and enriching the efforts of previous writers, and encapsulating the Medieval period to the benefit of the imminent Renaissance. Both of the aforesaid works by René were finely illustrated by Barthélemy d'Eyck. René also sponsored a fresh translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1467). Two of the finest extant illuminated manuscripts of *Le Livre du Coeur d'amour épris* are Codex 2597 in the Austrian National Library (Vienna), and fr. 24399 in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris).

About This Work

Le Livre du Coeur d'amour épris is dedicated to Jean II, Duc de Bourbon (1426-1488), Constable of France (1483), and the brother of René's daughter-in-law, Marie de Bourbon, who had married his son Jean (de Calabre). Jean II married Jeanne, a daughter of Charles VII of France, and René's niece. Jean II's father, Charles, had assisted in the release of René from earlier captivity in Burgundy (1436), and the dedication is evidence of a firm friendship, between the 'cousins', René and Charles' son, Jean II.

The translation rendered here mirrors the mix of verse and prose in which the work was written, the verse being in rhymed couplets, in varying metres.



**PART I:
THE QUEST FOR
SWEET MERCY**

CHAPTER I: RENE'S DEDICATION OF THE WORK TO JEAN, DUC DE BOURBON

Most high and puissant prince, my most dearly beloved 'cousin and nephew', Jean, Duc de Bourbon et Auvergne, etc. I, René, dedicate this pitiful plaint to you, as to one with whom, above all other princes, I have the closest acquaintance, and in whom I place the greatest love and confidence; as well I ought, for long since, even in childhood, your late father and I were always in company, witnessing between us a perfect affection, worthy of a pair of true brothers. Likewise, I have ever experienced your kindness, before and since your father's passing, and have found in you a perfect, benevolent, and loyal friend, such that I am much attached to you and indebted to you to a greater extent than I could ever deserve.

It is for that reason that I address my plaint to you, above all others living, while hoping that you will grant me good and sound counsel. One question exists that always possesses me; as to which of these three, Fortune, Love or Destiny, I should accuse of the wrong felt by my heart, and the pains I truly endure: for one of the three has plunged me more deeply in sorrow and torment than I can say, and I know not which to consider truly guilty of the charge and most worthy of punishment. For on that day when I first encountered my lady, Fortune, above all others, led me there, if am not deceived, I not knowing the why and wherefore, and I went that way, fearing no ill. And then, when I had come there, Love lying in ambush within the defences of that beautiful and noble lady, was not long in releasing the arrow of a glance, from her sweet and lively eyes, which struck me to the heart. And furthermore, since then, my Destiny, as I perceive it, has obliged my memory to think endlessly of the lady in question, and concentrate my attention upon her, without respite or repose, more so than upon any other living.

To which, then, of the three I have named above, to attribute the cause of my suffering, I know not, except to them all, and each of them separately; for, because of my loyalty, all have contributed according to their powers, and in such a manner, that I am still in such a state that I know how to remedy

The Book of the Heart Seized by Love

it by my own efforts. Thus, languishing, I dwell without the strength to heal myself or die: a state which you will find described precisely, in allegory, in this little book, if you are pleased to read on.



Amor delivers Rene's heart to Desire

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 2r: Le Livre du Cœur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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**CHAPTER I: RENÉ'S HEART (COEUR) DEPARTS
IN THE COMPANY OF DESIRE**

One night, in the month just past,
Wearied, suffering, and harassed,
I lay pondering, upon my bed,
Like to one that his heart has wed
To Love's laws, and his mercy,
Such that my life was completely
Consumed in tears and complaints, whereby
Sweet accord I might gain thereby,
To purchase which I'd long endured
More pain and torment, rest assured,
Than any lover has, bodily;
For my sad heart was totally
Consumed by strong and fierce desire,
So ardent and intense a fire,
There ne'er was a worse malady.
What would you have me say? To me
It seemed incredible, for, you see,
It proved a kindly enmity,
A sweet war, and a sour savour,
Pleasing tedium, ill favour,
A rest, that gave but scant repose,
A combat, yet devoid of blows,
A hurt, without an open wound,
My heart revealed, and yet attuned
To secrecy, such that I knew
Not what would come of me, for few
Signs of Pity my lady showed,

Such that I thought that naught bestowed
On me the power to save my life,
Or endure such a weight of strife,
Since Refusal, working treason,
Would destroy me, without reason.
Thus, I knew not what I might do,
On this night, I've described to you,
Troubled, and on the verge of death,
Upon the point of my last breath.
Then, at least in imagination,
Stirring in sleep, in pure vexation,
Whether in vision, or in dream,
(Here, I lie not) to me it did seem,
Love drew the Heart from out my breast,
Handing it to Desire, my guest,
Who spoke thus to my woeful Heart:
'If you would obtain, for your part,
Sweet Mercy yet, from your lady,
You must do chivalric duty,
And acquire it by force of arms,
Seeking to conquer her fair charms,
By defeating Refusal who,
Gainst all lovers in his purview,
Keeps the fortress, where Sweet Mercy
Is doubly bound, held securely
In the bonds of both Fear and Shame.
Go with me, now, in honour's name,'
Said Desire, 'and no more delay.'
Then, with my Heart, he stole away.

CHAPTER II: DESIRE EQUIPS THE HEART FOR ITS QUEST

Just as many stories have been read and related, in order to preserve the perpetual memory of the great deeds and exploits, the great victories and acts of courage in war, the marvellous events and most perilous adventures undertaken, laboured over, and accomplished by brave and steadfast knights, such as Lancelot, Gawain, Galahad, Tristan, Palamedes, and other noble knights of the Round Table in the days of King Arthur, in their quest for the Holy Grail, deeds the ancient histories recount in detail, so, to render my own work more comprehensible for you, who relate the quest for Sweet Mercy undertaken by the Heart seized by Love, I have adopted the style of those writings concerning the Grail, in describing how and with what armour Desire equipped the Heart. Namely: a suit of chain mail, forged of the Will, and wondrously solid, to resist the strokes and blows of Refusal and Denial, which even that mightiest of all, Despair-in-Love, in the mist of the fiercest combat and battle in the world was unable to pierce or harm.

Truly, it was always in these terms that Coeur heard Desire speak, and promise, and affirm his loyalty to him. But it was not thus in actuality, for, later, he was pierced and wounded many a time and often through this coat of mail, and not only through that garment, for neither buckler nor shield could prevent his being ill-treated, as you will hear recounted in detail. But the loving Heart, who, throughout the quest, rightly or wrongly, adhered closely to Desire's counsel, believed him so readily that he had confidence in this hauberk, and trusted it with his life; such that he dressed himself in it rapidly, without delay.

After this, Desire girded to Heart's side a sharp and trenchant sword of steel, wholly forged and wrought of most humble requests and pleas, and finely tempered in tears of pity, such that none of brute Refusal's weapons could destroy one so amorous. To add to the steel sword, Desire gave him a helm, woven entirely of the flowers of amorous thoughts, enjoining him to wear this above all, for this alone was most useful of all to every amorous heart that sought to win a lady's mercy. Furthermore, Desire conferred on him a shield composed of pure hope, large, and broad, and opulent, composed of three forget-me-not flowers and bordered with sad sighs; Coeur hung this carefully round his neck, to protect him when needed.

When Desire saw Coeur armed and equipped thus, he was joyful and content. Then with his own hands he fixed sharp spurs of loving memory to Coeur's feet, and had him mount on a wondrously great warhorse, tall and strong, named Free-Will, as seasoned as you would wish in every kind of combat, deed of arms, and encounter with the lance. When Coeur saw himself so well armed, mounted and clad, he thought none more content or joyful than himself! As regards satisfaction, I say naught, for that sweet reward was yet to arrive.

Desire now placed in his hand a lance of cypress-wood, wondrously thick and long in proportion, with an iron tip of concessions, sharp with promises, with which to confound all the enemies of Love. Then Coeur pricked his steed with the spurs of amorous memory, and Free-Will, scarcely restrained, leapt forward despite himself; but Desire, inflamed, pursued him closely, while reassuring him gently, and encouraging him in these terms:

CHAPTER II: DESIRE CALMS COEUR'S STEED, FREE-WILL

'If ever a courteous and loving heart
Ought to find happiness, through Love's sweet art,
You are that one, Coeur, though you grasp it not,
For you have chosen, indeed, as your lot,
The noblest beauty of all, young and fair,
That the most perfect qualities doth share,
Compared to all who are, or yet shall be.
Now who is daring enough we shall see,
To enter on the quest, faithful ever,
And fearing naught, be it sweet or bitter,
So as to win the prize of sweet mercy,
For ne'er has heart chosen one so lovely,
From head to toe, pure beauty, in a breath.
Be it otherwise, I'll submit to death!
Nature has left there nothing more to do,

She's an ideal for lovers, made so you
Might strive the harder to acquire the prize
And praise; believe me, for I tell no lies!

CHAPTER III: COEUR AND DESIRE REACH A PAVILION IN A MEADOW

Then, so the story tells, as soon as Coeur had heard Desire speak thus, he delayed no longer, but set himself to gallop swiftly along the road before him, towards adventure, and swore by the heavens above that he would not halt in any fixed place until he had gained, by his prowess, sweet mercy from his noble lady, without which he would be forced to die upon the spot, for Desire's speech to him had so inflamed him that he was wholly inspired. In this manner he departed, and Desire, his companion, followed him closely.

And the story tells that he progressed so, travelling for some days without encountering any adventure worth the telling, until on a certain day, at the entrance to a great forest, in a strange country, a quite unknown land, he came upon an erect pavilion, wondrously luxurious and pleasant to see, in a grassy meadow, under a fine tall pine-tree, the latter being full green and straight. The tent seemed to be wrought of precious stuff for the border that ran the length of its canopy was embroidered in a leafy design, richly enhanced with pearls.

At the entrance to this pavilion, more within than without, beneath the canopy, was a square-cut pillar of jasper, about half a lance's length in height, and three feet wide on each side; on this pillar, letters, skilfully engraved of old, read as follows:

CHAPTER III: THE WRITING ON THE PILLAR OF JASPER

‘O all you, hearts, both noble and gracious,
That, for honour’s sake, would win the precious
Gifts of sweetest grace, and blessed mercy,
From the God of Love, and from your lady,
Ne’er allow your loving thoughts to alter,
Or stray from your first and only lover.
Be faithful, without ever varying,
And I’ll ever pity you in loving.’

CHAPTER IV: COEUR AND DESIRE ENCOUNTER HOPE

While Coeur was reading the inscription on the pillar, leaning over his saddle-bow, full of wonder and deeply pensive, for he wished to know who had once commanded the writing and engraving of those letters, you might have seen a lady emerge from the pavilion, seeming of a mature age, of noble allure, and luxuriously and royally dressed. She wore a robe purple in colour, her shoulders covered by a mantle trimmed with grey fur, and her head bore a golden crown. This lady seized Coeur’s steed by the bridle, so suddenly that he could not evade her. He began to tremble and change colour, ashamed that a woman had proved strong enough to seize the bridle (he who thought himself so proud and strong that two knights at least would be needed to arrest him thus) and sought to spur his horse on, but in vain; he was forced to halt, whether he would or no, so firmly had she gripped his bridle. Finding it was thus, he slid to the ground, asking and praying her to say who she was, and why she had thus arrested him, addressing her in these words:



Coeur and Desire encounter Lady Hope

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 5v: Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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CHAPTER IV: COEUR ADDRESSES THE LADY

‘In God’s name, lady, if you please
So as to set my mind at ease,
Tell me, your servant, of your state
For you seem to be blessed by fate,
Noble, and sweet, and wise indeed.
And if, ere now, I paid scant heed
To yourself, was rude in manner,
In paying my respects, twas rather
Due to the endless depths of thought
Into which I had plunged, unsought,
Through the letters that met my eyes
On the pillar that here doth rise,

Which I have read, and deem that none
Have ever the like looked upon.
That is the reason why I pray
That you'll offer but scant delay
In absolving me of all blame,
And will deign to reveal your name.'

CHAPTER V: HOPE EXPLAINS THE JOURNEY HE MUST MAKE

Then the story relates that when Coeur had spoken, courteously thus, to the lady, she took him by the hand and responded in these terms:

You, Coeur, who so deeply desire
To know my name and state entire,
Listen to me, without interruption
And you shall hear of my condition,
What I serve, and what may share,
My name, and my every affair.
My name is Hope, I say to you,
Without which a man naught may do,
Nor speak, to advance his lot,
For you know, if you've not forgot,
And every man knows this same,
Who has sense and wit to his name,
That, unless hope leads him ever,
Much pain will greet all endeavour.
And the writing that you have seen
On the pillar, and read, I ween,
Twas Love that had it written there,

To comfort those who seek to dare
What lies before them, and so gain
What you would win, whate'er the pain.
For by this road such folk must pass,
And without me be lost, alas;
Lacking me they labour in vain,
As did, indeed, my lord Gawain.
I shall tell you what you must do,
And how to comport yourself too,
If you to my words now attend
Listening carefully, till the end.
You'll undergo great woes, that often
Seem beyond the bounds of reason,
For this is how Love, have no doubt,
Deals his rewards and ills about,
Whether deserved or undeserved,
Caring not how a lover's served.
Thus, the Forest of Long-Delay,
You must enter; attention pay!
From the Fountain of Fortune drink,
Tis ne'er the same for all, I think,
And from the fountain you may go
Through Profound Thought's valley so.
You will pass the River of Tears
Ere the end of that vale appears,
Towards the mound, Devoid-of-Joy,
You must then a path employ,
And in the meadow of Harsh-Reply
Your steed will more than once, say I
Graze on the bitter grass therein,
But you must pass it, for your sin,

And take the path more dangerous,
They call the Passage Perilous.
But, there, be on your guard, I say,
The road of Unreason lies that way;
By it you'll reach the mansion there,
The house within which dwells Despair.
And if you chance to enter in,
This is what you must do therein:
Always keep my presence in mind
Thus, true victory you shall find,
For you will reach the road e'er sought,
The path, that is, of Joyous Thought.
Thereon, with Mercy you will meet,
Though heart's affliction first will greet
Your quest, ere you succeed, instead
You'll feel a sharp blow to the head,
From Harsh Refusal and Denial,
For both will put you to the trial;
While, if Despair seeks to employ
His weapons, you'll ne'er meet with joy.
If you but keep remembrance by
Of my fair name, for Hope am I,
Thereby Sweet Mercy you shall own,
And every good the world has known.'

CHAPTER VI: COEUR IS CONSOLED BY HER SPEECH

Here, the story says that, when Lady Hope had spoken thus, and consoled Coeur, as you have heard, he grew sorrowful and pensive and a little troubled by the great perils and tribulations which Lady Hope had revealed to him and through which he must pass if his enterprise

were to be successfully concluded. Thenceforth, the presence and fair speech of the lady would comfort him greatly. But, for the moment, the tale ceases to speak of Coeur and Lady Hope, and returns to Desire, who had counselled Coeur as to his enterprise, and armed and equipped him in the manner previously related.

CHAPTER VII: COEUR RE-JOINS DESIRE

The story now relates that this noble young man, Desire, once he had satisfactorily and thoroughly equipped the Heart seized by Love, clad him and set him in the saddle, never leaving his side for a moment; on the contrary, wherever Coeur went young Desire followed him so closely that he was never out of his sight. Desire, then, in the course of his journey, directed, guided and conducted him to Lady Hope's pavilion, as one who well knew the road, having led many there before. And then, after the conversation with Lady Hope which you have heard me relate previously, Coeur re-joined Desire, whom he found close to the pavilion, that is to say beneath the pine-tree, whence Desire had uttered not a word while Lady Hope was speaking, and Coeur addressed him as follows:

CHAPTER VII: COEUR PLACES HIMSELF IN DESIRE'S HANDS

'Desire, my gracious friend and master,
You have, with the Lord's aid, led me hither,
Protected, guided, and conducted me,
Knowing that none born of woman, truly,
Was e'er more desirous of Hope's counsel,
Which is assuredly beyond all equal.
Be so good then as to guide me rightly,
In all of my actions, and instruct me
Encourage, counsel, warn me, of your grace,

And also, in God's name, grant me solace,
And lead me back to Hope's true road, ever,
For I trust you more than any other,
You who know the paths Love doth devise,
Where lovers pass, the foolish and the wise.
Now lead on, sweet friend, and seek the new,
For, if God pleases, I will follow you.'

CHAPTER VIII: THEY REACH A HERMITAGE AND ENCOUNTER A FEMALE DWARF

The tale relates that, after Coeur had spoken thus, Desire instantly, and without saying a word, was the first to spur his steed onwards, taking the broad road that he found, on the left, close to the pavilion. Coeur, also, on seeing Desire depart, commended Lady Hope to God, who commended him to God equally, and to his lady, and wished him well in all his adventures. Then Coeur departed, close on the heels of Desire; they journeyed for several days without coming across anything worth relating or germane to our story.

The young nobleman Desire, and the noble Coeur, that Heart seized by Love, wandered long midst vales and mountains, through wide plains and forests, until one fine evening, at the hour of vespers to be exact, having ridden the trail from daybreak, without finding lodgings or a place to rest, they arrived at a certain place. There Coeur beheld, immediately before him, on descending a hill, a hermitage at the edge of a forest, which seemed to him the deepest, most terrible and shadowy, dark and appalling forest of which any had ever heard tell. Coeur was most troubled at the sight, and no less so on seeing that Desire advanced without halting. He followed nonetheless, approaching nearer to the dark and terrible forest, and the one thing that consoled him as he rode on was the hope of hearing favourable news at the aforesaid hermitage.

Thus, they rode on to the hermitage, before which Desire halted, as did Coeur. Desire called out in a loud voice, seeking to know if there was any living soul within. He had no spent long in doing so, when there emerged

from the hermitage, via the chapel door, which was narrow and low, and of an ancient style, a hunchbacked female dwarf, misshapen in face as well as body, with thick dark hair, stiff, harsh and bristling and almost a foot and a half in length, as if it belonged to the hide of an old wild-boar. Her eyes were glowing and inflamed, like burning coals; her face and brow was dark, wrinkled and hideous; she had shaggy eyebrows, a long, twisted nose, a wide mouth stretching to her ears which hung down more than a palm's length, long yellow irregular teeth, and great sagging breasts. Her shoulders were above the level of her ears, her arms were short, strong and hairy, her haunches high, her legs scratched and scarred by thorns. She had large flat feet like a swan, and wore nothing but a pair of lion's skins, complete with their hair, knotted over her shoulders. Truly this was a creature of little grace, or courtesy, odious and unlovable!

Young Desire, nevertheless, advanced, knowing that country and its language, and addressed the dwarf in the following manner:



Coeur and Desir before the hermitage of the dwarf Jealousy

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 9r: Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460-1469)

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CHAPTER VIII: DESIRE ADDRESSES HER

'If you'd be saved, fair dwarf, draw near!
As now the shades of night appear,
Ask the hermit, who dwells within
This place, if we may lodge herein,
And he shall do us a courtesy,
Which shall win him merit, for we
Are two knights errant who wander here,
Seeking adventure, far or near.'

CHAPTER IX: THE DWARF REPLIES ANGRILY

The author says that, when Desire had finished speaking to the dwarf, as courteously as he knew how, hoping to find lodging for the night at the hermitage, the dwarf, full of anger and discontent, wrinkled her brow, grew red and then pale, her expression one of indignation, and answered Desire:

'If I know aught of you, young stranger,
Little man who'd play the master,
I'll not move, e'en a step, for you,
For aught on earth, within my view.
But, tell me your rank, and your name,
And if they're good, I'll do that same.
Come, tell me this other's name also
Who, I see, at your heels doth go,
And where you are going to, and why,
And what you wish, and seek, thereby;
Or, if you will not, off with you, now;
And God with ills your shoulders bow!'

CHAPTER X: OF THE DWARF, JEALOUSY, AND OF THE YOUTH, FAIR-WELCOME

When the two companions heard themselves thus rebuffed and ill-received by so ugly a creature, an ill-shapen humpbacked crone of a dwarf, Coeur almost lost his patience and would have struck the dwarf if Desire had not prevented him. They subsequently agreed that since she was a woman, and ugly besides, they would do her no ill, since it would bring them little honour; on the contrary they spoke courteously to her, hoping to obtain lodging, for the sun was already setting and they were weary, worn and famished. Thus, they resolved to tell the dwarf their names, and the object of their enterprise.

If you were to ask me to say if there was any other than the aged dwarf in that hermitage, and the name of the old crone, I would reply that she was named Jealousy and that she held a handsome youth, Fair-Welcome, a prisoner within the hermitage, who was there to instruct and guide true lovers who sought to penetrate the forest of Long-Delay. And the old trickster had gagged him before he could utter a cry, and then posted herself before the entrance to the hermitage to thwart Fair-Welcome's designs.

Coeur spoke to her, seeking to seem more amiable and receive a better response than his companion, saying:

CHAPTER X: COEUR TELLS JEALOUSY OF THEIR PURPOSE

'Fair dwarf, I'll tell the truth to you,
As best I can, as to what we do,
For the noble should ne'er tell a lie,
For fear that they'll gain ill thereby.
I've no fear of you otherwise,
But shall not deign to utter lies.
Desire is my companion's name,

Joy to lovers he brings, that same,
And I am the Heart seized by love,
For such is the force that doth move
My being; we pursue a quest,
At our own, none other's, behest,
To seek to win to Sweet Mercy,
As God allows, most graciously!
Now I've told you of our affair,
For God's sake, let us enter there,
Where we may ask the kind hermit,
Who'll prove I think no hypocrite,
If he'll please to lodge us within,
Without more ado, and favour win.'

CHAPTER XI: JEALOUSY DEPARTS, AND RETURNS WITH ILL-INTENTION

Here, the tale relates that, when the old dwarf Jealousy, having listened to Coeur, who seemed pleasing in his speech, nonetheless realised that that they were of the company of the god of Love, her mortal enemy, and were in search of Sweet Mercy she was seized, more than heretofore, by anger and discontent. Then, the false crone, full of wickedness and treachery, entered the hermitage, with the pretence of going to speak with the hermit; but shortly afterwards she returned, without having spoken to a soul – for there was no hermit within – and spoke again to the two companions, addressing them in the following way:

CHAPTER XI: JEALOUSY'S REPLY TO COEUR AND DESIRE

'Begone from here, companions in valour,
You, who preen yourselves in royal manner!
For to speak as succinctly as I might,
You shall not lodge in this fair place tonight,
Since the hermit, who all alone doth dwell,
Cares not for those enchanted by Love's spell,
And opposes every least request indeed,
Which oft leads on to many a misdeed,
While if you seek to force him to comply,
He'd rather see the flames leap on high,
And set fire to his dwelling, so he said,
For he told me to bar the door, instead.
Nonetheless, I'll tell you what to do,
And how you may lodge, the pair of you,
More pleasantly than you now seek to, here,
And you'll find no better place, tis clear,
Though you were at Orléans; you must go
By the road to the left, I'd have you know,
And enter the forest, with scant delay,
Halting not for an instant, on the way,
For a league and a half, or thereabout.
You'll find a person there, without a doubt,
Who will lodge you most finely, and take care
Of those fine steeds that your lordships bear;
They call that place, if I dare say the name,
The Manor of Fair-Repose; in that same
You'll lodge well for, I tell you no lie,
He's a friend to all lovers who pass by.

Ride on, good sirs, and you'll not go astray,
Just as long as you take the road I say.
You both sit astride fine steeds; tis light,
As yet, and you will reach it ere tis night.'

CHAPTER XII: THE FOREST OF LONG-DELAY AND THE FOUNTAIN OF FORTUNE

Now the story relates that when the two youths had heard the old dwarf's speech, they believed her, and trusted in what she had told them, even though she seemed filled with anger and discontent, not thinking that she sought their ill, but rather imagining that she spoke in good faith. Thus, they saluted her, and commended her to God, and she saluted them in return. They spurred their horses, and rode hard, so as to arrive, in a short while, at the Forest of Long-Delay, though they failed to arrive before night had overtaken them.

They entered the forest, and set their steeds to follow the path indicated by the old dwarf Jealousy. They journeyed till the trail led them into thick brushwood, where the woodsmen had recently felled the trees and piled the logs. Ask not if they had trouble advancing, they and their steeds, for the brushwood was so dense that the branches and thorns scratched their faces, and lacerated their mounts everywhere; for two hours they laboured without issuing from the tangle. Nonetheless they strove so vigorously that they emerged on a little path, always bending to the left, as old Jealousy had indicated, which led into the heart of the forest. They journeyed, hour after hour, that night, at the whim of chance, until they came upon a little clearing, long, and about a bowshot wide, surrounded all about by the dense forest.

Desire, who was in front, looked around him and saw, in the midst of this clearing, a wondrously tall aspen-tree; he rode towards it for it seemed a fine place to rest, and he was tired and worn in the extreme, having ridden hard all the way, in the depths of night, without eating or drinking. Coeur, pensive and melancholy, followed him closely. Thye both arrived beneath the aspen-tree and agreed to set foot on the ground and rest there awhile, and allow their mounts to graze, they being in great need of doing so.

They, therefore, descended from the saddle, and sought shelter beneath the aspen, loosing the bridles of their steeds, and letting them browse the grass, which grew tall and dense all about them. Coeur, being heavily armed, eased himself a little by freeing his head and hands, and leaning his lance against the tree. They then gazed around, the better to know the place in which they sought to rest.

Coeur perceived a large dark-grey slab of marble, that was scarcely distinguishable by reason of the obscurity of the night, which was dark and shadowy. They approached the aforesaid pillar and, groping about, found that a brass cup rested on top, attached to it by an iron chain. They then perceived that a spring flowed from beneath the stone, though they could not see if the water was cloudy or clear. Nonetheless, the acute thirst they had endured all that day drove them to drink of it. Desire, it was, who possessing a warmer and more ardent nature and complexion than Coeur – he was burning like fire – was first to take the cup in hand and draw water from the fount, of which he drank deeply. He then handed the cup to Coeur, who drank his fill avidly, and then hurled the cup brusquely onto the stone, like one intending to scatter what remained in the cup over the pillar.

At this, the sky, glittering with stars though the night was dark, was instantly covered with cloud; thunder and lightning declared themselves so suddenly that never a human heart could have escaped a pang of fear, while it began to rain and hail so violently that it seemed the cloudy sky itself would fall. Our two companions, stunned by the dreadful weather, soon retired beneath the aspen-tree, and sheltered as best they could, though they failed to avoid being drenched and bruised by the rain and hail, to the point where they seemed to have surfaced from the depths of a river.

Desire was in dread lest Coeur be discouraged from his enterprise, since this first encounter was so disagreeable; which is why he could not refrain from addressing him, speaking thus:

CHAPTER XII: DESIRE COMFORTS COEUR

‘O Coeur, you who are so renowned
For courtesy, a heart that’s sound,

And goodness, I seek and request
That you by naught here be distressed,
For though we suffer a foul night,
Yet shall you come to true delight.
So, think of the good you'll receive
Gaining Sweet-Mercy, and believe
In Hope, and her advice recall,
Who told you of what must befall.'

CHAPTER XIII: COEUR REPLIES TO DESIRE'S ADMONITION

When Coeur, who was proud and brave, heard Desire speak to him thus, he reddened a little, with annoyance, not because he wished ill towards his companion Desire – for he loved him deeply – but because he believed that Desire had seen and discerned some reprehensible trace of cowardice in him. He therefore raised his head – since he had lain down beneath the aspen-tree to rest – and replied to him in these terms:

CHAPTER XIII: HE DENIES THAT HE IS IN ANY WAY COWARDLY, AND RE-AFFIRMS THE QUEST

'Desire, my loyal companion,
Who set me above many a one
Of greater renown, you flatter,
Though lacking proof in this matter;
But one thing I will say to this,
In me there lies no cowardice,
Rather I'm ready to address
Whate'er may come, and no less

Shall I, now, abandon the quest,
Whoe'er may utter that request;
And yet one thing I ask of thee,
Come, tell me now, hide naught from me:
Have you perceived aught in my face
To think me craven? Pure disgrace
Twould be; death I'd prefer to this!
Let us ride on, whene'er you wish.'

CHAPTER XIV: DESIRE IS CONTENT WITH HIS REPLY

When Desire heard his companion speak in this way, he was both content and saddened by his response: content because he found him in good heart and well disposed to accomplish his enterprise; saddened because he thought he had said something to displease him, and that Coeur felt he had addressed him with disdain, which was never his intent. He answered Coeur's reply in the following terms:

CHAPTER XIV: AND REASSURES COEUR

'Ah, Coeur, my loyal companion,
Come, think not ill of me, for none
Did I intend in speaking so,
For God's sake, any such forego!
Naught have I seen in your face shown
I would not welcome in my own,
Twas merely a manner of speaking
To comfort us, I went seeking!
Now it is time to sleep awhile,
Then, tomorrow, address in style
The matter of our quest, and find

Some place, by good Fortune designed,
To furnish us a bite to eat,
For that we need, both ale and meat.
God send us a fine, restful night,
And naught harm us till it be light.'

CHAPTER XV: COEUR'S DREAM

With these words, the two companions settled down beneath the aspen-tree, their teeth chattering somewhat due to the dampness of the ground, and the coldness of the rain, by which, as you have heard, they had been drenched. Nonetheless, the burden of weariness and pain they had endured led to sleep.



Cœur and Desir sleep beneath the aspen

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 12v: Le Livre du Cœur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460-1469)

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Then it was that Coeur experienced a truly marvellous dream; it seemed that his steed bore him perforce onto a long narrow bridge, which was old and rotten, fragile, weak, broken and pierced through, so ruined and shattered, damaged in many a place, that of sheer necessity it was bound by old ropes and supported by cables at numerous points, so as to secure the major part of this evil passage, that nonetheless seemed scarcely safe enough for a man on foot to pass, never mind a horse.

Beneath the bridge ran a deep and tumultuous river whose waters were dark, dense and troubled. It seemed to him, once his mount had borne him almost to the middle of the aforementioned bridge, that a great bull, dreadful and hideous, charged upon him, in fury, bellowing like a tempest, terrible in its rage, and black as a mulberry. Roaring loudly, its head lowered, rolling its inflamed and ardent eyes, twisting its neck about in lively annoyance, it charged him, with the full force of its horns, so savagely that it overturned him and his steed, sending them plunging into the river. Then, as he was about to drown, unable, due to his heavy armour, to swim to the bank by the strength of his arms alone, a wondrously beautiful blonde siren emerged waist-high from the water, stretching her arms towards him, so as to draw him from the deep, and save him from peril, ere he drowned pitiably and irremediably. She clasped him in her arms so effectively that she was able to bear him to the shore, unharmed.

This dream lasted till the break of day. At dawn, Coeur was awakened by the seeming pain and torment he experienced in his sleep. He sat upright, and gazed at his companion, Desire, who was slumbering as soundly beside him as if he had not slept for three days; nor did he dare wake him out of respect for so deep a slumber. He bowed his head to the ground, in profound reflection on the dream he had experienced.

After a while, he emerged from his musing to find the day was fine and clear, and the sun had commenced to shine. He arose at once, and began to inspect the fountain and the marble pillar, noting that the fount's water was dark, hideous, and turbid: not for a moment would he have drunk from it on the previous evening, had he seen it in its present state! On the stone he saw various letters engraved and inscribed that read as follows:



Coeur reads the inscription on the fountain

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 15r: Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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CHAPTER XV: THE WRITING ON THE FOUNTAIN'S PILLAR

'Straight from beneath this pillar's foot,
Wrought of marble, and black as soot,
Flows the Fountain of Fortune; none
Other on earth, can match this one.
And he who conceived all, and wrought
It thus, was a giant, most vile, in short,
Who was the lord of all this land,
None worse alive did sight command,
Either in temperament or features;
He was ever the worst of creatures.

This evil giant was named Despair,
Famed for his vileness everywhere.
Men and women, he would devour,
And every beast within his power.
Whoever the cup you see shall drain,
Will suffer therefrom endless pain,
For the fount was made by artifice,
By Virgil, or some close accomplice,
Such that if any drink its water,
And pour the rest away, thereafter,
Such that they wet the stone, truly
The sky will then darken swiftly,
And, though the day be fair and bright,
Cloud will fill the heavens outright.’

CHAPTER XVI: THE TWO COMPANIONS QUIT THE FOUNTAIN OF FORTUNE

Now the story tells that when Coeur had read the inscription on the stone, as you have learned, he gave a wry smile, and thought to himself that if he had seen what was written there, the evening before, on their arrival, as clearly as he did now, he would have been careful not to spill a single drop of water on the stone, for it had led to himself and his companion, Desire, being drenched to the bone. Though to abstain from drinking, for fear of the ill or discomfort they might experience, he would have avoided at all cost, for that might have been imputed to cowardice or villainy.

He raised his eyes and saw that his companion, Desire, was awake and had risen. He called to him and showed him the inscription on the stone; and when he had read the writing, they gazed at each other, pensively enough. Nevertheless, they roused each other, proud and valiant men as they were, found their horses grazing not far away – for the grass was remarkably rich in that place due to the little spring that trickled from the fount – and replaced their bridles. Then Coeur took up his helm and shield, recovered his lance

from where it leant against the tree, mounted his steed, and they took up their path again briskly, which ran beside the little stream that flowed from the fountain, believing that not far distant somewhere along its length, some dwelling might be found where they could dine, for they were famished, not having eaten during the preceding day and night, and having endured unbelievable discomfort.

They rode, in this manner, for a good league or more, without encountering the least adventure, talking of their journey, and the dream that Coeur had experienced during their night under the aspen-tree. Desire was amused, and could not refrain from saying to Coeur, with a smile:

‘Coeur, oft a man may dream a dream
That proves more real than it may seem.’

CHAPTER XVII: THE VALLEY OF PROFOUND-THOUGHT

Smiling, and conversing about the old dwarf, who had deceived them thus, they rode on, ever looking about them hoping to discover the Manor of Fair-Repouse of which she had spoken, but in vain, since she had lied to them. Not long after, they entered into a vast and marvellous vale: it was a dark wasteland, with a deep river at its heart, hideous, troubled, and appalling.

Desire, casting his gaze about, saw, in the midst of the valley, hedged about by thornbushes, a little hovel, of poor construction and much dilapidated. He spurred in that direction, and attained the aforesaid dwelling. Inspecting its doorway, he saw a board on which the following was inscribed:

CHAPTER XVII: THE HOUSE OF MELANCHOLY

‘This vast and appalling valley
Is named, by all in this country,
The Valley of Profound-Thought,

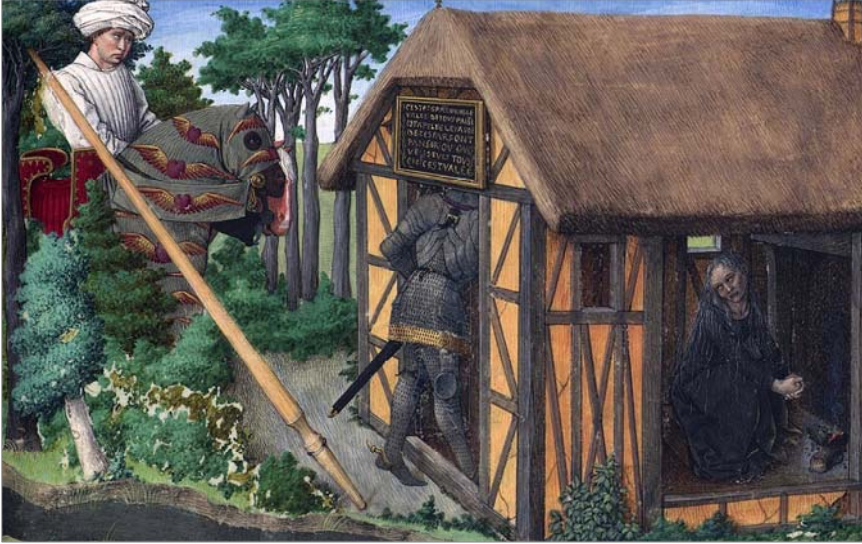
Where in this hut, fit for naught,
Amidst its gloom and poverty,
Dwells, thus concealed, Melancholy,
Who never did man any good,
Nor ever will, nor ever could.’

CHAPTER XVIII: THE COMPANIONS FIND MELANCHOLY WITHIN

After reading and studying the words inscribed on the plaque, so the tale goes, they reflected a little and concluded that they had certainly not arrived at the Manor of Fair-Repose, and that Melancholy and Fair-Repose bore little likeness to one another. Nonetheless, whatever the place, they absolutely must dine, since they had gone too long without a bite to eat.

Coeur descended from his steed, since he was scarcely able to keep in the saddle because of the violent hunger that gripped him; he entered the cottage, calling out, demanding to know if there was any living soul within, though no one responded. He advanced to the hearth, where the fire was so feeble that a cat would scarcely scorch its tail therein, and saw a dishevelled crone, gloomy and pensive, seated there, her hands clasped together. She was dreadfully thin and wrinkled, and, in short, seemed to have emerged from the bowels of the earth, for never was seen so horrible and appalling a creature.

Coeur said to himself that this must indeed be Melancholy, of whom the sign on the door of the hovel had spoken. He saluted her, but she scarcely returned his salute, for she was plunged in other thoughts. Nevertheless, he was so bold as to address her, in the following manner:



Coeur and Desire at Melancholy's dwelling

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 17r: Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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CHAPTER XVIII: COEUR ADDRESSES HER

‘Melancholy, I ask of you,
That of your grace, and kindness too,
You will offer me bread to eat,
For I hunger, and twould be meet
If my companion shared my meal,
For from us both the life doth steal.’

CHAPTER XIX: MELANCHOLY OFFERS HIM A MORSEL OF BREAD

On hearing Coeur speak thus, Melancholy rose, painfully since she had been plunged deep in thoughts from which it was hard to withdraw, and went straight to where she stored her bread; she tore off a piece and gave it to Coeur, willingly enough, not through pity or compassion towards him but because she knew the bread would do no good to him or any other who ate it. And when Coeur received and inspected the dense and heavy offering, he was troubled, and could not resist asking from what it was made, for he could see only too well that it was not wheat. Melancholy replied in the following manner:

CHAPTER XIX: THE RIVER OF TEARS

‘Coeur, since you desire to know
How my black bread is made, the dough
Is kneaded from a certain grain,
That goes by the name of ‘harsh pain’,
With water from the flood, say I
Which, as you witness, flows nearby.
Tis known as the River of Tears.
None dine on worse bread, it appears.’

CHAPTER XX: MELANCHOLY LEADS THE WAY TO A BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER

When Coeur heard Melancholy’s reply, and heard of what the bread was made, he was troubled, for never before had he eaten bread composed of such a grain and in such a manner. Indeed, it seemed astoundingly dense and hard, and if it had not been for the piercing hunger which gripped him, he would have refrained from tasting it, but he

was so horribly famished that he could not stop himself from consuming it, while saying to himself that hunger was a sauce without equal.

He took a bite from the bread, and carried the rest to his companion, Desire, who was astounded on viewing it, but since he was no less famished than the other, he bit down hard and they each ate their share, though it brought them little contentment, since it was so dense and hard to swallow it would scarce pass down their throat without pain. Then they drank water from the River of Tears that flowed nearby, as you have heard, water which Melancholy had stored in the hovel. If you ask me whence this river arose, I say it flowed from the Fountain of Fortune, beside which the two companions had rested the previous evening.

After eating and drinking, in the manner described, Coeur was desirous of leaving; but first asked Melancholy to show them, or indicate to them, some road that crossed the river whose current was so extremely forceful and terrifying. She, on hearing his request, however, was pleased to lead them there, not because she wished them well, but because she thought rather to lead them into a situation of which they would shortly have cause to repent.

The crone went ahead, and Coeur mounted his steed, he and his companion, Desire, then following at her heels, and in such a manner they approached the bank of the river; the old crone Melancholy first, the two companions riding behind. They were not long on their way before they saw a tall wooden bridge before them, traversing the stream, the bridge being weak and fragile, built long before and terribly narrow, such that a horse could barely pass. The river was deep and flowing strongly, such that the force of the water shook the whole bridge and made it tremble.



Coeur encounters the Black Knight at the bridge

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 18v: Le Livre du Cœur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460-1469)

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CHAPTER XXI: THE PASSAGE PERILOUS, AND THE KNIGHT ANXIETY

On the far side of the bridge was a knight clad entirely in black armour, except that portrayed upon his black shield were three flowers of anxiety. He was mounted on a great black steed, his head protected by a helm whose crest was of that heraldic columbine, and, lance in hand, he was ready to joust. And if you ask the name of this knight, I say that it was Anxiety himself, who guarded the bridge against noble lovers, and the bridge was named the Passage Perilous.

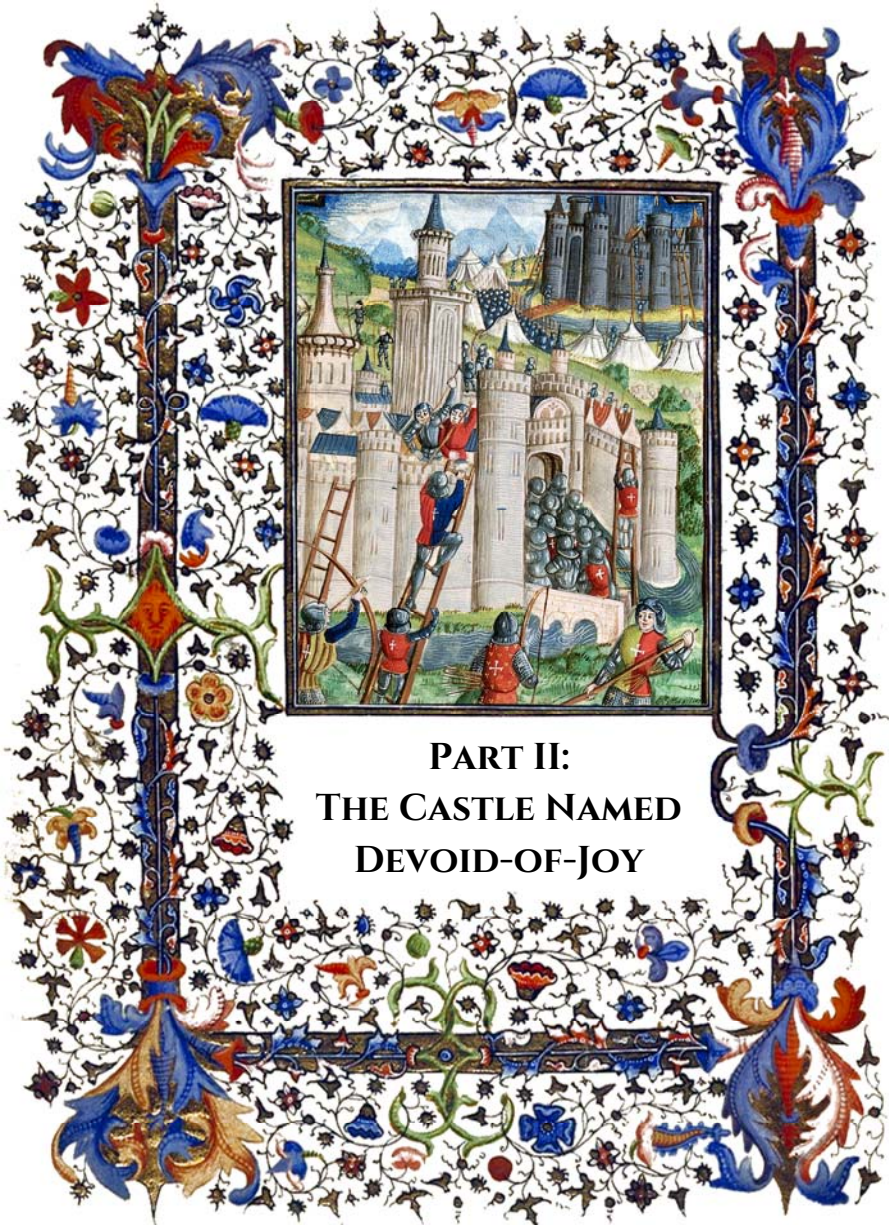
Old Melancholy showed the two companions the bridge, and Coeur was the first to advance, ashamed of appearing slower or more fearful than his companion, and hanging back in dread of a single knight. So, he spurred his steed, which bore him onto the bridge in an agile manner, the bridge trembling in such a way as to trouble him greatly, while Anxiety, with lowered lance, advancing towards him, put his charger to the gallop, his steed being accustomed to the narrow bridge.

On seeing this, Coeur directed himself towards him, and dealt him so fierce a blow on the shield that he broke his own lance, for he had seen that he must try to force a passage. But Anxiety, in turn, struck him so resounding a blow that he toppled Coeur and his steed into the depths of the river, for Coeur's steed was unaccustomed to the bridge, unlike that of Anxiety. Yet, he was not drowned, but able to reach the surface, for he was aided in doing so, as you will hear further.

However, the tale now ceases to tell of him, and returns to speak of Hope and Fair-Welcome, since it has proved silent regarding them for some time.



THE END OF PART I OF 'LE LIVRE DU COEUR D'AMOUR ÉPRIS'



CHAPTER XXII: LADY HOPE FREES FAIR-WELCOME, AND TAKES LEAVE OF HIM

The tale recalls that once the two companions, Coeur and Desire, had departed from the pavilion where they had found Lady Hope, and had taken leave of her in the manner previously described, she remained there all that day and the next morn till beyond the hour of Prime, without hearing news of them. It seemed to her then that too much time had passed without hearing of them, and that if they had travelled securely or reached safe harbour, they would not be in a such a state that she would not have been apprised of it, given that she at all times received news of true lovers. She therefore readied herself and, nobly attired and adorned in pure white royal robes, mounted a fine palfrey, taking with her only a single servant and a page, and announcing that they were going to seek the two companions, for she was convinced that they had great need of her yet.

She and her company, took to the road, passing swiftly through the Forest of Long-Delay, for she knew, having divined it, the whole route the two companions had taken, which you have heard described. She had not journeyed long when she saw the hermitage where old Jealousy held Fair-Welcome captive, and where she had deceived the two companions, as you have heard. She prodded her palfrey in that direction to discover if the crone had news of the pair, for she was sure they had been there, or at least had passed nearby. She reached the door of the hermitage, descended from her steed, and entered, but found no sign of old Jealousy, since at that hour the crone had left for the forest, hoping to find lovers to whom she could do ill or wrong.

Lady Hope searched the hermitage from top to bottom for someone to whom she could speak. Passing before the door of a little chamber, she heard the voice of one complaining bitterly, in a weak low voice, and imploring aid from the god of Love and his sweet mother, Venus. Hope strove, aided by her servant, to break down the door, which in that simple rural hermitage, scarcely resisted, and found the handsome youth, Fair-Welcome, within, his feet shackled with newly-wrought irons. Lady Hope, who recognised him

immediately having seen him before, broke the shackles, then drew him forth from the chamber. Though his colour was pale and wan, due to the painful captivity he had endured, he was nevertheless so handsome it would have been difficult to find his equal.

Brought to the light of day, Fair-Welcome gazed at Lady Hope, for he had feared she was old Jealousy come to drag him to his death, or at least to some worse place than this. When he looked at her closely, he recognised her, and they threw themselves upon each other's necks, and embraced warmly. What more can one say? They greeted each other with a mutual joy beyond description. When they had rejoiced together awhile, Lady Hope asked Fair-Welcome how and by whom he had been captured, and whether he had seen the two companions, Coeur and Desire. Fair-Welcome told her all from beginning to end: how old Jealousy had taken him, by a ruse, and wronged him wickedly, and how he had been imprisoned by her; but when she enquired regarding the two companions, he had no news of them.

Lady Hope wished to give him her page's horse, but Fair-Welcome would not accept; it was, he said, scarce a league to the House of Delight, and there he would find all he needed; and he did not wish to interfere with the journey Lady Hope had started upon, aimed at finding the two companions, as she had already explained. They departed on foot, travelling slowly, talking of what had occurred, until they reached the entrance to the Forest of Long-Delay, which was not far distant. There they exchanged a kiss, embraced each other, and took their leave. Lady Hope was the first to say her farewells:

'Fair-Welcome, my friend, sweet and dear,
I say adieu, with this wish sincere,
To be of service, and give pleasure,
To you, in any and every measure.'

**CHAPTER XXIII: FAIR-WELCOME, IN TURN,
TAKES LEAVE OF LADY HOPE**

When Fair-Welcome had heard Lady Hope speak thus, he could not hold back his tears at the sweet words she had addressed to him, and he replied in the following fashion:

‘Hope, my sweet and noble lady,
Whose I am, in soul and body,
You have a service done for me
That is scarcely slight and, truly,
I desire naught but to return
Like service, and your favour earn.
I’ll praise you to the god of Love,
As soon as I may, and so prove,
To him, you’re of his company,
For you aid true lovers, gladly.’

**CHAPTER XXIV: HOPE FOLLOWS THE TWO
COMPANIONS’ PATH TO THE RIVER**

With these words, they commended each other to God, and Fair-Welcome took the road to the right which led to the House of Delight, where he might find a steed, and all necessary for re-joining the god of Love, of whose household he was a member. As for Lady Hope, she took the path to the left: expecting the two companions to have gone that way, since she had anticipated, and related to them, all that they had since encountered. She urged her palfrey on at such a speed that her servant and the page could scarcely follow. Thus, about the hour of Tierce she reached the Fountain of Fortune, from which the two companions had departed that morning.

Part II: The Castle Named Devoid-of-Joy

She continued to ride briskly, and came upon their horses' trail, which she followed swiftly, and gained the valley of Profound-Thought, arriving at precisely the moment when Coeur and Anxiety were jousting on the bridge of the Passage Perilous. At a glance, Hope perceived them in combat on the bridge, and saw Coeur fall into the river below. She urged on her palfrey, and sped towards the bridge as swiftly as she could, encountering only Melancholy, who was returning to her dwelling, and who sped away as soon as she had passed by.

Reaching the bridge, she saw Coeur in the water, gripping one of the piles of the bridge. She quickly descended from her horse, and helped him from the river; as for his steed, it had already climbed from the flood, and had set itself to grazing the grass around.



Hope rescues Coeur from the River of Tears

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 21v: *Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris*, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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CHAPTER XXV: SHE RESCUES COEUR, AND THEY TELL HER OF THEIR ADVENTURES

When Coeur found himself free of the water, ask not if he was overjoyed; he looked to see who the lady was who had rescued him, and immediately recognised Hope, his good mistress, who had already, in the past, done well by him and proffered sound advice. Coeur now removed his helm, and drew down his ventail, and they exchanged kisses, sharing a joy and delight beyond description. However, Coeur, annoyed and angered by having been so vilely defeated in the joust by a lone knight, claimed that the affair was not over, and he would see who was the better swordsman. Yet it counted for nothing, for as soon as the knight had defeated Coeur, he had ridden towards the castle named Devoid-of-Joy, for that was his dwelling-place.

Lady Hope consoled Coeur and he re-mounted his horse, while Desire who had done what he could to drag Coeur from the river, though he could achieve nothing till Lady Hope had arrived, came towards her and greeted her joyfully. They entered into conversation, Lady Hope asking what had happened to them, and they recounted all their adventures since they had left her pavilion. The lady began to smile, and as they rode along slowly, spoke as follows:

CHAPTER XXV: LADY HOPE ADVISES THEM FURTHER

‘My children, now, listen to me,
Be reassured as to what may be;
Trust in my sound advice, I pray,
It’s equal you’ll not find, this day.
I have ever been your true friend,
And, on my word, you may depend.
You must on a keep alight,
Devoid-of-Joy tis called aright,
There you will find many who try

Love's company, and Love defy,
For Trouble is the master there,
The captain of their least affair.
Rather than songs and dances, one
Hears lamentation from everyone,
Nor will you be free, I suggest,
Of the ills that will dog your quest,
For, from there, a road you'll take
Whence pain arises, and no mistake;
For you the sea's perils must prove,
Suffering there the ills of love,
Meeting Discouragement moreover
Who has slain full many a lover.
For God's sake, there, remember me,
Who am your mother, eternally.
I have told you so, and oft repeat
The same advice, for such is meet,
Since I fear lest Discouragement
Capture you; tis, his strong intent.
Yet, if you pass those evils, say I,
You'll be happy, for by and by,
You'll find yourself in Love's sweet isle,
Which is fair, and rest there awhile,
There where there is naught to annoy,
And naught lacking to bring you joy.
And there Fair-Welcome you will see,
Whom wretched, and in misery,
Jealousy held in captivity,
Who to lovers proves an enemy.
In that isle, fair and gracious,
Is many a thing full precious;

And there sweet and pleasant Mercy
Dwells without fault or enmity,
Whom you are seeking for the while.
But ere you may win her, in style,
Refusal's strength you must counter,
And Rejection, a fierce foe ever.
You must stand firm against those two,
To win the praise that is your due,
If you'd complete your present quest,
For then you'll garner of the best.
I'll speak no more now, for my part,
But say adieu, and so depart.'

CHAPTER XXVI: COEUR REPLIES TO LADY HOPE'S PARTING WORDS

When Lady Hope finished speaking thus, they were most content and reassured by the words of that noble dame, yet somewhat saddened and troubled that she was taking leave of them, for her presence and advice greatly comforted them. Therefore, Coeur could not help but reply, as follows:

'Hope, my lady and my mother,
You, whose speech is never bitter,
You who have done us so much good,
Else we were lost, if you but could
Refrain, we beg, from leaving now,
Then "God be thanked" would be our vow.
Truly, were it but possible,
And to you in no way harmful,
Then your very presence, alone,

Would help us to face the unknown,
And grant us strength to encounter
Whatever may come hereafter.'

CHAPTER XXVII: LADY HOPE VANISHES

At these words, Lady Hope bowed her head towards them, while urging on her palfrey, and departed so suddenly that it seemed to the two companions that she had simply vanished. They gazed at each other, concluding that she must be a creature spiritual in essence, and therefore capable of such a disappearance. After a moment spent reflecting upon this, Desire was the first to speak, saying:

'Coeur, my friend, tis all in vain
To think on this; come, turn again
To the quest that we must further,
If you'd win both praise and honour.
Valour and strength you own, I know;
Naught else you need to conquer so.
Let us pursue this to the end,
I beg, with all my heart, dear friend!'

CHAPTER XXVIII: THE COMPANIONS REACH THE CASTLE NAMED DEVOID-OF-JOY

Coeur, who had been meditating on the subject of Lady Hope, she who had departed so suddenly, stirred himself then, seized the bridle of his horse, mounted, and spurred his steed along the left-hand trail, which was the most worn. They journeyed so well, without finding any adventure worth speaking of, that they soon arrived at the foot of the castle named Devoid-of-Joy. They gazed at the high walls of this great castle, which was old and somewhat dilapidated, the stones of its ramparts, lacking

in attractiveness, being constructed of small ill-cut pieces, yellowish-brown in colour, streaked with black and red, fissured and pierced in many places; in short, the place was ill-favoured in all regards.

As they viewed the castle, they commented that they were as likely to be as ill-lodged as they had been the previous night, for it was only too evident that the castle might offer woeful hospitality. Yet it was time to seek lodgings, for the sun was setting and night was falling. So, notwithstanding that they had been meanly lodged the evening before, which had increased their need for repose, Coeur, being noble and brave, rode forward along the ancient track stony and ill-made. They went in such a manner, at the gallop, for otherwise they could not have advanced, and so swiftly, that they came to the main gate of the castle, where no one was to be found. As they would discover later, Idleness was supposed to be guarding it that day, but she had not yet risen from her after-dinner sleep. They passed the barrier so, and gazed up at the portal, above which letters were engraved, which read thus:

CHAPTER XXVIII: THE WRITING ABOVE THE CASTLE'S MAIN ENTRANCE

'All those who dwell here, in this same
Valley, grant this fortress a name,
Which is Denial-of Delight,
And Lady Sadness rules its might,
And Trouble is this castle's lord,
Who to many doth ill afford.
None that enters here knows joy,
For many a sorrow they employ,
And none there is that in doth go
That will not feel a weight of woe,
And a greater when they depart,
For Trouble ever pains the heart.
And all who do, must Trouble fight,
And be beaten by that great knight,

Knocked from their steed, the blow full sure.

Now, enter, he who longs for war!

CHAPTER XXIX: COEUR TAKES UP THE LANCE BESIDE THE GATE

When the two companions had finished reading the message and studying it, they reflected on the fact that they were unlikely to be lodged, and attended to well, that evening, though they were in great need of it; Coeur, indeed was not yet dry after the bath Anxiety had made him take, when the latter had hurled him from the perilous bridge into the River of Tears.

The two companions exchanged a glance, for they saw a lance leaning on the wall beside the gate, left there by the guardian of the aforesaid portal. Then Coeur advanced, and appropriated it, since he had broken his own in striking that blow against Anxiety, as the tale has told, and, if the inscription over the gate was to be believed, he would most certainly have need of it. He flourished it, and found it fragile enough, but told himself that it was better than nothing.

When Desire saw him comport himself thus, ask not if he was joyful, for he observed that Coeur was afraid of nothing, and had the firm intention of seeing his quest to a successful end. Unable to restrain himself from speaking, he addressed Coeur as follows:

CHAPTER XXIX: DESIRE PRAISES COEUR'S VALOUR

‘Coeur, how noble and brave are you!

I see, tis war you would pursue,

And that in you there dwells no fear,

Regarding what is written here.

Be not anxious as to your quest:

You'll gain Sweet Mercy, with the best.

I but fear that your bath, before,
Weakened and softened you for war.'

CHAPTER XXX: COEUR REASSURES HIM

Then Coeur turned towards his companion, Desire, and looked him in the face; and, reddening a little, replied to him thus:

'Desire, my friend, fear not for me,
Since I'm brave enough, certainly,
For this adventure; my valour
Seek not to question, by my honour.
You'll witness it within the hour
If Amor but preserves my power.'

CHAPTER XXXI: IDLENESS SUMMONS TROUBLE WITH HER CRIES

With this, he spurred his steed, and was the first to enter the castle courtyard, followed by his companion, Desire. They immediately encountered Idleness, who was returning to guard the gate. She was utterly tousled and dishevelled. Her shoelaces, and the ribbons of her hose were trailing at her heels, her gown was torn in more than twenty places, her eyes were bleary, and her hands, dirty and unwashed, she held clasped over her belly, as she advanced muttering with annoyance.

On seeing the two companions, within the castle, she uttered cries dreadful enough to have roused fear in anyone, while Trouble, the lord of the castle, on hearing her call out, hastened to close the doors of the keep, then stuck his head out of a window, upon which he saw the two companions in the middle of the courtyard, and shouted at them, as follows.

'What are you doing there, you two?
The Devil has sent the pair of you!

Part II: The Castle Named Devoid-of-Joy

You do me injury and wrong,
But dead you will be ere too long.
Wait for me there, a moment now,
For I'll be there in haste, I vow.'



Coeur and Desire enter the castle and encounter Idleness

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 25v: Le Livre du Cœur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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CHAPTER XXXII: COEUR AND TROUBLE CONTEND

The two companions, on hearing this, knew they were destined not to escape without a fight. Coeur promptly descended from his charger and checked that the straps were all drawn tight, then remounted, seized his shield and lance, and prepared to battle as fiercely as he could. He did not wait to see the door of the keep open, whence Trouble, the lord of the castle, emerged, in his reddish-brown armour; on his shield he bore the emblem of three thistles charged across with a branch of blackthorn, and on his helm a false dragon's head furiously spitting flame. Annoyed and angry,

he advanced at the gallop, and as soon as he saw Coeur, who awaited him fully armed in the midst of the courtyard, he rode towards him, while Coeur did not fail to engage.

They landed such great blows on their shields that their lances were broken, and their steeds collided so violently, chest and body together, that they were borne backwards to the ground; they rose, nonetheless, so rapidly that it was uncertain who arose first. But it was Trouble, the lord of that place, who spoke first, in the following manner:

‘My friend, you’ve failed to conquer here:

You too were grounded, such is clear.

Now we must fight on together,

And so may determine whether

You are the better swordsman or

Whether tis my own skill proves more.

The Devil brought you to such a pass:

And, therefore, loves you not, alas!’

CHAPTER XXXIII: THEY CONTINUE THEIR FIGHT WITH SWORDS

When Coeur heard himself mocked and insulted thus, he ground his teeth, seized with anger and discontent, set his sword before his breast, and brandished the sword in his fist. Then he advanced towards Trouble, and dealt his as violent a blow as possible on his helm, so effectively that Trouble fell before him, and it pierced the helm to a depth of more than three fingers. Then, he answered him in these terms:



Coeur and Trouble contend

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 26v: *Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris*, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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‘My friend, you who insult me thus,
Take this blow, as a gift from us!
For you are not so brave in this
As to mock me for cowardice.
And before you depart from me,
Thank God if you’re injury-free!’

CHAPTER XXXIV: COEUR OVERCOMES TROUBLE

Then they struck each other so vigorously and favoured each other with such mighty blows, that none who could had seen them would have hesitated to esteem them men of skill and valour, so ferocious and dreadful was the battle they fought. Trouble, who was angered at being attacked thus by Coeur, rendered him blow for blow. They struck each other while each losing a quantity of blood, to the degree that the ground all about them was dyed crimson and they could hardly keep their feet. Then Trouble,

who could not bear to be struck so forcefully, raised his steel blade and dealt a blow to Coeur's helm, as violently as his arm would permit, though it failed to land squarely, the blade sliding down over the shield, shearing away a good quarter of it. Trouble could not contain the power of his blow, so that the blade swept onwards and fixed itself in the ground to the depth of a foot or more. He tugged at it, but in vain, since it was too firmly embedded.

Coeur, perceiving this, approached him and dealt him so sharp a blow to the head that he cracked the helm and the iron cap beneath, and sank the blade at least two fingers deep into his skull. He carried through with a second stroke which landed so savagely on Trouble's shoulder that he fell backwards to the ground. Coeur leapt upon him then, cut the laces of his helm, dragged it from his head, and dealt him so fierce a blow on the brow with the pommel of his sword that he was stunned, and cried for mercy. Trouble, finding that his head was now unprotected, feared to die, and surrendered, while begging Coeur of his grace to tell him who he might be. He had surrendered willingly, he said, and begged Coeur, in God's name, to spare him. Coeur replied in the following manner:

CHAPTER XXXIV: HE SPARES TROUBLE'S LIFE ON CERTAIN CONDITIONS

“Trouble, you who ever work ill,
You now are subject to my will!
Yet if you still would know my name,
I'll not refuse to give that same:
Not for fear of aught you can do,
For you've now received your due,
But rather I seek not to conceal
My name from any; let me reveal
Coeur am I, your conqueror truly,
Who goes in search of Sweet Mercy.
Now your promise I must obtain,
For you must do as I ordain,

And swear to me you will so do,
Or else I'll make an end of you;
And you must speak of the dangers
Of this castle and how strangers
Are treated here, and why I find
You in this place, and all your mind.'

CHAPTER XXXV: SADNESS BEGS COEUR TO SHOW MERCY

While Coeur was thus addressing Trouble, Desire, who was watching the battle between the two, looked towards the door of the keep, and saw a woman emerge, tall and thin, pale in colour, hideous and dishevelled, ignobly dressed, woeful and weeping, approaching swiftly, making a vast lament as if she was utterly desolated. And if you ask me who she was, and her name, I reply that she was named Sadness, and that she was a friend of Trouble, the knight who had fought with Coeur.

She came straight towards the two adversaries, and Desire, fearing lest she might harm Coeur, his companion, drew nearer to see what she sought to do. But as soon as she reached the two combatants, she fell on her knees before Coeur, in such a state of woe that all must pity her, for she was ever wretched thus, and begged Coeur to have mercy, for God's sake, on her friend, whom he had conquered, and spare his life otherwise she would kill herself, and if he would do her that courtesy he would be richly rewarded.

Coeur gazed on this woman, who seemed to possess little beauty; though, since she was a woman, he pitied her, and felt constrained to admit her request, provided Trouble did as he commanded, regarding whom Sadness spoke to Coeur in the following manner:

**CHAPTER XXXV: SADNESS SPEAKS OF
TROUBLE AND OF HERSELF**

'My most noble and gracious lord,
None may more readily afford
You certain knowledge of my friend;
Upon my words you may depend.
After which he will swear to you
To do as you wish, and prove true,
And faithfully perform your will.
By my faith, I'll not rest until
He and you are in good accord.
Know, of this castle he is lord,
And Trouble is his name, yet I
Have ne'er found any, neath the sky,
Better suited to my own nature;
What pleases me, he wishes ever.
For Sadness I am called, one who
Wounds many a heart, such as you.
Many an ill, and many a crime
Gainst Love he's wrought in his time;
Of doing harm he'll never tire
To all who pass; tis his desire;
Yet of both our conditions we
Gain no joy, only misery,
Nor doth any dwell in this place,
No attendant or squire doth grace
This castle of his, willingly,
Who with our state doth not agree.
In place of joy, on all occasions,

We express but lamentations.
I speak the truth, with every breath;
And pray you will not seek his death.’

CHAPTER XXXVI: COEUR ALLOWS TROUBLE TO RISE

At this, Coeur took Trouble by the hand and raised him from the ground. Though he was annoyed that Trouble was ever hostile to the god of Love and his company, he was nonetheless content to grant him his life at the lady’s request, telling himself that he would make Trouble swear an oath to the effect that, lest he perjure himself –which he later did – he would do lovers no further harm. He then took his right hand in his own in the presence of Sadness, saying:

CHAPTER XXXVI: HE ORDERS TROUBLE TO SWEAR ON OATH NOT TO HARM LOVERS

‘At the request of your lady,
Who your friend would seem to be,
Trouble, I now spare you your life,
And lest we need renew our strife
You must promise me, faithfully,
That you will end your villainy,
And naught ill will advance, or move
Against the company of Love,
Nor of those who of him complain
When they the castle here do gain,
Which is devoid of all delight.
For God made not so drear a sight,
Devils built it with their own hands,
And scant esteem it thus commands.

Do all that I demand of you,
Or you'll pay the price that's due,
Swear an oath now for your friend
On whom it seems you can depend.'

CHAPTER XXXVII: SADNESS INSTRUCTS TROUBLE TO OBEY

When Trouble heard himself urged, under threat, to swear an oath scarcely agreeable to him, he glanced towards his friend, Sadness, who signalled to him to do as Coeur asked, since she thought to take revenge in another manner. Then Trouble delayed no longer, but did as Coeur had requested of him, saying:

CHAPTER XXXVII: TROUBLE SWEARS TO SERVE THE GOD OF LOVE

'O Coeur, who are so valiant,
Brave, skilful, and resilient,
You have conquered, and not by chance;
Scant use to me my shield and lance.
My sword I render up to you,
For victory is yours, and through
Sheer force of arms, and manfully.
Thus, I will swear now, openly,
The oath that you demand, this day,
Without seeking, in any way,
To stray from the path you have set,
For all your demands shall be met.
On the contrary, Love I'll serve,
And free of complaint or reserve.'

CHAPTER XXXVIII: DESIRE ASKS SADNESS WHERE THEY CAN FIND LODGING

Once Coeur had made Trouble promise, on oath, as you have heard, Desire approached and asked Sadness if she knew of any place in the vicinity where they might find shelter and lodgings for the night, since it was late and Coeur was weary and weighed down with sorrow. That treacherous deceiver Sadness, who thought other than she said, replied that it was out of the question for them to seek another lodging that evening than the castle; and answered him in these terms:

‘Ah, Coeur, my gentle noble lord,
Honour me, and dine at my board;
On good lodging you may depend,
And you, Desire, my dear friend.
Tis the finest place, without doubt,
For two days’ journey hereabout.
No better welcome will you find,
Nor truer solace, to my mind.
Good food is in abundance here,
If you but sample of our cheer.
Dear God, but one hour of the day,
And one half, is left; you must stay.’

CHAPTER XXXIX: COEUR IS IMPRISONED IN THE CASTLE

When Sadness had ended her plea, in the above fashion, the two companions looked at each other, aware that darkness was already falling, and that they knew of no other place in which to spend the night. Since the lady had offered so strong a plea, they accepted her offer of lodgings with good grace. Lady Sadness then took Coeur by the

hand and marched straight towards the keep, Desire and Trouble following, though all arrived there together. She called out on reaching the door, it was opened, and they penetrated the interior.

On entering, Coeur and Desire heard a host of people weeping and lamenting, in a distraught manner. They passed on into the lady's chamber, to which she led them, in order that Coeur and her friend, Trouble, might there be relieved of their armour. She summoned a knight of mature age, thin and pale, to perform this. The tale indicates that this knight was Anxiety, the combatant who had toppled Coeur from the perilous bridge into the River of Tears. Anxiety recognised Coeur on seeing him, by the arms he bore, but Coeur failed to recognise him in turn, for he had not seen him free of his armour before. Anxiety was a close relative of Sadness and her friend Trouble.

Once Coeur was disarmed, the lady, refreshments having been prepared meanwhile, had wine brought, though of a poor quality, and a portion of bread that smelled musty, while the two companions' ears were met with endless complaints, cries of woe, and lamentations from an unseen host of people. The pair were preoccupied and filled with scant cheer, since their lodgings appeared so truly joyless. It was scarcely a moment before Lady Sadness reappeared, having accomplished her task, and on entering, finding the companions so troubled, she begged them to walk about the place a little to raise their spirits, for the building was of marvellous construction; and this they agreed to, willingly.

So, Lady Sadness took a candle, and went before them, with Coeur, and then Desire, following after. They visited various parts of the castle. The two companions continually gazed about them, and listened, for wherever they went they could always hear the sound of tears and lamentation. It was then that they recalled the words of Lady Hope: that instead of joyful songs they would hear only cries of woe.

They pursued their walk, such that, after their viewing many ancient and wonderful features, Sadness led them to a very old tower. She entered first, a woman plotting a wicked ruse, holding the candle before her so that Coeur behind her could see little; she quickened her pace and strode over two floorboards, while Coeur who suspected naught trod on one of the planks, which gave way in an instant, precipitating him downwards, a lance and a half's length at least.

CHAPTER XXXIX: DESIRES SEEKS HELP, AND ENCOUNTERS HUMBLE-REQUEST

Then Desire, who was instantly on his guard, retreated and precipitated himself towards the principal door of the castle, which he found open, for Lady Idleness had not been so diligent as to close it. He mounted and rode through the gate, sorely troubled by what he happened to his companion, Coeur. He glanced back at the inscription above its portal, thinking how true it had proved. He reflected that it was of little use musing or dwelling upon the matter, and that he must employ diligence to seek aid for his companion, who, it seemed to him, had fallen into evil hands, those of Sadness who had sadly proved a hypocrite.

He took to the road without delay, thinking to reach the House of Love, where he might find help for his companion more readily than in any other place he knew. He travelled all night, like one who knew the way, without it seems meeting with adventure. At dawn, he found himself at the edge of a deep forest, and saw, beside a most pleasant river, in a vast meadow dotted with pretty bushes, and little green hedges, a large array of tents and pavilions. Descending a slope, he headed straight towards them, encountering a messenger on the way who bore a coat of arms, azure with three golden arrows, flighted with silver feathers, two angels supporting the aforesaid blazon.

If you ask me who this individual was, and, in whose service, he laboured, I will say that he was Humble-Request, Love's messenger, whom Love had sent to Honour and others of his company, to inform them that Ill-Talk had assembled a great number of slanderers to destroy his realm, and ransom his subjects. When Desire saw him, he recalled him perfectly, for he thought to have seen him before in the House of the god of Love. He therefore saluted him, and addressed him in the following manner:



Coeur encounters Humble-Request on horseback

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 31v: Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460-1469)

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CHAPTER XXXIX: DESIRE ADDRESSES HUMBLE-REQUEST

‘Well met, fair messenger, indeed,
Whose task is e’er by Love decreed,
My gentle friend, Humble-Request!
Tell me your mission and your quest,
Say, if you please, what brings you here,
For that you travel hard, tis clear;
And who the folk are I see yonder
Hard against that forest’s border;
What these tents, and pavilions, are,

Tell me true, that rise near and far,
And tell me further, if you will,
If their presence bodes good or ill.'

CHAPTER XL: HUMBLE-REQUEST REPLIES TO DESIRE

On hearing this speech, Humble-Request gazed at Desire, recognising him in turn, since he had seen him before in his master's house, and elsewhere, and doing him reverence, he saluted him, saying:

'Desire, may the Lord God ever
Send you good-health, joy, and honour!
Love, my master, has ordered me
To summon his whole company,
His allies, and well-wishers, all,
Upon his enemies to fall,
Whose leader is Ill-Talk, for war
That slanderer makes, as oft before.
Refusal and Rejection fight
At Ill-Talk's side, and many a knight
Of ill-repute, and, hark to me,
Those folk have captured Sweet-Mercy.
They have imprisoned her, I say,
– The Devil was there on that day! –
Bound her tightly, in bonds of fear
And shame, weeping many a tear.
And she shall know delight no more,
Filled with distress, her fate unsure.
That host, just beyond you, Honour,
As it seems, has sought to gather;

All those allied to our cause, who,
Vaunt their courage, he doth review;
They now gather to Love's banner,
To aid him and bring him succour.
Before ten years of war is done,
All the vile traitors, every one,
Shall be punished! But come, draw near,
And tell me why you journey here.'

CHAPTER XLI: DESIRE SEEKS OUT HONOUR'S PAVILION

The story now relates that, when Desire had heard the news borne by Humble-Request, he was all at once both sad and joyful; sad because the slanderers were making war on his master, Love, and because Sweet Mercy, according to that messenger, was held captive; joyful because he saw Honour and his company nearby, who, he thought, would not fail to furnish him with aid for his companion, Coeur, since they were no more than a day's journey from the castle named Devoid-of-Joy.

He then told the emissary Humble-Request the whole tale: of how he had undertaken the quest for Sweet Mercy in support of Coeur, the Heart seized by love, and of the adventures they had encountered, and how Coeur was now imprisoned in the castle named Devoid-of-Joy, and all in detail that had occurred, as the story has revealed to you, from its commencement until now. Then they embraced, and commended each other to God, and Humble-Request went diligently about his business, while Desire headed towards the tents and pavilions nearby.

Desire asked the whereabouts of Honour's pavilion and there was no lack of folk to direct him there. He dismounted, entered the tent, and found Honour within, considering his battle-plans aided by his barons' counsel. Setting one knee on the ground, he saluted, and spoke as follows:



Coeur kneels before Honour, outside his pavilion

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 33r: *Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris*, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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CHAPTER XLI: AND SEEKS HONOUR'S ASSISTANCE

'My most steadfast lord and master,
Most high and noble prince, Honour,
I kneel to you, reverentially,
And wish you Fame and Victory!
I come to you now, seeking aid,
For one of Love's fair cavalcade,
Whom I have set upon a quest,
He submitting at my behest,
To find the Lady, Sweet Mercy,
Of whom ill news had come to me.

He is suffering, I dare say,
In seeking praise, much pain each day,
Yet, after peril and travail,
Vile Sadness o'er him doth prevail,
For she has tricked him most falsely,
And now imprisons him harshly,
Within Denial-of Delight
Her dwelling, hidden from the light.
Love loses a good servant there,
And you, my lord, by that affair,
For willingly he sought the quest
And wholly at my own behest.
That you be pleased to bring him aid,
Is what I seek, and have relayed.'

CHAPTER XLII: HONOUR CONSIDERS DESIRE'S REQUEST

When Honour had heard the whole of Desire's speech, he gazed at him attentively, since he had spoken so nobly and steadfastly. He recognised him, moreover, for he had seen him before in the house of Love, his sovereign lord. He made him welcome and comforted him, and, giving him his hand, raised him and demanded further details of Coeur and the circumstances of his imprisonment. And Desire told him, from beginning to end, all that had happened since the commencement of their quest until now, and affirmed that Trouble was lord of the castle in which Coeur was held captive, adding that it was no more than a day's journey away.

Honour listened most benignly, and having heard all, could not keep from reddening in vexation with regard to Trouble and Sadness, and he addressed Desire, thus:

CHAPTER XLII: AND REPLIES AS FOLLOWS

'By my faith in the god of Love,
Aid for Coeur, I indeed approve,
Though my own powers I must employ
For never, by God, will I have joy
While he suffers such sore distress
And in vile Sadness' hands no less.
If I should capture her, and Trouble,
Twill be the end of that quarrel,
For they will perish, in a breath,
Whoe'er would shelter them from death.'

CHAPTER XLIII: HONOUR CALLS UPON RENOWN TO AID COEUR

Then Honour summoned Renown, and said to him that he must furnish all the enterprise, that he must commandeer sufficient men from out the army, and make sure to deliver Coeur from his captivity. And Renown, who desired nothing more, strode forward to do reverence to Honour, thanked him, and replied in these terms:

CHAPTER XLIII: RENOWN RESPONDS TO HONOUR'S COMMAND

'My dear lord, your command to me
Shall now be furthered, instantly!
Before two days, no more, have passed,
Coeur shall be freed, and if I cast
My eyes upon, and seize Trouble,

I'll bring him before your Council,
And do the same with Sadness too,
So the false traitress you may view.
To God, I commend you, your Grace;
I must not linger in this place.'

CHAPTER XLIV: DESIRE LEADS RENOWN TO THE CASTLE, WHERE THE LATTER ADDRESSES HIS MEN

At this point, the story says that, after speaking thus, Renown brooked no delay: rather he summoned Pleasure and Enjoyment to his side, since he knew they had long hated Trouble and Sadness; and he gathered other folk he thought worthy, dressed and equipped himself as he thought necessary, had the trumpets sounded, and parted, in noble company, from Honour's army.

Once in the field, he sought out Desire, and had him ride ahead to guide them straight to the castle named Devoid-of-Joy; and Desire did so, as one who knew the way. They journeyed, in this manner, without any adventure to speak of, till they came to the borders of the forest, and entered the dense low undergrowth. They saw before them the heights of the castle named Devoid-of-Joy; the large and ancient keep, fissured and eroded in many a place. Desire when asked the name of the castle, replied that it was, indeed, Devoid-of-Joy, the same in which Coeur was imprisoned.

Then Renown, who sought to take the castle by assault, had them all halt to don their helmets, and ready themselves, before haranguing his troops as follows:

CHAPTER XLIV: RENOWN ADDRESSES HIS TROOPS

'My peers, and my companions, here,
Who fine and valiant thus appear,
So fine that you may be assured,

None finer ever served a lord,
I rejoice in so praising you,
And yet I would exhort you, too:
All your skill and might display,
Conquer by force of arms this day,
The crowd of villains in this keep,
Who hold brave Coeur in prison deep,
One that's a true servant ever
Of Love, who is our lord and master.
Now we'll see who loves him truly,
And so, performs his martial duty!

CHAPTER XLV: RENOWN'S ARMY IS ROUSED TO ASSAULT THE CASTLE

When the company heard themselves exhorted and admonished thus, their hearts were roused such that there was none so humble at that hour that they thought themselves less valiant than Lancelot or Hector of Troy. They shouted, with but one voice: 'On, on, we delay too long!' But, at this point, the tale turns elsewhere and speaks again of Coeur, in order to tell of his imprisonment, and of how he was treated in his captivity.



THE END OF PART II OF 'LE LIVRE DU COEUR D'AMOUR ÉPRIS'



PART III:
COEUR'S RESCUE

CHAPTER XLVI: MELANCHOLY VISITS COEUR IN HIS PRISON CELL

Now the tale relates that when Coeur had fallen into Lady Sadness' dungeon in the castle named Devoid-of-Joy, as has been described previously, he was extremely surprised and annoyed. One thing above all grieved him sorely: that he might never be freed, since the castle where he was imprisoned lay in a distant and most inhospitable country, and far from the sight of benign folk; and he feared his companion, Desire, might be dead or at least a prisoner, for it seemed to him that Desire had not the strength to fight Trouble and his people, not thinking that Desire would be able to escape as he had done.

He remained without food or drink that night, having only partaken of that which he and his companion, Desire, had already received, the morsel of bread and the sour wine that is, which, as you have heard, Sadness had provided; and he could not prevent the tears welling from his eyes. After lying awake, for most of a night that felt most painful to him, reflecting on his plight, he slept till dawn, though he knew not if it was night or day, for no light penetrated his prison.

That morning, about the hour of Tierce, Sadness sent a messenger to Melancholy, her close relative, asking Melancholy to re-join her at the castle named Devoid-of-Joy, and to bring a loaf of bread made from harsh pain, and a flask of water from the River of Tears, of both of which the two companions, Coeur and Desire, had already partaken, and informed her also that she wished her to guard Coeur, the Heart seized by love, who was now her prisoner. And once Melancholy had received and read the message from her cousin Lady Sadness, she was pleased though scarcely joyous, for it was not in her nature to feel joy.

She departed swiftly, her shoulders bearing the bread and water Sadness had demanded, and took herself to the castle named Devoid-of-Joy, for it was but a short journey from her dwelling to that place. Her cousin Sadness came to meet her, welcomed her warmly, and told her in detail how she had come to capture and imprison Coeur. She conferred on Melancholy the task

of guarding him, which was accepted willingly; the latter asking if Coeur had eaten that day; Sadness replied that he had not, so Melancholy took up the bread and water she had brought, and asked to be conducted to where Coeur was being held. Trouble, who was present, led her immediately to the trapdoor that gave entry to Coeur's cell. She bent down, and called out to Coeur:

CHAPTER XLVI: SHE ADDRESSES THE IMPRISONED COEUR

'O wretched Coeur, are you there?
What devil dropped you through the air?
You and Desire, your companion,
Set forth on a wretched mission,
To attain and win Sweet Mercy,
(Such you willed, incontinently)
By force, not foreseeing trouble;
So much for that foolish counsell!
A most presumptuous pair are you:
You're a rascal, and he makes two!'

CHAPTER XLVII: COEUR'S DREAM

Then she threw down the bread of harsh pain to him, and poured out the water from the River of Tears that she had brought, and when Coeur tasted them, he knew, by the savour, that he had partaken of them before, and understood that the old hypocrite Melancholy had come merely to view him, not because she wished him well. He therefore fell into thoughts so gloomy that he nigh-on died of sadness; he could not bring himself to eat, and was left in dark despair, such that he could scarce recall a single memory of his mistress Hope.

Yet it was at that very moment he felt wholly comforted, and ate and drank a little to restore himself, though the nourishment offered him did him scant good. And once he was moderately refreshed by that unappetising meal,

he slept awhile, for he had found but an ill rest the previous night.

He dreamed that a white turtle dove led the way for a flight of three nightingales accompanied by a host of other birds, that followed singing, who came to visit him: beating their wings, they struck the keep in which he was imprisoned so forcefully that they levelled it more effectively than blows from a cannonade, shattering it to pieces entirely. Then he emerged from his dungeon, safe and sound. But now the tale ceases to tell of Coeur, and returns to speak of Renown and his companions, so as to relate how Renown came to Coeur's rescue.

CHAPTER XLVIII: RENOWN AND HIS TROOPS TAKE THE CASTLE

Now the tale tells that when Renown had forcefully admonished his companions, and exhorted them to do their best, as you have heard previously, they waited not a moment but rode forward, as swiftly as their steeds could carry them, as far as the brink of the ditches that defended the castle named Devoid-of-Joy, leapt to the ground, and, before the master of the castle, Trouble, and his folk were aware of it, reached the foot of the wall. Meanwhile Pleasure and Enjoyment, those valiant young men, rested not: alone, the pair headed for the castle-gate, and found it but ill-guarded, for at that moment Anxiety, the champion of the keep, had as yet scarcely woken from sleep, and had not yet risen. They therefore attained the first barrier, before Anxiety advanced towards them to defend the portal. But Pleasure, that noble youth, dealt him such a blow to the head that he promptly fled, abandoning the gateway, while Pleasure and Enjoyment promptly entered the castle and reached the keep.

As for Renown and his troops, who delivered their assault from another direction, they soon scaled the wall by means of ladders, so effectively that they were at once within the castle, crying loudly: "The keep is ours!"; so loudly that Trouble and his folk, who were yet asleep within, awoke and set

themselves to defending it, though with little success, for Renown signalled the assault with trumpets and bugles, and they assailed the keep so furiously and skilfully that, in no time at all, it was captured.

When Trouble and Sadness realised that fortune was not on their side, they fled secretly with their troops, through a cunningly-placed postern, into the incredibly dense undergrowth, and from there, accompanied by Ill-Talk, to the place where, ever since, they have caused many an ill and annoyance to the god of Love and his followers. Meanwhile Renown and his companions, having taken the castle named Devoid-of-Joy, searched everywhere seeking Trouble, the lord of the place, and his friend Sadness, but all in vain, since they had fled. They searched, from the summit to the depths, so thoroughly and effectively that they found the dungeon where Coeur was imprisoned.

Desire, who was in the lead, and recognised the place where he had previously met with such fear, reached the entrance to the dungeon, and called out to his companion, Coeur, who had awoken from his dream, and listened with full attention as soon as he heard a voice. Nonetheless, he was not absolutely sure that it was his companion, Desire, astonished as he was to hear his name being called, and Desire, perceiving that Coeur might be unsure of his identity, spoke to him in these terms:

CHAPTER XLVIII: DESIRE CALLS TO THE IMPRISONED COEUR

‘Ah, Coeur, my friend, have no fear,
I beg you; nay, be of good cheer!
For you are of Love’s company
Who sends you succour, willingly.
Honour has sent Renown, for he
Will hear of naught till you are free.
And so, Renown, at his command,
Is here, with all his martial band.
He’s taken the castle by assault,

And all is won, from floor to vault.
Yet it seems to me a marvel
To find no trace of vile Trouble,
Or of Sadness his bosom friend,
He nor she do the keep defend:
It seems that neither can be found.
Would that they both were underground!
For I suspect they'll work much ill,
Being so full of malice still.
Now, companion, climb above,
And from that evil place remove!
It is Desire who summons you,
To prove his love forever true.'

CHAPTER XLIX: THEN RESCUES COEUR FROM THE DUNGEON

On hearing these words, Coeur knew for certain that his companion, Desire, was there. He was filled with joy, and rose to his feet. Desire let down a rope to which a wooden bar was attached, and told Coeur to seat himself on the bar, and hold tightly, with both hands, to the rope, which Coeur did. Then Desire, with the aid of the two knights Pleasure and Enjoyment, drew him from the dungeon.

Once free of his prison, Coeur raised his eyes and saw Desire, his loyal companion, before him. He clasped him vigorously, and they embraced so warmly, that they nigh on fainted from the heights of joy they experienced on seeing one another again. After a while, once they had come to themselves, Coeur gazed at Desire, and when he was able to speak, addressed him in the following manner:

CHAPTER XLIX: COEUR EXPRESSES HIS RELIEF

'Desire, my faithful companion,
Loyal as ever, in all that's done,
True love for me you show indeed,
Saving me, in my hour of need,
For I would surely have been slain;
Twas Sadness did my fate ordain,
Filled with deep anger against me.
Yet, the Lord be thanked, I am free!'

CHAPTER L: COEUR IS INTRODUCED TO RENOWN AND HIS COMPANIONS

Then Desire took Coeur by the hand and introduced him to the two knights Pleasure and Enjoyment, urging him to thank them for the welcome aid they had granted him, which he did most courteously. Then Desire led him to Renown and the other barons, who were taking refreshments in one of the chambers, and introduced him to Renown, counselling Coeur to thank him humbly for his assistance. Coeur did so willingly and, setting one knee to the ground, addressed the latter.

CHAPTER L: COEUR THANKS RENOWN FOR HIS AID

'Renown, most noble lord, to you
Your servant offers what is due;
Here, I, Coeur, thank you most humbly,
In that you, so diligently,
Have rescued me, for, in a breath,
You saved me from a cruel death;
I'll yet repay your aid to me,
For I will serve you, faithfully.'

CHAPTER LI: RENOWN PRAISES COEUR

Then Renown took Coeur by the hand, made him rise, and spoke as follows:

‘Ah, Coeur, yet you deserved that same,
Already you had served my name.
Naught could have, you may depend,
Barred me from aiding you, my friend.’

CHAPTER LII: THE COMPANY RIDE TO HONOUR'S CAMP

Then Renown saw that Coeur was given food and drink, of which he had great need, and when he had eaten and drunk with the rest, Renown ordered that the castle be razed to the ground, and those who were given the task hastened to see it accomplished. Not long after, they sounded the trumpets, raised camp, and rode swiftly in the direction of Honour's camp.

As they journeyed, Renown never ceased to address Coeur, questioning him as to his adventures and his captivity, while Coeur related what had occurred. They progressed so quickly that they soon reached the army; the barons dismounted before Honour's pavilion, and Honour came forth to meet them.

On seeing him, Renown knelt, and Coeur did likewise, then Renown spoke to Honour, addressing him as follows:

CHAPTER LII: RENOWN ADDRESSES HONOUR

‘My lord, I have, as best I could,
And have, as best I know, made good
Upon the promise that I gave,

To rescue Coeur, and so did save
His life, and yet displeased am I
That Trouble was not slain thereby.
Behold the Heart, Coeur, seized by love,
Sadness to him a foe did prove.
Excuse my fault, and pardon me,
If I've acted displeasingly.'

CHAPTER LIII: HONOUR WISHES TO KNOW COEUR'S INTENTION

At this point the tale relates that, when Renown had finished justifying his actions, Coeur knelt and thanked Honour humbly. Then Honour took them both by the hand and led them into his pavilion. He began to converse with them and asked for details of Coeur's captivity.

At that moment, Desire was passing before the pavilion; Honour perceived him instantly, summoned him, and extended his hand to him most affably. They all conversed awhile, and Honour asked Coeur and Desire what they wished to do, and if they would remain with the army to fight against the slanderers. Then Coeur knelt again and replied thus:

CHAPTER LIII: COEUR AFFIRMS HIS COMMITMENT TO THE QUEST

'My lord, your true servant in this,
In naught would I defy your wish.
I am, indeed, obliged to you;
For saving me, my thanks are due.
And yet I ask of you this day,
In God's name, seek not that I stay.

For you must go, as commanded,
To fight, as Love has demanded,
While I can remain no longer,
Despite aught the world might offer.
For, indeed, I would be forsworn,
A betrayal ne'er to be borne.
So, if it please you, let me go,
For I must search both high and low,
So that I may find Sweet Mercy,
Which is still the quest before me.
Yet if you'd have me here pursue
Aught in my power, that I will do.'

CHAPTER LIV: HONOUR GRANTS COEUR LEAVE TO DEPART

Then Honour took Coeur by the hand and made him rise, and thanked him generously for offering to serve him, and benignly granting him leave, spoke thus to him:

'Coeur, my dear friend, since it is plain
That you lack the wish to remain,
And you are set upon a quest
Pursuant to Desire's behest,
I'll not hold you against your will,
Rather you must your task fulfil.
And I ask of the god of Love
That he a guide to you shall prove
That you might achieve your goal,
And return both sound and whole.
Yet if you lack silver or gold,

Or any of my own household,
That might escort you wherever,
Or grant you aid in some manner,
Take, with pleasure, all you need;
That would gratify me indeed.
And recommend me humbly
To the god of Love; politely,
Say that my talents I employ
In that service he doth enjoy,
Most willingly, with lance and sword,
And salute each and every lord.
And may it please the Creator
That you return this way later,
For your success in all I'd see,
And know you've attained Sweet Mercy.
Such the good wishes I extend you,
And to God above commend you.'

CHAPTER LV: COEUR REQUESTS THAT LARGESSE ACCOMPANY THEM

At this, Coeur took his leave of Honour as did Desire, and Honour embraced them warmly. In saluting and taking leave of the barons who were gathered about Honour, Desire perceived Largesse among them. He drew Coeur aside urgently, insisting that, since Honour had offered one of his followers as a guide or companion, he was of the firm opinion that Largesse would be of great use to them on their quest, and that it would be a good idea to ask Honour that Largesse accompany them.

Coeur was of the same mind, and immediately made that same request of Honour, that he allow Largesse to go with them, to which he generously agreed, even though he had no wish to part with him, for he ever appreciated having Largesse at his side, and loved him greatly; but, since he had made the

offer, he could not now refuse them. So, at once, he ordered Largesse to go with them wherever they pleased, which Largesse agreed to willingly.

With this, all three took their leave, left Honour's tent, and headed for Fair Renown's pavilion to take leave of one who had treated them with great courtesy, as you have previously heard. But ere they could enter the pavilion, behold Renown, who had perceived their approach, took them by the hand and led them into the pavilion.

The hour of Vespers was past, and it was time to eat; the tables were now laid, and Renown insisted on their dining with him, while they sat down willingly enough, as they wished to extend their acquaintance with him. Thus, they ate and drank, at their ease and to their heart's content.

After dining, they walked for a while, and Coeur, who wished to know more of Largesse, who was new to their company, approached the latter so courteously that they were soon well acquainted and good friends. As for Renown and Desire, they spoke together of their imminent departure and of the quest Coeur had undertaken. They all conversed thus, until night fell and it was time to rest. They then retired to the pavilion, and Renown had two beds made up; he and Desire lay down on one, while Coeur and Largesse took the other. They did so willingly enough, Coeur and Desire at least having no other place to lodge and, before they fell asleep, they spoke together awhile of their journey, and the enterprise. Largesse listened eagerly, and asked Coeur questions to better understand what he might be required to undertake.

Not long after this, all four were asleep, and slumbered soundly till the following dawn, when Desire was first to wake and called out to Coeur who was still sleeping. Coeur awoke and roused Largesse. Then they rose and, while they were dressing, Renown too awoke, astonished to see that they had risen so early. He rose himself, and dressed himself like the others, then, all together, they went to hear Mass. When the Mass had been said, the three companions, Coeur, Desire, and Largesse returned with Renown, and in taking leave of the latter, Coeur spoke for them all in saying:

CHAPTER LV: COEUR TAKES LEAVE OF RENOWN

'Now, my most noble lord, Renown,
Desire, you see here, and the crown
Of wisdom, Largesse, whom you know,
(Many a time you've named him so);
Both they and I would take our leave,
And though there's naught, I do believe,
That we can render you, at least
We can give thanks, ere we have ceased
To grace your presence; we are yours,
Though bound perchance for foreign shores.
If our going should please you not,
For God's sake, let that be forgot,
For we pursue our quest again,
And must suffer many a pain,
Many a mischief must endure,
Ere we may find what we seek for.'

CHAPTER LVI: THE THREE COMPANIONS, COEUR, DESIRE, AND LARGESSE PREPARE TO DEPART

With these words, the three companions took leave of Renown, but before departing they ate and drank a little, which was wise on their part, for they would be glad of it later, as you shall hear. But, for the moment, the tale ceases to speak of them – though it will return to them at the proper time and place – and begins to tell of Honour and his army, in order to relate something of their actions.

CHAPTER LVII: HONOUR SENDS HUMBLE-REQUEST WITH A LETTER FOR COEUR TO BEAR

Once the three companions, Coeur, Desire, and Largesse had taken leave of Honour and had departed as you have heard. Honour quickly summoned all his barons and captains to a council, to hear their advice as to what he should do, knowing that the slanderers, his mortal enemies, were campaigning against him. After each had given his opinion, they arrived at the conclusion that, since Coeur and Desire had gone, as you have heard, to win Sweet Mercy, they could not avoid passing by the dwelling-place of the god of Love; it would be wise for Honour to send him a letter, employing Coeur as his intermediary, asking the god of Love where he should deploy, and what he should effect, since he had remained long in the one place without receiving news, and ought to raise camp and go to meet their enemies.

Honour, indeed, made it known to all his barons and captains that, in two days from that time, he intended to do precisely that same; he summoned his secretary and dictated a letter to the god of Love, regarding their conclusions and intentions. Then he called for Humble-Request and asked him to bear the letter to Coeur, who on his part, if he would, should present it to the noble god of Love when he reached the latter's dwelling-place. Humble-Request did as his master, Honour, commanded.

Two days later, Honour had the trumpets sounded, raised camp in an orderly manner, and set out, the ranks arranged in splendid battalions, until they were a league or so from the enemy. There they established camp once more; but you should know that between the two armies flowed the River of Pleasure, a stream both dangerous and deep.

Now, however, the tale returns to Coeur and his two companions, and tells a part of their adventures pertinent to the matter we pursue.

CHAPTER LVIII: THE TRAVELLING-COMPANIONS FIND A PLACE TO REST FOR THE NIGHT

The story now relates that, as the three companions departed Fair Renown's pavilion, having partaken of a drink as has been said, they encountered Honour's emissary, Humble-Request, who saluted them and handed Coeur the letter Honour had confided to him, asking him to present it on his behalf, if he would, to the god of Love when he reached the latter's dwelling. Coeur replied that he would so most willingly.

The companions then rode on at a lively pace, for it was the freshest and brightest of mornings, until they entered thick undergrowth, and from thence travelled through a fine and lofty forest which extended two leagues about them. Their mounts laboured hard, such that they soon emerged and found themselves in open country, which seemed unending, for the tale states that it was a day and a half's journey long, and a good day's journey wide. They rode ever forward, on the trail before them, without meeting any adventure worth speaking of, full of gloomy thoughts, until mid-day.

At one point, Desire, who was in the lead, gazed about him, and, saw, at a goodly distance, a tall pine-tree, in the midst of the plain. There was not the least sign of a castle or township in the vicinity, while the plain as you have heard was both long and wide, and the pine-tree was far enough from them that the night would be pitch-black ere they reached it. At the hour of Vespers, when the sun sets, Desire was obliged to call to his two companions, Coeur and Largesse, who were plunged in deep reflection, begging them to rouse themselves from their thoughts in order to pay attention to where they might lodge, for they were like to spend the night in the open air.

They halted, and looked about them, and, viewing the emptiness of the extensive plain, saw neither house nor hut in which they might spend the night. They concluded, with one accord, that they should make for the pine-tree visible from the trail, since they could at least camp beneath it, though they found it most disagreeable that there was naught to eat, for they were famished, nothing having passed their lips since they had drunk a cup that morning in departing from Fair Renown's pavilion, as you have heard.

They rode on, directing their course straight towards the pine-tree, as night was falling, without encountering any misadventure; they then rode in

single file, Desire leading, Coeur behind him, and Largesse behind, for the night was exceedingly dark, since the weather was somewhat adverse and no moon shone. They laboured well enough and reached the pine-tree, about an hour before midnight. All three dismounted, by common accord, for they were weary and worn, and their horses had need of rest and pasture having been ridden all day. So, the riders removed their bridles and left them to graze the grass, while they themselves lay down beneath the pine as comfortably as they could, in order to repose.

Nonetheless, their great hunger prevented them from falling asleep quickly, and Desire, who was the most loquacious of the three, commenced to speak in order to distract them somewhat:

CHAPTER LVIII: DESIRE SPEAKS LIGHT-HEARTEDLY TO THEM

'Now, between ourselves, gentlemen,
We are fortunate once again.
Since it gives me pleasure, let me say,
It's clear that we've not gone astray,
For Hope told us, not long ago,
That ere good things to us may flow,
Plenty of ill things we must bear,
Much tedious labour, we must share.
Little of such has passed as yet,
For with a deal more we'll be met,
At least Coeur will, and so will I.
As for Largesse, who here doth lie,
I would not wish to claim he's one
That will, for he has just begun.
Now let us sleep on this damp ground,
It will do Coeur good I'll be bound.'

CHAPTER LIX: COEUR RESPONDS TO DESIRE'S MOCKERY

As Desire finished speaking, Largesse began to smile, but Coeur was unamused since it seemed to him that Desire was mocking him in saying that the damp ground would benefit him greatly; and he could not help replying in these terms:

‘Desire, do you mock everyone,
Each and every companion,
As you do me? Good sir, tell me
Have I done aught, to you, to be
The butt of the jests you employ?
It causes much pain and annoy.
Yet you can say whate’er you will,
Then repent of it, I am still
Able to bear as much as you,
By Saint Helen, could ever do!
Yet tis just, Desire ne’er ceases
To mock all folk, as he pleases.’

CHAPTER LX: LARGESSE REPROACHES COEUR

Largesse, on hearing Coeur speak thus, understood that that the latter was at the end of his patience, and had failed to treat Desire’s comment as a mere jest. So, he addressed a few words to him, reproaching him for his show of annoyance, as follows:

‘Ah, Coeur, a man of wit and sense,
Why must you seek to take offence
At another’s mere pleasantry,

As though he was your enemy?
But little patience you show, now;
Tis not what Hope desired, I vow,
When she would have you note her well,
Or such the tale I've heard you tell.
As he does you, Desire mocks me,
And treats us both, thus, equally,
And yet I suffer his intent,
Without displaying discontent.'

CHAPTER LXI: DESIRE SEEKS COEUR'S PARDON

Then Desire could not refrain from addressing Coeur once more, not with anger or malice towards him, for he loved him dearly, but wishing to apologise, saying:

'Coeur, if we can no longer jest,
How shall our troubles e'er find rest?
By God, take not my words so ill:
But, of your grace, pardon me still.'

CHAPTER LXII: THE TALE TURNS TO THE SUBJECT OF ILL-TALK

At his words, Coeur regained his calm, and the three companions fell asleep beneath the pine-tree. But here the tale ceases to speak of them and turns instead to Ill-Talk, the captain of the slanderers, in order to recount a few of his actions, inasmuch as they are relevant to our story; but it speaks of only a few, for to relate all his actions and the work of those slanderers would need a far larger volume than this.

CHAPTER LXIII: OF ILL-TALK AND HIS FOLLOWERS

At this point, the story says that when Ill-Talk and the slanderers, who occupied and made camp on land within the realm of the god of Love, and of his subjects, allies, and sympathisers (although they did so covertly as one might say, rather than openly), learned by means of their spies (who ever accompanied them on their missions, since they believed nothing they had been told) that Honour, Fair Renown, and the followers of the noble god of Love had pitched camp near them, as was related previously, they were much surprised, and, sounding the trumpets, struck camp in confusion, and swiftly covered eight leagues at least, ravaging and devastating all the nearby realm of the god of Love and his folk, until they felt they were sufficiently far from Honour and his army.

They then established themselves on the bank of a little river, deep and dark, which was named Gloom, and once there two spies whom Ill-Talk had sent to reconnoitre returned to him. They had been posted for most of the day at the exit from the forest whence the three companions, Coeur, Desire, and Largesse had emerged as they entered the great plain, as the tale related previously. They told how they had seen them pass by, not daring to follow since the enemy were three strong, while they were but two. Nonetheless they were sure that the three were seeking to attend upon the god of Love, or were in search of Sweet Mercy, for they were pursuing that path, and they had heard talk moreover that Coeur was set on winning her, by which token they thought it must indeed be him.

When Ill-Talk heard this, his brow furrowed, his face grew pale with anger and malice, and he began to curse and vilify his spies, crying:

‘You foul, and wretched miscreants!
You whose ill presence scarce enchants,
You who have failed to challenge those
Three villains, and their path oppose,
As they pursued their quest this day!
God curse you! Be upon your way!

The gibbet may serve, in due time,
To punish you two for your crime!

CHAPTER LXIV: ILL-TALK SENDS A SUMMONS TO REFUSAL AND REJECTION

Then Ill-Talk summoned two or three of his slanderers, saw them suitably equipped, and sent them to Refusal and Rejection who were holding Sweet Mercy captive, to tell them to be on their guard since Coeur and his companions were set upon a campaign to free Sweet Mercy; and he commanded those slanderers to remain with Refusal, to assist in his defence if he was attacked in any manner. The slanderers took leave of their master Ill-Talk, and ceased not their efforts until they had arrived where Refusal was, and had communicated the news that their master had sent to him.

But now the tale falls silent for a time as regards Ill-Talk and his followers, it being a good thing not to speak of them, and begins to tell of Coeur and his two companions once more, in order to describe certain of their adventures.

CHAPTER LXV: THE THREE COMPANIONS REACH THE HOUSE OF GRAVE-SIGHS

Now, as the story relates, the three companions, Coeur, Desire, and Largesse, who, as you have heard previously, were sleeping beneath the pine-tree, slumbered deeply till dawn of the following day, being worn and weary. Coeur woke first, and gazed at his still-sleeping companions. He chose to rise quietly, but failed to do so sufficiently silently as not to wake them, for it appeared they had enjoyed an adequate amount of sleep. They looked about them and saw that it was broad daylight, so they rose and set off in quest of the horses.

In doing so, they came upon a dwelling-place, badly constructed and in poor repair. Over the entrance to this little building, they perceived a panel carrying a clearly-readable inscription. All three headed towards the portal and began studying the lettering, which, as they discovered, read thus:



The three companions read the inscription over the doorway

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 46v: *Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris*, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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‘The plain both long and wide you see,
The people call, in this country,
The Plain of Weary Thought, and here
Grave-Sighs lives out each weary year.
Choosing to end his life this way,
Within his house he e’er doth stay,
A poor one, as you now behold,
One hardly worth its weight in gold!
Yet its comfortlessness doth please
One who in sighing takes his ease;
God knows if it provides that same!
For others peace it oft doth maim:
Since those who make of him a friend,
Own but sad faces in the end.’

CHAPTER LXVI: CROSSING THE PLAIN OF WEARY THOUGHT, THEY REACH A HERMITAGE BY A WOOD

Once the three companions had finished reading the inscription on the panel, they fell into a profound reflection, gazing at each other in amazement. After a while, Coeur, who was bolder than the others, decided to enter the dwelling, his two companions following, and found the building to be poor and ill-decorated. He advanced to the hall, and found Grave-Sighs there, the master of the place.

The latter was old, thin, wrinkled, pale and haggard, with a long beard, and thick eyebrows hiding his eyes. He was seated on a stool, his hands clasped about a knee, meditating, while sighing so profoundly that neither their arrival nor their words when addressed to him could draw him from his thoughts.

They looked high and low for any trace of food to quell their hunger a little, for they were in great need of nourishment, but found nothing but a morsel of black bread, so hard as to be inedible. This plunged all three into a state of woe, which elicited the heaviest of sighs. But Desire, who had passed this way before, and knew it thoroughly, decided that if his companions were to remain in that state for long, they might well abandon their enterprise. So, he signed to them to quit the house, which they soon did.

As soon as they were outside, they commented to each other that never in their lives had they experienced so painful and heavy a state of mind as in that place; ill was it for those who chanced to find themselves there! They set to the task of finding the horses, and were not long in discovering all three of their mounts grazing the grass around. They saw to the bridles and reins, then mounted in the saddle and applied themselves to the road before them. But they had not gone far when, gazing ahead, they saw a wood in the remote distance, only just visible to them, which seemed to them to mark the extremity of the vast and wearying plain in which they found themselves.

They covered the distance without meeting with a soul to speak to nor any adventure worth the telling on their approach to the wood, nor could they reach it fast enough for the sun had already set when they arrived there. Once they had done so, they looked about them, and saw a little hermitage

at the entrance to the wood. They rode in that direction, dismounted, and entered the hermitage's chapel, where they found the hermit saying his prayers. They saluted him, and requested shelter for the night. The hermit, who seemed a noble gentleman, replied in the following manner:



Coeur, Largesse and Desire enter the hermit's cell

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 47v: *Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris*, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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CHAPTER LXVI: THE HERMIT REPLIES TO THEIR REQUEST FOR SHELTER

‘My noble lords, and children, I
Your fair request shall not deny;
And you may share the place with me,
But within, in truth, you shall see
A lady I’m devoted to
Body and soul, to her I’m true,
For I have known that very same
Since childhood, Lady Hope her name.

Late yestereve she sought lodging;
I'd not refuse her anything.
She was wearied in the extreme,
Tired by her efforts it would seem.
If you're content to lodge with her,
I'll not object, nor make a stir,
My noble lords, if she agrees,
For I'd do nothing to displease.
Attend me here; to her I'll go,
And soon return, that you may know.'



THE END OF PART III OF 'LE LIVRE DU COEUR D'AMOUR ÉPRIS'



**PART IV:
THE ISLE OF THE
GOD OF LOVE**

CHAPTER LXVII: COEUR AND DESIRE FIND HOPE ONCE MORE

The hermit now left the chapel to re-join the lady, while the three companions awaited his return. Coeur and Desire, having heard the hermit say that Lady Hope, their noble mistress, lodged there, gazed at one another. Ask not if they were joyful, for they loved her greatly, and were deeply in debt to her for the help and comfort she had granted them previously. They had not waited long ere the hermit returned and told them to enter, since that was agreeable to Lady Hope.

The hermit showed them a narrow stall where they could leave their horses, which contained fodder he had gathered that morn. They led their mounts to the place, set the fodder before them, and went directly to the hermit's little chamber, where they found Lady Hope. Coeur and Desire recognised her in an instant, and did her reverence; and Lady Hope, in turn, displayed great happiness and joy on recognising them.

The hour came for them to dine: the hermit swiftly set the board, for he saw that the three companions were greatly famished, and seated them at the table. Hope sat between Coeur and Desire, with Largesse opposite them, and the hermit served them, and satisfied their appetite as best he could. He fed them a sufficiency of what the Lord had provided, and the company ate with a good appetite, practically nothing having passed their lips for a good two days.

CHAPTER LXVIII: LADY HOPE AND THE THREE COMPANIONS HEAR THE MASS RECITED

After dinner, once the board had been cleared, Lady Hope summoned Coeur and Desire, and began to converse with them, asking whom Largesse was, and how their affairs had gone since they had departed from her. The two companions talked to her of Largesse,

telling her whence he had guided them, and describing all the adventures that had occurred to them, from the moment she had left them on the perilous bridge over the River of Tears, where she had saved Coeur from drowning, until now.

It grew late, and the time came to rest, so they called to the hermit, their host, and asked him if he would perform the Mass first thing next morning, which he promised to do. They said goodnight to Lady Hope, and saluted her, and the hermit led them to a corner where he had laid out a pallet of fresh straw, for he had given up his own mattress to Lady Hope, and left himself without a bed. The companions lay down, covered themselves as best they could, and were soon asleep, weary and much fatigued as they were.

When dawn broke, they woke, arose and were dressed in no time, since they had slept clothed in their tunics. They went to the hermit's chapel, where they found him saying Matins; they wished him good day, and the hermit returned their salute. They asked if Lady Hope had already risen, and he replied that he knew not. One of them went to find her, but encountered her on her way to the chapel, fully ready to hear the Mass, since she had already said her prayers before quitting her chamber.

The hermit donned his sacred robes, and performed a Mass of the Holy Ghost for them, which Hope and the three companions listened to with deep devotion.

CHAPTER LXIX: THE COMPANIONS REQUEST HOPE'S GUIDANCE AND COUNSEL

One the Mass had been said, the three companions addressed Lady Hope, and, before taking leave of her, begged her, since they had told her all their news, to grace them with hers, and tell them what had happened to her since they had seen her last, and also to counsel them and tell them how they should best act in order to achieve their enterprise of which she was aware; and of her maternal goodness to speak a little of the adventures that awaited them, as she had done once before, since they knew, if she pleased, she could tell them of those very same.

Then Lady Hope began to smile, and was pleased to tell the three companions all that she had heard, not only Coeur and Desire that is, but also Largesse, who when she had heard him named recognised him as one whom she had seen before, and who seemed to have great confidence in her. Then she addressed them, in a brief harangue, in the manner of a discourse, speaking as follows:

CHAPTER LXIX: HOPE GIVES AN EXTENSIVE REPLY

Now, my children, I will address,
Since I'll tell all, no more nor less,
That which you have requested so,
Which otherwise you could not know.
Fair Welcome, who is bound to me,
I sought to bring across the sea,
And lead him to the god of Love;
He is the friend I did remove
As I have informed you before,
From the dungeon, oped its door,
Where Jealousy imprisoned him,
For there, indeed, his hopes were dim,
And naught but death was in his mind,
Which rouses pity in me, men find.
And that is ever Jealousy's way,
Who groans if others joy display.
And whether it be wrong or right,
Brooks no excuse, woe her delight.
After that, I remembered you,
Ere you came within my view,
For I have ne'er ceased to rely
On meeting you, should I pass by.

So, I have journeyed to this place,
And ne'er a moment slacked my pace.
Now, God be thanked, I find you here,
But let the past swift disappear,
And let us speak of what's to be.
You will have much to do, I see,
Before Sweet Mercy's won by you,
Yet be not dismayed; stay true;
Let your belief in me ne'er cease,
You'll win her, whome'er that displease,
Despite the torments you shall know
Upon the sea, where you must go,
And many a grievous woe beside
Overcome, on the other side.
I believe that you yet recall,
Without my repeating it all,
That you must combat Rejection,
And Refusal, scorn dejection,
Ere Sweet Mercy yields to you;
Each of you knows this to be true.
You shall walk the sacred ground
Of Love, wherein sadness profound
Will pain your hearts as you view
The sepulchres and portraits too
Of lovers who died in the quest
Of her you seek (for there they rest),
Of her with whom you'll take your ease,
And yet rejoice, if God so please.
Shall I point out to you the way,
Ere I now cease? Well, then, I say,
Here is the path that you must take,

When this place you, at last, forsake:
After this wood ends, that you see,
Sited there, midst a wild country,
Stands a tall cross, plain to the eye.
Coeur, approach it and so pass by,
And you, others, all three together,
For, believe me, that path is ever
The quickest way to reach the sea.
Once you arrive, now hark to me,
There you'll find that a boat doth ride
The wave, a barque, tis long and wide.
Boldly then, make your way aboard,
The heavens will fair winds afford;
They will carry you o'er the main,
Till you shall reach dry land again;
For to the isle of the god of Love,
O'er the ocean, that boat will move.
Adieu, for I must now depart;
No more have I to say, dear Heart.'

CHAPTER LXX: THE THREE COMPANIONS REACH THE SEASHORE

Then Lady Hope vanished from the three companions' sight in such a manner that they knew not what had become of her, and they gazed at each other, amazed at how swiftly she had disappeared from view. But Coeur and Desire who had seen her do thus before, and who had managed to endure all the ills she had prophesied, were undismayed and reassured Largesse. Then all three together went to find the hermit, to take leave of him and thank him for the kindness he had shown them. Largesse took six gold bezants from his purse, and offered them to the hermit, who would not take them, so Largesse dropped them into the chapel's collection

box in the hermit's presence, who told him they would be employed for God's work. Then the hermit brought them water to drink before they left, saying that they would soon be grateful for it.

When the three companions had drunk, and eaten a morsel, they took leave of the hermit, found their steeds which they mounted, and took to the road, riding through the woodland, as Lady Hope had instructed them. They rode at a goodly pace till they emerged from the trees, a distance of a league and a half or so, without meeting with any adventure that the story relates, and once beyond it could see the coast, about a league away. Their hearts trembled, but they recalled all that Lady Hope had told them, which comforted them greatly.

They road swiftly towards the sea, without straying from their path, until, at noon, they reached the shore. They looked about them, and saw the barque ready to sail, as Lady Hope had prophesied. Then they drew close, and deliberated amongst themselves as to what they should do. Desire was the first to declare his thoughts on the matter, and spoke as follows:

'What do we fear now, gentlemen?
Hope gave us guidance, once again.
Has not the lady said if we
Have confidence in her, then she
Will preserve us from harm always,
And thus, all ills met with this day?'

CHAPTER LXXI: THEY BOARD THE VESSEL AND ENCOUNTER TWO MAIDENS

With this, Coeur immediately dismounted, annoyed and ashamed at having delayed so long, marched to the water's edge and boarded the vessel. His two companions did the same, handing their mounts to the valets, who received them as payment for their services. Once the three companions were installed aboard, they inspected the boat from prow to stern, and there they found two noble maidens sleeping, who

attended on those who sought to cross the sea, an office to which they had been appointed by the god of Love, who recompensed them well for doing so.

On hearing the sound of horses ashore, they awoke; for in truth, when the aforesaid creatures no longer had the bit in their mouths, nor the bridle on their heads, none could hold them, and they commenced to rear at each other violently, striking with hooves and teeth, neighing loudly and causing a great stir. It was this loud neighing that woke the slumbering maidens within the vessel, while the three companions were installed by their valets on the prow of the ship, where they helped them doff some of their armour and remove the spurs from their feet.

It was at that moment, that the two maidens opened their eyes, and with a frightened air raised their heads and looked around to see whence came the noise. They then perceived the three companions, who were now aboard, and, rising to their feet, glided gently towards them, as if undismayed and fearful of naught. They saluted Coeur, then Desire and Largesse, all three returning their salute. Then the maidens asked the three companions what adventure had led them there, and Desire replied as follows:



The companions embark

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 51v: Le Livre du Cœur d'Amour Épris, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

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CHAPTER LXXI: DESIRE'S REPLY TO THE MAIDENS

'My mistress Confidence, and you Attention,
We are here, urged on by the true intention,
I and my two companions, to ask of you,
If you will aid the crossing we now pursue,
For we are in greater haste, than e'er before,
In our desire to achieve the further shore.
We will reward you well, to your heart's content,
Such that, by God, of your deed you'll ne'er repent.
And if you would know our names at once, then he
Is Coeur, who is much esteemed by all that be,
And I am named Desire, and here is Largesse,
And all three beg you'll forgo sweet idleness,
And bear us o'er the sea to the god of Love,
For we three hope that our aim he will approve.'

CHAPTER LXXII: THE MAIDENS TAKE TO THE OARS AND THE BOAT SETS FORTH

Without replying, the two maidens prepared to grant the aforesaid request of the three companions, and simply attired so as to row more easily, a thing lovely to see since they were nobly formed, they raised anchor, and set forth on the waves, so effectively that they were soon a goodly distance from shore, such that they were hard put to distinguish the land from the expanse of water through which they ploughed.

Gazing at the maidens as they laboured thus, Coeur pitied the extent of their efforts; he therefore advanced in order to offer his aid, begging them to pass him an oar, and show him what he must do. Confidence addressed Coeur, smilingly:

‘Coeur, full of impetuosity,
There’s scant need for such courtesy;
You shall not labour at the oar,
For little you’ve known of such before!
By my soul, let me be, for I
Am used to it, we both can ply
The oar, both I and my sister;
For loyal hearts we labour ever.
Suffer us now to guide you there,
Mix not in what is our affair!’

CHAPTER LXXIII: THE VESSEL IS CAUGHT IN A GALE

While they were speaking together thus, the weather being calm and bright, and the slightest of undulations, roused by the gentlest breath of a fresh breeze, stirring the surface of the sea, in the most propitious way one might wish, and blowing from astern sufficiently to drive the boat towards the isle of the god of Love, the two maidens ceased to row, then, without a moment’s delay, one loosed the sail, which was furled to the yard above; she slackened the ropes clewing it fast, and shook out the canvas, which quickly caught the wind. The other maiden sped to the helm to set their direction: and thus, with the one attending to the sail and the other steering, they maintained their course.

The three companions who had not rested for three days, slept so deeply and for so long that they woke not till the wind strengthened, the waves rose higher, and the swelling sea grew somewhat troubled, in such a manner that the vessel was forced to pitch and toss, here and there, quite wildly; its motion roused the three, who felt dizzy and somewhat seasick. They began to visibly lose colour, confused and unsure what to do, until Desire could stay silent no longer; he spoke as follows:

CHAPTER LXXIII: DESIRE ENCOURAGES THE OTHERS

‘Ah, Lord above! How Amour doth ever
Stand by while his faithful servants suffer,
And grants them scant repose until too late!
I hold him foolish who, sad to relate,
Sets forth without knowing how to return.
Oh, how the tempest rages, the waves churn,
All about! Now, in truth, I feel and know
How tis when the soul from the flesh doth go.
Dead I would rather be, embrace my fate,
Than dwell much longer in this wretched state!
Nonetheless, I’d not choose to be onshore,
Whatever the ills we three must endure,
If we were forced thus to forsake our quest,
Quit our enterprise, at the storm’s behest.
May God guide us, and grant us patience now,
Later, we’ll be proud of ourselves, I’d vow.’

CHAPTER LXXIV: THEY REACH AN ISLE WHERE COMPANIONSHIP AND FRIENDSHIP ARE FISHING

So, Desire lamented, as the tale tells, because of the tempest that tormented him endlessly; and not him alone but also his two companions, even though they uttered not a word of complaint: though that was because their lips could not form the sounds, so troubled and anguished were they, as could be seen clearly by their expressions.

When the two maidens perceived their state, they made them lie down to avoid experiencing a worse bout of sea-sickness, and they gave way to the maidens’ wish; indeed, they lay down willingly for assuredly they had great need of repose at that moment, and it was necessary for them to rest. Though

they had naught to eat or drink, they had no appetite for such. Curled up, thus, they better endured the sickness that overcame them whenever they stood or lay straight.

So, they passed that day till evening, and when the sun was near to setting, the gale weakened as the sun descended, and raged less wildly than it had done, though the waves still ran full and high, and the sea was still troubled and restless. Little by little it grew calmer, such that before night fell, and the sky was wholly dark, the wind ceased to blow, and the sea was again calm.

It was at that precise moment, that the two maidens perceived, on a rocky isle surrounded by the sea, Companionship and Friendship, fishing with rod and line: on seeing the two maidens the pair recognised them from afar, called to them, and demanded to know why they were there and what they sought. The cries they uttered woke Coeur, Desire, and Largesse, and on raising their heads they saw the island, which fact scared them a little for fear their vessel was about to strike the rocks.

The two maidens began to laugh at the sight of the three companions in such a state of fright. Attention spoke as follows:



Companionship and Friendship fishing from the rocky isle

Codex Vindobonensis 2597, fol. 55r: *Le Livre du Coeur d'Amour Épris*, (Barthélemy d'Eyck, 1460–1469)

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

**CHAPTER LXXIV: ATTENTION
ADDRESSES THE THREE COMPANIONS**

'Noble and gracious Coeur, what ails you now,
And Desire, ever faithful I would vow,
And you, Largesse, what is it you see here
That seems to fill the three of you with fear?
We are women, and own no fear at all,
And with good reason: no ill shall befall,
Yet we see you brave fellows shake with fright!
List to my words, for here we may alight.
There's not a threat of danger near at hand,
We are as safe here as we were on land.
Arise now, for the time has come, I think,
When you'll find strength anew to eat and drink:
In a moment or two, you'll be on shore,
And you can seek for nourishment once more.
Upon this rock we all shall pass the night.
Now cease to think, rejoice at this new sight!
These two ladies will see about our supper,
By their grace we all shall dine together.
They are true servants in the company
Of the god of Love, and will ever be.
Come now, disembark, forego more delay,
We'll find rest here, until the break of day.'

CHAPTER LXXV: THE COMPANIONS DINE WITH THE FOUR LADIES

The brave companions were the first to set foot on shore, followed by the two maidens, and Companionship and Friendship received them in their dwelling, joyously, and most willingly, and made them eat of what they had there; instead of ship's biscuit they ate grilled fish, a fish that the ladies called Go-Between. And Coeur, full of astonishment, asked what sort of fish that was, for it seemed to him he had seen the like before, in France and elsewhere, but named otherwise. Finding that Coeur was surprised by the name they gave, Friendship said sweetly to him:

‘Know then, noble Coeur, the name they employ
For the fish you eat, and happily enjoy,
There, in France, would in truth be ‘mackerel’,
A flavoursome fish that suits lovers well
That suffer from such sickness. It will ease
The worst of pangs, and ‘lettuce’ too doth please,
A sweet relief, and pleasant medicine.
So, eat away, and from the fair cuisine
Of Love, on a Friday, seek no other.
Eat well, such is ever in my larder.’

CHAPTER LXXVI: THE COMPANY SPEND THE NIGHT ON THE ISLE

The three companions addressed their plates without more ado, and ate heartily. Then they drank of the good wine that was there, to their heart's content. They arose, and gazed at the isle and the waves in the moonlight. But it was not long before Companionship and Friendship took up rod and line, and baited their hooks with what they called ‘gifts’. And once they had cast their hooks in the water, they soon caught plenty of fish,

of the kind spoken of before. Desire was delighted to view this, and never ceased from watching the ladies employing themselves thus.

Largesse asked why they fished by night, and waited not for daylight when they might see better and catch the fish more readily, but Companionship replied that he understood naught, for it was the nature and habit of such fish to approach the shore at night rather than in the daytime. It was useless to fish by day for they would find none, or at least surprisingly few, that failed to hide in the depths.

After a while, Desire called to his companions, and told them he wished to sleep; he informed them that, according to the custom followed in those waters, those who wished to sail abroad were obliged to depart two or three hours before dawn, that is at the hour when the morning star was apparent in the sky, the star which in France they call the 'day-star'; he knew this because he had sailed this sea before in the company of other brave hearts than the one present. Confidence spoke to Coeur, and Largesse, in the same terms; and then Companionship and Friendship took them gently by the hand and led them to the hut they had built to which they could retire to rest after the fishing. They were poorly lodged there, but endured it patiently. The torment they had suffered at sea during the preceding day meant that they found rest all the more sweet and pleasant at that time, and their lodgings more agreeable; besides, after labour no bed seems hard, as everyone knows.

So, our three companions slept, leaving the ladies at leisure to fish all night. And when the hour arrived when the morning star, high, bright and clear, shone in the sky, Companionship called to the two sweet and amiable maidens, who arose and slid their boat (which they had beached, in a narrow inlet, a natural harbour, where the wind could not dislodge it) into the water. Then they raised the mast, attached the furled sail to the yard, and hauled that spar on high, before setting the oars in place.

CHAPTER LXXVI: THE THREE COMPANIONS AND THE TWO MAIDENS SET SAIL

It was then that Coeur, Desire and Largesse, who were yet sleeping, awoke, and while they were dressing the two maidens climbed to the summit of the cliff to observe the weather and see if it was favourable for voyaging. They found the horizon clear and calm, free of cloud or wind, and the day vanquishing the night, at that hour when the moon can no longer rival the light of the sun, and the birds begin their chorus. For its part, the sea was serene and tranquil, motionless as a pond. Gulls were wheeling above the waves, while others, a pleasant sight, were pecking about on the rocky shore. The sun persevered in chasing the moon and stars to their rest, until naught but it appeared in the sky. Then the three companions felt ashamed, on viewing the bright day, of having taken so much time to dress and ready themselves. They left the little boxlike hut, and exchanged salutations with the two ladies of the isle.

Coeur now asked where Confidence might lie, and Companionship told him she had gone with her companion, Attention, to the cliff heights to observe the weather. But Friendship, who was still fishing, left her rod and line to assure the three companions that the weather was fine, and that there would be not the least gust of wind at sea that day, with which assurance our trio were most content, and rendered thanks to God, for they much doubted and feared the waves, since they had experienced their power the preceding day and in such a manner that they had thought to die. Confidence and her companion, on hearing the trio speak, recognised the voices of Coeur, Desire, and Largesse, and descended from the cliff and ran to help the three companions board the vessel. And in less time than once could recite two paternosters, the three companions, accompanied by the ladies of the isle who led them straight to the inlet, arrived at the boat, where they all greeted the two maidens, who saluted them all in turn, and then embarked with the three companions, leaving the two ladies of the isle on the shore. The voyagers commended each other, courteously, to God, and thanked the ladies for their hospitality, who asked pardon for not having attended upon them more assiduously the previous night.

CHAPTER LXXVI: THEY VOYAGE TO THE ISLE OF THE GOD OF LOVE

They raised anchor, and the two maidens directed the vessel calmly over the water, while the tranquil sea bore them along sweetly, without tossing them hither and thither. In a brief while, perforce, they were carried so far from the rocky isle where they had lodged, that it was lost to view. But not the sun, which rose higher and began to shine more brightly, the day being fine, while the calm sea was pleasant and lovely to gaze upon, and they did so gladly.

In viewing the waves, they looked ahead, and saw an island some distance from them, cloaked it seemed in an azure mist so beautiful and fine they took great pleasure in the prospect, it seeming a place more spiritual than terrestrial. They took counsel together, and decided to sail as directly as possible for that lovely isle; the two maidens navigating on that course for two leagues or more. Then they rested awhile, still gazing in the direction of the island.

The sun, already high and shining brightly, pierced the depths of the mist, so effectively that it wholly illuminated a splendid castle, situated in the midst of the isle, which itself glittered and shone so resplendently that it was a wondrous thing to view, and one which no tongue or pen could adequately describe. But I am at least capable of relating that the three companions, gazing upon it, were so charmed they knew not where they were, so amazed were they at the sight of so fine and pleasant a castle, sited upon so lovely and agreeable an island, and on viewing they great beauty of the buildings they could see there.

They pursued their course in such a manner, most effectively, throughout that day, the maidens navigating without interruption while keeping their eyes on that finest of castles, until they were no more than a mile from the island. The evening shadows had not yet fallen, though the sun was no longer shining, and the brightness common to summer days still lingered. They could view the interior of the isle, to a depth of two miles or so, and could see there the most magnificent church that a mortal could ever see, and, as the tale told in speaking of the chateau mentioned above, the church seemed no earthly thing, but rather a celestial one, since the building,

and the enclosure about it was sited upon a rock formed wholly of pure love, and the walls were set upon foundations of brownish-grey marble, composed of bright polished jasper, and entirely covered by plaques of pure silver, nobly enamelled with azure stars, and so fine that, though the sun had set, the whole formed a spectacle of absolute beauty.

At this point the story ceases to describe in detail the allure of the church's various aspects, as to do so would take too long (it is impossible to tell of them in their entirety until a more appropriate occasion is forthcoming) and begins to speak of the three companions once more, in order to relate something of their adventures, and return to the heart of our subject matter.

CHAPTER LXXVII: AND STEER FOR THE CHURCH VISIBLE ON THE ISLAND

At this point, the story relates that when the three companions in the boat perceived, as I described previously, the glorious church, which seemed nearer to them than the splendid castle of which the tale has told, they and the maidens decided to steer for the church, as it seemed to them that they would not soon reach shore, and they would be fortunate to do so while it was still light; moreover, they were increasingly weary and needed nourishment, weakened as they had been by sea-sickness, and none of them having had even a morsel of bread all day.

So, the maidens redoubled their efforts at the oars, upon which Desire, who was steering, told Coeur and Largesse to row and allow the maidens to rest, and this they did. But as they rowed quite feebly, he could not help smiling at their situation. He did not smile, however, so discreetly as to avoid his doing so being seen by Coeur, who felt a degree of anger, and called out:

**CHAPTER LXXVII: COEUR REPROACHES
DESIRE FOR MOCKING HIM**

‘Come now, Desire, what’s this I see?
Are you not once more mocking me?
When I seek toil rather than rest,
As ever, you make of it a jest!
By God, you’re but a malcontent,
To anger me your whole intent,
For instead of cheering me on,
As I work, you pour scorn thereon,
And so, discourage, in the end,
One who believed he was your friend!
I know not why you e’er do so,
But you do ill, I’d have you know.
You’ve not observed a trace in me
Of idleness, you must agree!

**CHAPTER LXXVII: LARGESSE INTERVENES
TO RECONCILE THE PAIR**

At this, Desire and Largesse realised that Coeur had been angered on seeing Desire smile. Largesse addressed Coeur and Desire both, for he ever intervened to reconcile the pair, and spoke as follows:

‘Ah, devil take me, what is this?
When you’ve ceased to spit and hiss
I’d like a little word or two:
And you must listen, both of you.
By my faith, I’d ne’er have thought

When Honour told me, at his court,
To journey with you both, I'd be
In such impetuous company!
One mocks, the other takes offence,
One smiles, the other makes defence,
And shows a lack of patience here:
You lack all sense it would appear.
You must govern yourselves better,
Obey love's laws, to the letter,
And seek to be not fools, but wise,
Or you'll fail of your enterprise.
Coeur, little you recall Hope's word,
Your behaviour is most absurd,
Angered by a friend's mere smile,
As though he were but full of guile.
And you, Desire, are wrong indeed,
Our guide, to smile so, when we need
Rather to hear of this fair isle,
To which we journey all the while.
So, make peace, between you, now,
And let us hear the truth. We'll vow
To listen, as we sail along,
And forget that you both did wrong,
For companions upon a quest
Should not quarrel thus, o'er a jest.'

CHAPTER LXXIX: DESIRE TELLS THEM OF THE ISLE

And the story goes that, at these words, the two companions, Coeur and Desire, were silent and calmed themselves; they realised that they had both done wrong, and might have been taken for a pair of drunks if they had indeed imbibed any wine: Coeur because he had been roused to anger so readily, and Desire, because he had told them nothing of the island to which they were headed, one which he knew well, and because he had failed to encourage them even a little, though he had led many another to that place.

Desire then said that it was high time to offer some encouragement, since they had escaped great peril on the sea, though not the other perils to come of which he had considerable experience, as you will hear later, and spoke to them in the following manner:

‘Gentlemen, be not now displeased,
And listen ere our voyage has ceased.
By God, you ought to be ashamed,
Dear Coeur, for growing so inflamed!
You thought I made a mock, of you,
When I but jested here anew.
Not at all, for those who mock you
Displease me, and annoy me, too.
And too sad are those by a mile
That would not see another smile.
Forget all that, and list to me,
And I will tell of that country.
In truth you gaze upon the isle
Of the god of Love, so fertile,
Full of joys, so delectable
That the place is most notable.
Whether tis fine or it should rain,

Nothing annoys, or gives one pain.
Those it displeases leave that day,
For Love forbids that they should stay.
He wishes on them woe and pain,
Those who Sweet Mercy would gain,
So, Coeur, take care, I beg of you,
Let not delight obscure your view;
There's naught Amor would hate so much,
Nor would rouse his anger and such,
I assure you, as that you forget
The sweet prize that you seek to get.
Of other things you will hear
When before him you appear,
But, for now, to the church we go
That makes here so noble a show.
Tis the place that offers succour
To many a poor faithful lover,
To them a refuge it doth prove,
For tis the Hospital of Love.
Therein lie the tombs moreover,
Of many a loyal lover,
For none that are faithless lie there,
They all lie, neath the rain, elsewhere.
Many an epitaph there you'll see,
That seem beyond mere artistry.
Therein lies one of recent fame,
Worthy of glory was that same,
Alain Chartier, the master,
Of all that becomes a lover.
Of Love he wrought many a rhyme,
The very finest in our time,

And sang many another theme:
With fertile thoughts his verses teem.
Of the Hospital I'll say no more,
For we'll lodge there, once on shore.
But let me mention the chateau here,
That so wondrous doth appear:
The Castle of Pleasure tis named,
Where Love resides, and tis famed;
For love of Lady Venus, he
Wrought it; fair as the eye could see,
Its beauty, as wise folk avow,
Yet I'll speak no more of it now,
For, if God please, the place you'll see,
Tomorrow, if tis there you be.
For now, I'll leave off my discourse,
Or we may falter, in our course.'

CHAPTER LXXX: THE COMPANIONS LAND, AND REACH THE HOSPITAL OF LOVE

Now the tale says that while the three companions were conversing, Coeur and Largesse continued to ply the oars, and maintain their speed, for night was falling, and they laboured so well that, before Desire had finished the discourse you have heard, they reached the isle of the god of Love. Once there they each put a hand in their purse to pay the two maidens, but Confidence and Attention would accept neither gold nor silver, offering their services moreover to transport the three whenever they wished to pass to and fro. The three companions, thanking them, took their leave, as they did of the travellers.

Then the trio departed the vessel, and leapt ashore. They made their way swiftly towards the Hospital of Love, which lay before them. But they had not gone more than a mile, the least part of the way, when night finally fell,

and the moon began to shine, clear, bright and beautiful. For its part the path was fine and well-trodden, for many a poor amorous sufferer had gone there to end their days.

They were aided by the moonlight and the well-made path and in a short while they came to the door of the Hospital. There, before the portal, they found an old lady, very simply dressed, in religious habit; and if you ask me who she was, I will tell you that this was Lady Courtesy, the matron there, waiting for any poor lover in search of lodgings, for they could arrive at any hour.

Then Desire, who recognised her instantly, saluted her and spoke to her in the following manner:

CHAPTER LXXX: DESIRE ADDRESSES LADY COURTESY

‘Courtesy, God give you good eve,
And good year, and may you ne’er grieve!
We are three companions who
Seek to find lodging here with you.
From the Hospital, drive us not
Nor let our merits be forgot,
For we are of the company
Of the god of Love, as you see.
You have encountered me before,
Desire am I, on every shore.
Largesse is my companion, here,
To promises he doth adhere,
And this is Coeur whom you know not,
But shall in time, for tis his lot.
Lodge us now, for this one night,
Do not dismiss us from your sight.’

CHAPTER LXXXI: THE COMPANIONS EXPLAIN THEIR QUEST

When Lady Courtesy, the Hospital's matron, knew that here stood Desire and Largesse, whom she knew to be true servants of the god of Love, the sovereign founder of the Hospital, ask not if she was joyful. She rose from her seat instantly, and advanced, holding out her arms to greet them, and so filled with overwhelming joy was she that for a moment she could not speak. After a while, once she could utter a word, she asked whence they came, where they were journeying to, and the nature of their quest, and also who it was that accompanied them, for he seemed to be a nobleman and she took him for such since he was of their company.

Then Desire told her of their situation, and of the quest to find Sweet Mercy that Coeur had undertaken at his behest, and spoke of all the adventures they had encountered since its commencement, and how he had brought Largesse from the house of Honour, as one who, he was convinced, would prove most helpful to them on their journey. Then Courtesy, hearing this wondrous tale, marked within herself that Desire was truly a servant of Love, to have gained Coeur's trust so, and led him to undertake such a quest. She then conducted all three to the Hospital, wishing to introduce them to Lady Pity's chamber, she being the prioress there, though they met her as they went, since she, for her part, was on her way, preceded by a torch, to visit the sick, of whom there were a great number. For the most part they were suffering from wounds inflicted by Refusal and Rejection, as the companions heard recounted later, by the prioress, Lady Pity. Thus, while she was occupied in visiting the sick, and dosing and treating them as best she could, behold here came Lady Courtesy who wished her good eve, and presented the three companions Coeur, Desire and Largesse to her, and apprised her of what she knew concerning their rank and situation, notably in regard to Coeur and the quest he had undertaken at Desire's instigation.

CHAPTER LXXXI: THEY ARE GUESTS OF THE LADIES PITY AND COURTESY

Lady Pity gave them a kind welcome, having recognised Desire and Largesse whom she had seen before at the court of Love, but Coeur she knew not; nonetheless, seeing that he was a fine young man with a noble look, and in the company of those two, and also the leader of the quest, as she had understood from Lady Courtesy who had recounted all to her, she welcomed him with a cheerful face, and invited all three of them to her chamber once she had finished visiting the sick.

She began to converse with them, but Desire, who was bold and acquainted with her, said that they would much rather eat than converse, for they had eaten little that day, and had suffered and endured great pain and travail. Then he recounted their history from end to end, with all the adventures and accidents that had befallen them. So, the prioress, Lady Pity, gave the order for a table to be laid for the three companions, seated them, and served them an abundance of good things, which they ate with appetite, famished as they were.

But first Coeur removed his armour, for though he was on foot he had not yet seen fit to doff his hauberk or his iron cap, nor to lay down his good sword, with which Desire had chosen to arm him at the start of their quest, as you heard earlier. When they had eaten and drunk to their heart's desire, the tables were removed, and the ladies Pity and Courtesy approached the three companions: they entered together on the subject of the enterprise that the companions were about. Desire, who had talked a little with his friends in advance, and to whom it seemed appropriate to take counsel concerning their task with the two ladies, began to speak with them, as knowing them better and being more closely acquainted with them, and commenced in the following manner:

‘My Lady Pity, the prioress,
You oft do good deeds, and no less
Is Lady Courtesy well known
For kindness, as she will own.

See here the Heart that love has seized,
A fine young man who has been pleased
To forgo every other quest,
Undertaking, at my behest,
To win the lovely Sweet-Mercy;
Most willingly, and most humbly.
I have done so that he might serve,
The god of Love, without reserve,
Guided, thus, by Largesse and I,
Who keep him company thereby.
And because we know you ever
Love the virtue and true honour
Of the sovereign god of Love,
You should our enterprise approve.
As true as the paternoster,
True council we'd have you foster,
(As you have done on other shores,
For I know naught to equal yours)
As to what path we should follow,
And how we three might come to know
All that in future we must do,
And must not fail to conquer too,
To win Sweet Mercy in the end,
A lady I would wish my friend;
For if you would but grant us aid,
Then we are sure, our plans once made,
Of achieving what we desire,
Without our falling in the mire.
Seek then to favour us anew,
And we will pray to God for you.'

**CHAPTER LXXXII: THE prioress
EXTENDS HER HOSPITALITY TO THEM**

Then Lady Pity reflected awhile, and after doing so told Desire that she would give consideration that night to all he had said, and grant him a reply the next morning, after Mass, for it was too late to do so that evening and time now to go and rest. Then she ordered Lady Courtesy to prepare such beds for them as their rank demanded, which the latter hastened to do, like one that always desired to bring pleasure to all good folk.

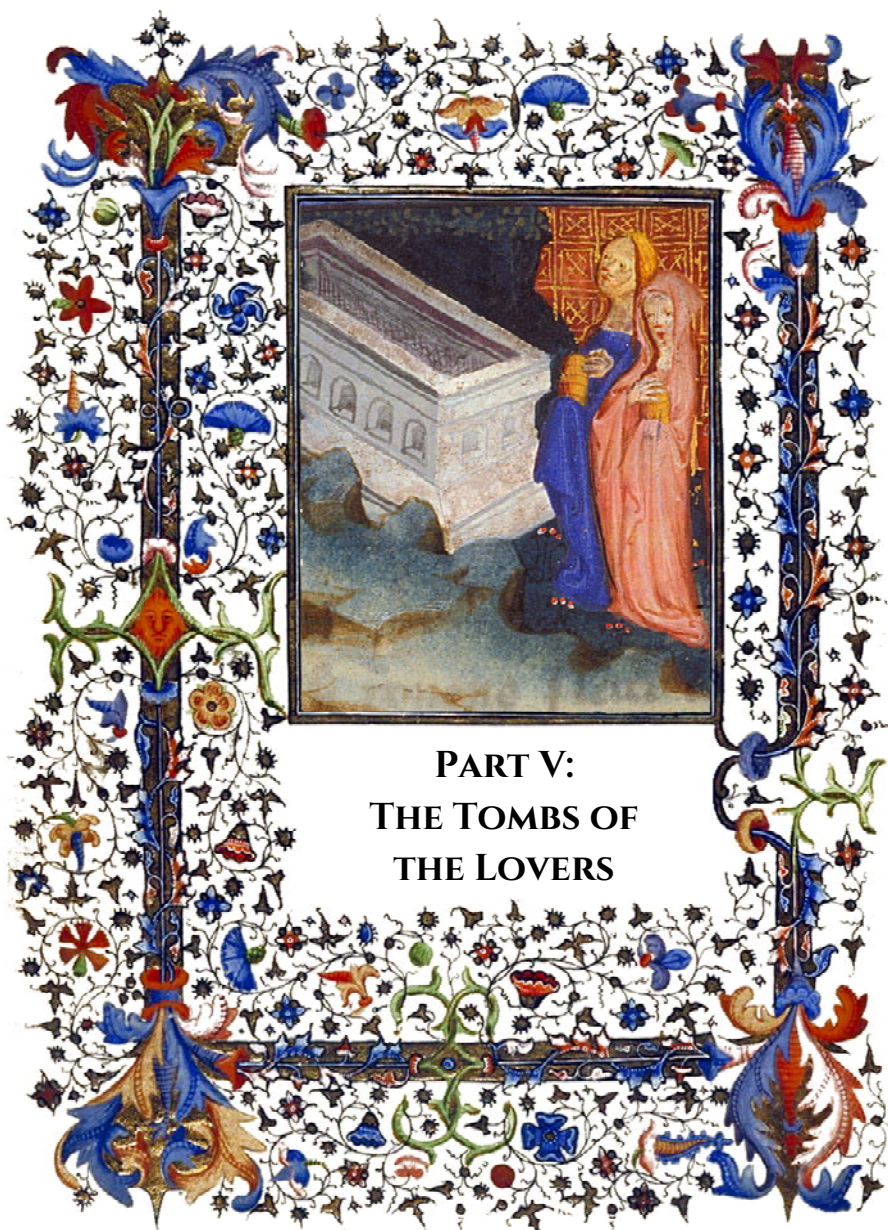
She lit a torch and led them to where they might rest in comfort and at their ease, then, after installing them in their chamber, she wished them good evening. But Coeur, who was curious to see the tombs in that place, and also to make better acquaintance of Lady Courtesy, the matron there, whom he perceived as a noble lady, spoke to her, in rendering her his salute, saying:

**CHAPTER LXXXII: DESIRE ASKS TO SEE
THE TOMBS OF THE LOVERS**

‘Lady, give you good-even too,
And such a one as I’d e’er view;
Yet one thing I would ask of thee,
Hoping that you will grant it me:
That tomorrow you’ll lead the way
To the tomb of Alain Chartier,
Whom I, a child, saw once before,
He being of France; one thing more
I would ask, to see all the tombs
Where bodies lie, that time consumes,
If you would deign to show them all
So, I might, later, the names recall.’



THE END OF PART IV OF 'LE LIVRE DU COEUR D'AMOUR ÉPRIS'



**PART V:
THE TOMBS OF
THE LOVERS**

CHAPTER LXXXIII: COURTESY SHOWS THE TRIO THE TOMBS OF THE NOTED LOVERS

Lady Courtesy replied to Coeur, that she would willingly grant his request, as it was most agreeable to her. She wished him good evening for a second time and went off to take her rest, while the three companions lay down to sleep at their ease, like those who occupy beds suited to their malady, being weary and fatigued after their journey, and having had little or no rest, due to the trials the sea had made them undergo.

The next morning, at dawn, Desire was the first to wake, who then called to his yet sleeping companions. All three rose and dressed immediately, then left their chamber and went to the Hospital. But they were not there soon enough to precede Lady Courtesy who had already risen and provided the poor lovers who were her patients with whatever they required, as best she could. She saluted them, and wished them good day, and the trio rendered her their salute also. Then Coeur reminded her of her promise: that as soon as she had risen and Mass was said, she would show him the tombs as she had promised.

So, Lady Courtesy took him by the hand, and led him to the church, Desire and Largesse following. They passed through cloisters, rooms and gardens, until they arrived at the entrance to the cemetery. It was a wondrously tall portal, high and wide, preceded by an ancient arched vault, made of pure white alabaster, which was about a hundred feet long and twenty feet wide, and beneath which magnificent coats-of-arms were affixed to the walls, rich, beautiful and of large dimensions, with the devices of the various possessors of these blazons, their names, titles and domains, and the reason why they had voyaged to, and sojourned in, that place.

Then the three companions halted, in silence, and Coeur above all began to inspect the blazons, attentively, to see if he recognised any of them; and, firstly, his gaze fell upon the blazon of Julius Caesar, that most powerful emperor and valiant conqueror. It was of gold, and displayed a two-headed eagle in black, with, above its head four letters in red tipped with gold, namely S.P.Q.R. They were formed in the ancient Roman manner, capitalised as

indicated here. Beneath these arms was written, in the style of an epitaph, and in the letters of the Latin tongue:

CHAPTER LXXXIII: THE INSCRIPTION BENEATH CAESAR'S COAT-OF-ARMS

'I Julius, called Caesar, Rome's general,
And the first, midst its Republic, of all,
The powerful, and steadfast conqueror,
Whom the wide world once trembled before,
Came here to do homage to the god of Love,
In all humility, for the god did move
My soul, subjecting me to Cleopatra,
Noble queen of Egypt, the shatterer
Of many a sound heart, with her burning arrows,
She whom, above honour and pride, I chose,
Victories, valour, and every noble deed,
To lie in idleness, and my strength concede.'

CHAPTER LXXXIV: THE BLAZON OF THE ROMAN EMPEROR AUGUSTUS

After this blazon of the noble and victorious Caesar, the author says that Coeur saw, on his right, at a distance of not much more than two feet (that is, an 'aune' as measured in Paris), an imperial coat-of-arms, on which the crown of Empire was depicted: the blazon was a little larger, and longer by about a foot, than that of Julius Caesar and seemed to have been wrought later than that of the latter, though not by many years. It too was rendered in the ancient manner, though not bearing those letters in red above that denoted the Republic; rather it bore on a plain field the arms of the Empire, and what follows was written beneath it in Lombardic lettering:

CHAPTER LXXXIV: THE INSCRIPTION BENEATH AUGUSTUS' COAT-OF-ARMS

'We, Augustus Caesar, Rome's emperor,
Sole sovereign master of the world, who bore
The weight of governing good men justly,
Keeping the realm at peace through fear, we
Came here constrained by rigour, by the force
Of Love, we called our lord, without recourse;
And so were made, clasped by him with ardour,
To set our shield here, his servant ever.
And thus, with our own hands, we placed it so,
For our dear wife, that our sole love did know,
Wise Livia, who was famed far and wide,
Our love of her ever our truest guide.'

CHAPTER LXXXV: THE BLAZON OF THE EMPEROR NERO AND HIS EPITAPH

A little below Augustus Caesar's coat-of-arms, but adjoining it, so the tale tells, was that of Nero, the cruel and perverse emperor, whose blazon was like to that of the aforesaid Augustus, revealing not the least modification, except that above the circle of the crown was writ, in ancient Roman lettering, the words FLAGELLUM DEI, and beneath the blazon was inscribed, as epitaph, the following verse:

'I am the emperor Nero; in my reign,
Pride and spite I did ever entertain,
Despising the Romans that lived neath me,
Thinking to govern them by cruelty,
Yet, nonetheless, though fierce and pitiless,

I was conquered, enamoured to excess
Of Claudia Acte the fair Roman,
My power but vain against that woman,
For the great god of Love, I then obeyed,
His unarmed prisoner, and tribute paid.
Here I set my blazon, that signifies
That Amor such confidence e'er denies.'

CHAPTER LXXXVI: MARK ANTONY'S SHIELD AND THE VERSE BENEATH

Following ever the same rank of blazons, after that of Nero, appeared that of the Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius, it being like to the others I have already mentioned, and beneath it was writ the following verse:

I am Marcus Aurelius, the wise,
Emperor, and philosopher likewise,
Singular orator, and sage speaker.
I that sound virtues owned, however,
Despite my science, and the eloquence
I owed to the god of Love, and good sense,
Could not avoid the task of bringing
My coat-of-arms here, thereby obeying
The fair Faustina, who had seized my heart,
And so inflamed it by her loving art,
That I was forced to seek Love's Hospital,
So, in my story, you may read my fall.'

CHAPTER LXXXVII: THE ARMS OF DAVID, KING OF JUDAEA

Ranged opposite to the blazons previously described, that is to say at the same height or greater, appeared the coat-of-arms of the sacred King David crowned with a gold coronet. His blazon was a golden harp on an azure field, its forty strings or so wrought of silver. Beneath it was an inscription in Hebrew, unintelligible to those viewing it, but beneath it the verse was offered in translation, as follows:

‘David, King of Judaea, was my name.
My power and my virtue brought me fame,
My victories, too, gained in many a place.
I was wise and prudent, before God’s face;
My fair deeds garnered me lasting praise,
Once dead, a tale fit to be told always.
Though, by my courage, vast Goliath fell,
Yet the great god of Love enchained me well,
Who made me pay him homage, many a year;
I, despite all, was forced to journey here.
Fair Bathsheba constrained me to obey,
To bear my arms here, and Love’s tribute pay.’

CHAPTER LXXXVIII: THE ARMS OF CHARLES VII OF FRANCE

Finer by far than any of the other blazons, be they of emperors and kings, one recently realised, and set in the most honourable place, its decoration being new and fresh, richly wrought and perfect, displayed a winged stag, white as snow, the wings being covered with red, white and green feathers. Above its large uplifted antlers, the stag bore a golden crown charged with precious and resplendent gems, the rays from which shone here

and there, casting wondrous shadows; and about its neck, beneath the throat, a strip of rich azure cloth, pure and fine, was tied, decorated with three large, glistening, fleurs-de-lys, and neatly arranged.

The stag was shown three-quarters upright, as if it would leap or fly, soaring from a verdant rosebush, whose roses, here and there, were in full bloom, and white as the lily. Beneath this stag, letters were inscribed in pure gold, which in truth were impossible to read from afar, having being painted so high on the wall. Nor does the story say what was written there, and is silent regarding the matter, passing on to the many other blazons, and firstly:

CHAPTER LXXXIX: THE SHIELD OF THESEUS

Coeur, who was examining the blazons, lowered his gaze a little, so the author recounts, and his eyes fell upon a shield without a crown, gules with a gold dragon in flight, its claws and teeth in silver, realised in mosaic. This shield was already much discoloured due to its antiquity, nigh-on completely tarnished; beneath it were inscribed letters in ancient Greek which, translated, read:

I am Theseus, famed for bravery.
I, who conquered many a fair country,
Fought and slew the cruel Minotaur,
Then allied myself, on another shore,
To Hercules, journeying, for a spell,
To the underworld, to unchain, in Hell,
Its huge and savage guard-dog, Cerberus,
That task requiring all our strength of us.
Nevertheless, love then seized me quite:
Ariadne, and Phaedra, fair and white,
Her sister, conquered, and they granted me
This blazon: Love deals joy and misery.'

CHAPTER XC: THE BLAZON OF AENEAS

Opposite the aforesaid shield, was another, similarly ancient in appearance, though the arms were different, for this shield was black, adorned with an eagle in gold, beneath which was found the inscription transcribed here:

‘Anchises’ son, Aeneas prince of Troy,
Born of the goddess Venus, I did enjoy
Amidst the brave Trojans, a well-earned fame,
Yet Amor caught me in his toils; I blame
The god, for being forced to journey far,
To this place of pilgrimage where we are:
For my love of Creusa brought me here,
The wife for whom I shed many a tear,
In Italy, once I had fled from Troy,
Knowing that in its ruin I’d lost my joy,
While Lavinia, Latium’s princess,
Brought me to hang my blazon here, no less.’

CHAPTER XCI: THE SHIELD OF ACHILLES

Further back, on the other side, was a large shield amidst a host of others, quartered in gold and azure, but since it was higher on the wall than the rest, as though that of an emperor or king, the story relates that Coeur gazed at it intently. Without pausing he began to read the verse found beneath, which ran as follows:

‘Achilles is my name, who in my day
Was famed for my skill in martial array.
I fought Hector, and that prince I slew,

And proved myself in other fair deeds too;
For, in my time, many a foe I met,
And conquered all before my face, and yet,
I'll not conceal it, was subject ever
To the god of Love, a fervent lover,
Vanquished by Polyxena, thus I bore
My shield to the Hospital on this shore,
And here it adorns the portal on this wall;
So, Love treated one who had conquered all.'

CHAPTER XCII: THE BLAZON OF HERCULES

Next to the shield of Achilles was another, larger by a third, of unusual aspect, in the form of a 'targe' rather than a plain shield, displaying three erect columns, all in gold, on a field gules; beneath this shield or targe the following verse was inscribed:

'My name is Hercules, the strong and bold,
All-powerful Jupiter's son, born of old
To fair Alcmena, that gentle mother,
My power greater than any other.
And yet, despite strength gifted from above,
Subject, nonetheless, to the god of Love.
Deianira, I loved, such was her name,
And thus, I bore, for love of that fair same,
My shield here, to set beneath the portal,
Of this place they name Love's Hospital.
Those whom he seizes, of his sovereign grace,
Do what they will, shall here find a place.'



Hercules battling against two lions

'L'Épître Othéa' (Paris, France)

Attributed to the Master of the Cité des Dames and workshop.

British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER XCIII: THE COAT-OF-ARMS OF PARIS, PRINCE OF TROY

A little lower down and to the right was a fine shield in the ancient style, except that the forms depicted on its field were wondrously strange to see, for the azure of the aforesaid shield displayed three crawling toads in pure gold; beneath was the following verse:

Paris, the fair and graceful, is my name,
The sweet melodious shepherd, known to fame,
Son of great Priam, that virtuous king.
Twas to me the three goddesses did bring
The apple, that I might choose the fairest,
Saying that none they saw, amidst the rest
Of those who wished to serve the god of Love,
Possessed a beauty they did more approve.
I won thereby a lady; in arms was skilled,
Yet the appetite for love, in me instilled,
Led me to set my blazon here, for I
Loved Helen, the fairest maid beneath the sky.’

CHAPTER XCIV: THE COAT-OF-ARMS OF TROILUS

On the other side, was found a similar shield, not bearing the same emblems but of like size: it showed on a silver field a lion gules seated on an azure platform, and the aforesaid lion’s teeth, tongue, and claws were in gold. Beneath the shield this verse was writ:

‘I am named Troilus, one who, in my day,
Great power, skill, and beauty did display.
Many a deed I wrought of which men speak,

The Book of the Heart Seized by Love

With many a feat of arms fair praise did seek;
Yet, nonetheless, true Love defeated me,
For I was tormented to extremity,
By Cressida, who seized and won my heart,
Caught in her net, imprisoned by her art,
Such that the god of Love then led me here,
So that my blazon likewise might appear.
My shield I brought, and set upon this wall,
That here it might be viewed by one and all.'



Troilus advising king Priam

'L'Épître Othéa'. France, Central (Paris)

Attributed to the Master of the Cité des Dames and workshop.

British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER XCV: THE ARMS OF DIOMEDES

Opposite was another shield, with a black boar's-head on a silver field, under which was writ the following verse:

'Diomedes, the name that I went by,
Strong, and virtuous, and feared was I,
My valour proved in many a fierce fight,
And yet a slave to Love, who ruled outright
A heart enamoured of fair Cressida,
She whom Troilus loved, led by her ever,
She that by his side declined to stay;
He, whom I slew, Cressida did betray.
That she commanded, she for whom I burned
Such that a voyage to this place I earned;
Scorched by Love's flames, my blazon here I bore,
To Love's Hospital, on this foreign shore.'

CHAPTER XCVI: THE COAT-OF-ARMS OF DEMOPHÖON

Next to the aforementioned shield another older one was to be seen, which displayed a lion's head gules on a golden field, with an azure tongue and teeth in silver, and beneath which was written the following verse:

'Demophöon I, once in Greece a king,
Who when I reigned on Earth, Fame did sing.
Proud, and valiant, all good things I loved;
Of my strength and honour all men approved.
Master of wealth and subjects, such my state,

Yet to be slave to Love still proved my fate.
I was his man, and bound thus to that same,
By my love for Phyllis, my lady's name.
I was so seized by Love, naught would suffice,
But to make of my shield a sacrifice.
Myself, I bore it here, placing it on high,
For all whom Love masters must do as I.'

CHAPTER XCVII: LANCELOT'S SHIELD

On one of the walls of the vault, a fine large shield was set, better lit than many another affixed to the portal, of much later manufacture, which was banded in red and silver, and beneath which was written:

'I am Lancelot of the Lake, renowned
In war, more than any that here are found.
I led many an army, in my time,
Conquered many a man in joust sublime,
Plucking out the soul from many a body,
My deeds thus prized, and honoured by many.
Yet Love's fierce dart changed all my valour
To longing, my prowess and my honour
To thoughts of Queen Guinevere, for that same
I loved, and that love too is known to fame,
Such that my flesh was so consumed by fire,
My shield I set here, to denote desire.'

CHAPTER XCVIII: THE BLAZON OF TRISTAN

Beside the preceding shield was set another, with a purple band on a gold field, beneath which was inscribed the following:

‘I am Tristan, whose life all men do know;
Many envied my skill and strength below.
I fought in many a fight where my war-cry
Was taken up by others that fought nearby.
For when I was in arms, no man in sight
That was not of my cause but took to flight.
Yet there came a day when the god of Love
Appeared in person and did me remove
To this place, his captive, and I obeyed,
Despite the power that erstwhile I’d displayed;
Now placed on high, my shield is to be seen,
Set here, for love of Iseult, Mark’s fair queen.’

CHAPTER XCIX: THE ARMS OF PONTUS OF GALICIA

Beneath the two preceding shields was hung one of still more recent creation, which was black, sprinkled with white tears, without any other emblem, except that the panel on which the aforesaid shield was placed showed the arms of Galicia, that is to say gold chalices on a red ground, the field scattered with trefoils likewise in gold. Beneath this panel was writ the following verse:

‘Pontus am I, a man well-known to fame
While yet alive, for all men feared my name.
In many a palace hall, my deeds were told,
And high praise I won, from the brave and bold.

Great feats of arms in the forest I wrought,
That's called Broceliande, and more at court.
But all proved vain, for my heart was given
To Love's fair service, whose god had riven
That same, and claimed me as his subject true,
Commanding me to place my shield on view,
In Sidonia's name, Brittany's princess,
For her father was that realm's king, no less.'

CHAPTER C: THE COAT-OF-ARMS OF ARTHUR THE LESS OF BRITAIN

Beside it was a shield in azure with three golden crowns upon it, and beneath that was the writing that follows:

'Arthur the Less, of Britain, is my name,
Who ruled many a vassal in that same
Fair realm, and refused many a lady,
Daughters of dukes and counts, many a she
That I might have wed if I had but shown
The slightest wish to make the maid my own;
For I would never grant one my consent.
Nevertheless, Amor his brave bow bent,
And his burning arrow set my heart on fire,
For a maid who filled that same with desire:
Jeanette de l'Étang was that sweet lady's name,
Of humble birth, her sire unknown to fame.'

**CHAPTER CI: THE BLAZON OF LOUIS D'ORLÉANS
(FATHER OF CHARLES D'ORLÉANS THE POET)**

Many another shield and Moorish buckler and German targe was affixed to the walls, set high or low on either side, so numerous and in such quantity that it was impossible to render a count of them. They bore various emblems, and displayed inscriptions beneath them in Greek, Arabic, German, Latin, English, Spanish, Lombard, French, Hungarian, Bohemian and many another language, though already so faded that it was not possible to decipher them. For that reason, the author falls silent here, a moment, yet undertakes to speak of one noble and magnificent shield, amongst the rest.

Coeur wished to know whom it designated, and to whom it belonged, for it displayed three golden fleurs-de-lys on an azure field, with above them three silver pendants indicating the elder branch. The said shield was supported by a wolf on one side and a porcupine on the other; beneath this magnificent shield was written in noble letters that which follows, no more nor less:

‘The second son of Charles the Fifth am I,
Louis, duc d’Orléans, of kindly eye,
And courteous too, whose good sense maintained
A stout defence against Love, and long retained
My freedom, though twenty voices pressed me,
And, in loving tones, in vain, addressed me.
But suddenly I felt the need to love,
A deep desire for union then did move
My heart so fiercely that I then was brought
To seek the god of Love, who swiftly taught
The way to this Hospital; I scarcely know
If I erred or not; yet here my shield I show.’

CHAPTER CII: THE ARMS OF JEAN, DUC DE BERRY

Next to this last, without the least space between, another shield was affixed, a field azure with three golden fleur-de-lys surrounded by a jagged red border; this shield was supported on the one side by a white swan wounded in the breast, and on the other by a brown bear, well-executed and skilfully painted. Below, on a scroll, was written:

'I am Jean, duc de Berry, such am I
That while a hostage, being forced to lie
In prison for my father, Jean le Bon,
Whom the English seized, my heart was won
By a lady, whom the god did approve,
His English servant, and fell deep in love.
For that graceful maid, the device I bore
Of the white wounded swan, evermore.
Her net held me so, nor could I win free,
And the god of Love then commanded me
To join, in homage, with the others here,
So that my shield, with theirs, might thus appear.'

CHAPTER CIII: THE BLAZON OF LOUIS II DE BOURBON (GREAT-GRANDFATHER OF JEAN II, THE DEDICATEE)

A little lower in the same row, on the right, another shield displayed an azure field with three golden fleurs-de-lys, and a red bar as a mark of cadency. This shield was surrounded by an azure cincture on which was written HOPE in letters of gold, and the aforesaid blazon was supported by two white spotted pug-nosed dogs. Beneath the blazon was written the following verse:

Louis, duc de Bourbon, my name by right,
Courteous, graceful, handsome to the sight,
Granted beauty and grace in full measure,
Thanks to the powers of God and Nature.
Indeed, many a lady of honour
Sought me in amorous adventure,
Many an eye assailed me with its glance;
My blazon here is bound, and not by chance,
By a cincture, HOPE writ there forever,
Yet, nonetheless, I swear, late a lover,
Amor made me, at last, by subtle labour,
Set my shield here, before the onlooker.’

CHAPTER CIV: THE COAT-OF-ARMS OF PHILIPPE III LE BON

A little higher, close to the preceding shield, was another, slightly larger: it was quartered to denote France, Burgundy, Brabant and Limbourg, and, superimposed on these, Flanders. The first quarter showed rows of fleurs-de-lys on an azure field, within a border of silver and red alternating bars; the second quarter, that of Burgundy, showed six slanting bands of alternating silver and azure, within a solid red border; the third, that of Brabant, displayed a lion in gold on a sable field, with red claws and tongue; the fourth denoted Limbourg, a lion gules on a silver field, its tail multi-forked, upright in attack, toothed, clawed and crowned in gold, with an azure tongue; and, at the centre, superimposed on these was the sable lion of Flanders on a golden field, with red claws and tongue.

All around the panel to which this shield was affixed, was an attractive scattering of little heraldic shapes (fusils) spreading over the stones, shapes from which sparks of fire leapt, embellishing the panel quartered simply in black and grey: and beneath the panel a verse was inscribed which read as follows:



Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy
Statuts de l'Ordre de la Toison d'Or. Netherlands, S. (Bruges); between 1481 and 1486.
British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

‘Philip of Burgundy, such am I called,
Who, all my life, was by sweet love enthralled,
Maintained by the god of Love in that state.
Yet, at the last, perceptive of my fate,
He forced me to attend this Hospital,
A slave in his service (by his several
Weapons, in battle, conquered and laid low,
In many a country where I chose to go,
And surrendering to that lord, therefore,
One vanquished in the field, captured in war)
Such that, bearing my shield, hither I came,
And neath this portal I have hung that same.’

CHAPTER CV: THE ARMS OF CHARLES D’ORLÉANS (THE POET)

A little higher, but not by much, on the same wall, a truly magnificent shield was placed and affixed, one of recent style, quartered for France and Milan; that it to say with France denoted in the upper quarter on the left, as viewed: three golden fleurs-de-lys on an azure field, with three points on a silver frieze, denoting the elder branch; and Milan on the right: an azure serpent (guivre) on a silver ground, swallowing a child with a crimson body, the shield’s lower quarters repeating the design, with Milan on the left and France on the right, reversing the order of those above. This shield was embraced by a silver chain-mail collar, supported on one side by a porcupine and on the other by a wolf. And beneath the aforesaid blazon was written in good readable characters the following verse:

‘Charles the Fifth, a strong king and a wise one,
Fathered Louis, of whom I was the son.
Louis held the Duchy, by right, although
It was but by appanage, you should know.

Later I possessed it, and, fought with honour
At Agincourt, yet despite my valour,
Was, sadly, taken by the English there,
Captive, in their land, after that affair.
I learnt the language, and one, fair and wise,
I came to know, sweet love did realise,
And wrote many a verse, all well-received,
Such that my shield here is now perceived.’

CHAPTER CVI: THE COAT-OF-ARMS OF CHARLES DUC DE BOURBON (FATHER OF THE DEDICATEE, JEAN II)

Another shield followed on, azure with three fleurs-de-lys crossed by a red band, and around the shield broken pots were depicted in gold, from which leapt fierce tongues of Greek fire, while the field on which they these pots were set was parti-coloured in black and azure quarters. Beneath this panel was written the following verse:

‘Charles de Bourbon, I, well-known to fame
For graciousness in my day, bore a name
For ever proving joyous and amusing,
And full of the virtues, oft found wanting,
Courtesy, goodness, beauty, and largesse,
Wisdom, honesty, judgement and prowess;
Courtied by ladies more than was my sire,
Such that I took for my motto: ‘Greek Fire’,
Inspired to do so through loving ardour;
Yet despite my fire and flame, however,
Here I came, to pay homage to our lord,
The god of Love, and show my shield abroad.’

CHAPTER CVII: THE BLAZON OF RENÉ D'ANJOU (THE AUTHOR)

There was another shield, next to the former, though larger and broader. Surmounted by a golden crown, it was supported by a dry tree-stump painted in trompe-l'oeil, which had but a single green shoot; above, this blazon was in three segments, those of three kingdoms: Hungary, Sicily, and Jerusalem; and, below, in two segments, those of the duchies of Anjou and of Bar. Hungary was denoted by eight stripes, alternately argent and gules; Sicily by rows of gold fleurs-de-lys on an azure ground, above a rake gules; Jerusalem by a gold Order-of-Christ cross on a silver field, with one smaller cross above, and one beneath, each of its two arms. Anjou was denoted by rows of gold fleurs-de-lys on an azure field bordered by a red band; Bar was denoted by two gold bars on an azure field scattered with gold crosses crosslet, some with pointed stems. Under this blazon, an inscription in French, when translated, read as follows:

‘René of Anjou, I, who wish to be
A mendicant of Love, in beggary,
Thinking it good to be Love’s mendicant,
And prove, thus, a beggarly indigent
With those who would beg of me my heart,
With pleading eyes, and steal it by their art,
Those of sweet speech that encourage me
To be their slave; without naming any,
Ladies, maids, and others I have given
All my love as they too did when bidden.
Tis why the god of Love summoned me here,
To show my blazon; hence, it doth appear.’



The arms of René d'Anjou, King of Naples (Barthélemy d'Eyck)
Book of Hours, Use of Paris, France, S. E. (Aix-en-Provence, c. 1442 – 1443)
British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CVIII: THE ARMS OF LOUIS DE FRANCE, DAUPHIN DU VIENNOIS (THE COUNTY OF VIENNE)

C lose to this shield, a little higher and to the right, was another quartered shield; that is to say, the left-hand quarter above, as viewed, showed three fleurs-de-lys on an azure field, while the right-hand showed a blue dolphin on a gold ground; the like quarters were reversed right to left below. Beneath this shield was written in embellished and capitalised gold lettering the verse which follows:

‘The seventh Charles, Charles the Fifth’s grandson,
Was my father, and a most royal one.
Dauphin du Viennois, Louis am I;
Proud and fierce in war, and in love not shy,
Though courteous ever, while ever seeking
Fair ladies and maids consent to loving;
For I was ever a slave to the god of Love,
And his true man, right loyal I did prove,
And from his company did ne’er remove,
Swearing an oath all princes would approve.
As witness I set my shield here, on high,
Revealing my allegiance to the eye.’

CHAPTER CIX: THE COAT OF ARMS OF CHARLES D’ANJOU, COMTE DE MAINE

Touching the aforesaid shield, was a shield set among thistles, whose spiky leaves were most attractively gilded and embellished, the flower-heads were in gold, the leaves in green. The shield bore three golden fleurs-de-lys on an azure field bordered in red, and at the top left of this border was a young lion, in silver, rampant; beneath the shield was found the verse that follows:

‘Charles of Anjou am I, that humble prove,
By offering myself to the god of Love,
Gifting him my person, his vassal true,
As one that has served him my whole life through,
Receiving from him many a fair reward.
Enclosed in thistles, my shield does afford
Remembrance of how Love wounds the lover,
Piercing the hearts of those who trust him ever,

Since, thus, was I wounded in love's fair field,
Enough to paint these thistles on my shield,
And sail to this Hospital, and set it here,
Gently, amidst the others that appear.'

CHAPTER CX: THE ARMS OF GASTON DE FOIX

After this shield, set among thistles as you have been made aware, but lower down, was found another truly magnificent one, around which broken and shattered chariot wheels were depicted, and between the wheels little scrolls were inserted on which was written 'To Remake'. This shield comprised the arms of Foix and of Aragon; the upper right quarter, as viewed, showing two cows in red on a gold ground, the left quarter three red vertical stripes on a like field of gold, and beneath the coat-of-arms was set the following verse:

'Gaston de Foix, am I, in humility
Come here that Love may not vilify me,
I that have proved myself on many a field,
Equal to all, and never thought to yield,
Such that none an ill reproach might offer.
And yet though I've led many a soldier,
Love's arrow pierced me, and brought me woe,
So that to Love's Hospital I must go,
As one who had served Love with his whole heart,
Unconquered in arms, vanquished by his dart.
Thus, I came here, humbly, to set on high
My blazon, for tis Love leads men, say I.'

**CHAPTER CXI: THE BLAZON OF
LOUIS DE LUXEMBOURG (A VASSAL OF RENÉ'S)**

Next to this blazon was another, a lion gules with forked tail, rampant on a field of silver, crossed saltirewise, with claws, teeth and crown in gold, and with azure tongue, surround by little tufts in blue and black. Beneath this shield was written the verse presented here:

Louis de Luxembourg, thus was I called:
Love seized me, and with blows my body galled,
Piercing me with darts fiercer than any
I have let fly in many a great tourney,
Where I shattered many a lance and shield,
And many a helm, on many a brave field.
I served Love so long, I thought myself free,
Yet journeyed here, in the end, as you see,
To this Hospital, bearing, day and night,
This fair shield of mine, as was only right,
To set it here, at the Love-god's behest;
And if tardily, then his pardon I request.'

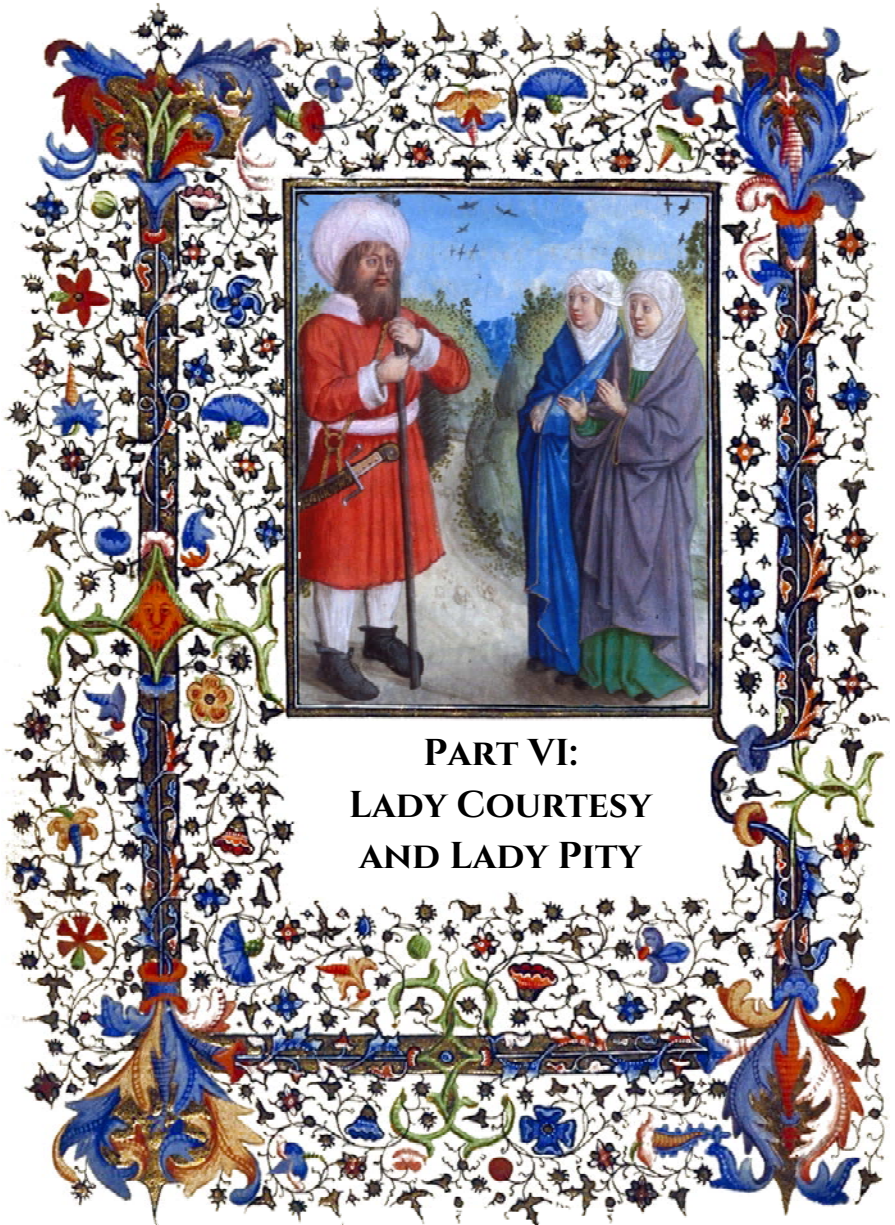
**CHAPTER CXII: THE COAT-OF-ARMS OF LOUIS,
SEIGNEUR DE BEAUVAU (A VASSAL OF RENÉ'S)**

Set alone and apart from the other blazons, seemingly in a more obscure place than the others, I found a fair and noble and richly-wrought coat-of-arms, quartered with the arms of Beauvau and Craon: those of Beauvau showing four lions rampant gules on a field argent; those of Craon rows of lozenges in alternating red and gold, The panel to which this shield was affixed was framed by four hooked crossbows, linked to one another, and beside it was written, in large letters of gold and azure, magnificently wrought: 'Never Quitting'. Beneath the blazon was written, in well-formed blackletter-script (Bastarda), the following:

'Louis of Beauvau, the loyal,
I, of Provence the seneschal,
Who in loving did e'er advance,
Seeking sweet love at every chance,
Promising the ladies ever
To be faithless to them never,
Swearing by my conscience further,
That I was loyal by nature,
Though thinking it not, for I know
That ever-changeable they go,
Nonetheless, set my blazon here,
And in good time, thus, I appear.'



THE END OF PART V OF 'LE LIVRE DU COEUR D'AMOUR ÉPRIS'



**PART VI:
LADY COURTESY
AND LADY PITY**

CHAPTER CXIII: THE TOMBS OF THE POETS OF LOVE

When Coeur had sufficiently examined the aforesaid shield of the seigneur de Beauvau, he no longer wished to remain there, fearing lest he annoy Lady Pity, who had already summoned him a number of times; though he would willingly have stayed there all day without food or drink, so occupied was he with inspecting the aforementioned coats-of-arms. He passed through the gate without more delay and entered a vast cemetery, filled with raised tombs made of alabaster and porphyry, but also of marble, gold, silver, and other metals; and wrought with such artistry as was astonishing to behold. But the companions had not advanced a bowshot within the interior of the cemetery when they perceived, amidst the others, a number of tombs, not far from the rest yet set apart, surrounded by a wall, and conspicuous by their excellence and singularity: they were exactly six in number and no more.

Of these six, one, the largest, of pure gold, was set beneath a baldachin of silver in the form of a little chapel, open on all four sides, and adorned with medallions wrought with marvellous artistry and skill. On this tomb was the statue of a 'philosopher' with a long beard, who upon his cap bore a crown of gold in the form of a laurel-wreath, nobly enriched with pearls and precious stones, including sapphires, balas-rubies, emeralds, topazes and diamonds, while his form was clad in, and covered by, a robe falling to his feet. Around the tomb, all the art of rhetoric was personified by figures in enamelling, and at the head of the tomb a scroll bearing an epitaph was held aloft by a cherub. On the scroll was written:

CHAPTER CXIII: THE EPITAPH DISPLAYED ABOVE OVID'S TOMB

'Ovid my name, here I was laid to rest;
Born in Sulmona, and a self-confessed

Friend of the god of Love, I did rehearse
The Art of Love, for all to read, in verse,
And, through my work, that art was exalted.
Thus, you lovers, by passion assaulted,
Recall my words and you will discover
The fair paradise of the noble lover,
And will know how one should ever behave
Towards one's lady, your side of the grave.
Wisely, that is, and well, your lady court;
Reflect on love fully, now, and fail in naught.'

CHAPTER CXIV: THE TOMB OF GUILLAUME DE MACHAUT

Next to this raised tomb, wondrously fine, magnificent and beautiful, and wrought of noble materials, was that of Guillaume de Machaut, the renowned poet and composer. It lacked a baldachin, but was nonetheless made entirely of pure silver, surrounded by inscriptions in blue, green and violet enamel, engraved with the scores of various chansons, virelays, sirventes, lays, and motets, written and composed in diverse forms; and an epitaph in a dozen lines as follows:

'Guillaume de Machaut, such had I for name,
Born in Champagne, and since known to fame
As one who was so fired with ardent thought,
For love of a maid, I found joy in naught
Till I could see her, and keep her in view.
Yet, nonetheless, this truth I'll tell to you,
To forge sweet songs and verse was all my aim,
While my life lasted, ever to please that same,
And I gave body and soul, all my days,

To making ballads, complaints, and virelays,
And in that passion rendered to God my soul,
My body resting here in this tomb, its goal.’

CHAPTER CXV: THE TOMB OF GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO

There was another sepulchre within this enclosure, nobly decorated and ornamented, wrought of silver and gilded, without an epitaph displayed above, for the verse was inscribed instead on the tomb itself, the surround to which was girded by wreaths of laurel in plique-à-jour enamelling, without any other decoration, except that within each laurel-crown was written the name Boccaccio, alone, in antique lettering, surrounded by little flamelets, signifying his lady, Fiammetta, while the words on the tomb read:

‘Boccaccio the poet, am I, laid here,
My body entombed next many a peer,
To show that Fiammetta was my love,
Who my heart to many a sigh did move,
I so scorched with flame and fond desire,
To many a verse, and text, I did aspire,
More in my day than did any other,
Such that my work outlives me; moreover,
I was so enslaved to the god of Love,
That, amidst those of whom he did approve,
He set me, at the last; I mean those whom
Beside Love’s Hospital, here, found a tomb.’



Petrarch appearing to Boccaccio

Boccaccio, *Des cas de nobles hommes et femmes*,
translated from the Latin, *'De casibus virorum illustrium'* by Laurent de Premierfait
France; 3rd quarter of the 15th century
British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CXVI: THE TOMB OF JEAN DE MEUNG

Next to this tomb, was a like tomb of silver though not covered with like inscriptions, nor in the same style, except in its grandeur, belonging to one who lived in the same epoch, though not precisely at the same time or place. The silver was gilded in a like manner, but where in places there were carved sprigs of laurel, they were not woven into wreaths but were accompanied by rose bushes, each lacking flowers

except for a single bud, crimson and well-formed. Between the laurel branches were little scrolls on which was written 'Jean Clopinel', alone, though on the lid of the tomb were writ the following lines:

'Jean Clopinel, oft called de Meung, am I,
Who would claim that, midst all those, on high,
Reigning among the poets, I sang of love
More fully than they, for true Love did move
Me, as his slave, to hearten every lover;
Which is why my body he did order
To be brought here, to its final rest.
And here, on my tomb's lid, at his behest
Is written, that every lover might know,
That to this place, at last, all lovers go,
To lie in the Hospital, where I now lie;
No other dwelling will they win, thereby.'

CHAPTER CXVII: THE TOMB OF PETRARCH

U pon another tomb of silver, more elevated than any except that of Ovid, and without a baldachin, stood the statue of one dressed as a learned man, with a crown woven only of laurel leaves held over his head, by two young girls equipped with wings, while their heads, inclined towards a shoulder, were crowned with gold diadems set with gems; and the statues of these young girls were so excellently fashioned that none, viewing them from a little distance, would have thought them anything but living, the colouring of the enamelwork being so well-done that its hue evoked that of the human body to perfection. And at the head of the tomb a panel was affixed to a column of green jasper flecked with red; on this panel the following epitaph was inscribed:

‘Petrarch am I, the famous Florentine,
Servant of Love, who for that love of mine,
Fair Laura, my blonde and noble lady,
Composed many a sonnet, and full many
A little book, writ in Florentine script,
Such lovely verse as none less well-equipped
Could write, nor had since the Crucifixion;
In that new style, I had no competition.
None was my equal, I believe that true,
Such that I had this tomb made, that you view,
Neath which I lie, destined, ere the grave,
To be Love’s secretary, and his true slave.’

CHAPTER CXVIII: THE TOMB OF ALAIN CHARTIER

At the end of the row of five tombs mentioned previously, there was found another, or to speak more precisely a coffin, for it was made of wood, though it was covered in a large thick gilded drape, as magnificent as it was beautiful: it was not brocaded, but made of layer on layer of velvet, thicker than three fur coats, of fine cramoisy cloth, and the gold motifs were enhanced with gold, strengthened and thickened; onto this gilded cloth was sewn a large white cross, richly ornate, extending the length and width of the drape, which was a good span across or more. At the head of the tomb, a satin cushion, pure azure in colour, rested on the gilded drape. On this, an epitaph was embroidered in pure Cypriot gold, which read, if translated from the French:

‘Charles the Seventh’s secretary was I,
Alain Chartier, a man made to sigh,
Taken by surprise by Love so strongly,
That, when ill Fate wounded me severely,
Through my lady’s death, I spent my days

The Book of the Heart Seized by Love

In languor and in wretchedness always,
Composing chansons, ballads, in sweet verse,
Such as I think none other did rehearse,
Nor wrought so fine, according to my case.
Such that, upon my death, of his true grace,
The god of Love his slave did not forget,
And midst these other poets I was set.'



The poet encounters the four ladies

Alain Chartier (b. 1385, d. c.1433), *Le Livre des Quatre Dames*; France, W. (Brittany); c. 1425
British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CXIX: LADY COURTESY SHOWS COEUR THE REST OF THE CEMETERY, AND BEYOND

Once he had read all these epitaphs, and viewed the aforesaid tombs in detail, Coeur set himself to pray for the dead, though Lady Courtesy told him that she was of the firm conviction that he need not do so, for their souls were enjoying endless joy and eternal repose in Love's Paradise. He continued to view the cemetery, and its many fine sepulchres and epitaphs, asking Lady Courtesy the names of several; to which she replied that if he wished to be instructed in the matter, he must not fail to read the book entitled *L'Hopital d'Amour*, composed by a young clerk, Achille Caulier, born in Tournai, which would provide sufficient answer.

Then she led him, walking a little in advance, outside the Hospital enclosure, and showed him a host of corpses, left all naked in the mud and rain, without tomb or epitaph, some of which were rotten and decayed, nothing but skeletons, others partially decayed, their entrails on display. While others, but newly deceased, lay indecently revealed amide the slime. Then Courtesy spoke to Coeur, as follows:

CHAPTER CXIX: SHE WARNS HIM TO BE FAITHFUL AND TRUE IN LOVE

'Within the cemetery you viewed,
I know not if your thoughts pursued
The fact that only true lovers
Are buried there, not these others;
For those who've loved most faithfully,
Are thus interred, most honourably.
But in this field, beyond the wall,
We find the very worst of all,
Those Love excommunicated;
For their disloyalty, thus fated.

Those who, in this world, lived so
And naught but faithlessness did show.
Lie here, therefore, exposed to sight,
So other folk know what is right,
And in praise of those constant yet
Whom the Love-God will ne'er forget;
While, whether he be known or not,
Shame shall prove the traitor's lot.
Seek then to be true forever,
And, thus, prove disloyal never.'

CHAPTER CXX: LADY COURTESY TELLS DESIRE ABOUT AN UNFORTUNATE PAIR OF LOVERS

Then Coeur bowed his head, and meditated for a time on the wonders he had seen, and had been informed about by Lady Courtesy. After a while he raised his head once more, and thanked her profusely for all she had been kind enough to reveal to him. Then she took him by the hand, and led all three of the companions to the rooms of the prioress, Lady Pity, whom they found already risen and quite ready, and they went, all together, to attend Mass, and participate in the service celebrated that day for a pair of lovers, who had been led to their deaths in Germany, after a pitiful affair they had recently engaged in. Desire could not refrain from asking Lady Courtesy for the truth concerning that affair, and she replied that she would tell them willingly, and began to speak in the following terms:

'In truth, it was not long ago:
That the young man had wished to go
One night, to see his fair lady,
One whom he loved most faithfully.
Their bodies not their souls lie here.
Vile slanderers that oft appear

Speaking ill, whose lies we fear,
Rogues that irk us many a year,
Spied upon the pair, secretly,
Exposing them to Jealousy,
Who took their lives; for a blade,
With one fell blow, the two unmade.'

CHAPTER CXXI: THE SACRED RELICS ON LOVE'S HIGH ALTAR

With these words, Courtesy raised the drape with which the corpses were covered, and revealed them still entwined in an embrace, the sword-blade traversing their two bodies. The three companions marvelled at that remarkable sight before their eyes. They listened to the Mass, most reverently, and then went forward to kiss the relics on the high altar: that is to say firstly, a large and sumptuous crystal vessel, round in shape like a pot, adorned with gold and gems, and full of water from the Hellespont, in which Leander drowned, while swimming that strait so he might see the beautiful Hero whom he loved; and then further relics, as follows:

Item: the sword of the Greek who killed Coroebus, the son of Mygdon, King of Phrygia, as he defended Cassandra whom he loved, which sword by some miracle was still covered with blood and could not be cleaned without the blood reappearing each time, as fresh as the day on which Coroebus was slain.

Item: another sword of ancient manufacture, magnificently adorned with gold and gems, being the sword with which Turnus was slain as he sought to prevent the capture of Lavinia, the daughter of King Latinus.

Item: a goblet of wondrous beauty, which Coeur kissed, marvellously wrought in gold, and garnished with gems, the very goblet from which Ghismonda, the daughter of Tancred, prince of Salerno, drank the mortal potion that killed her, her corpse being interred in the grave of her spouse, Guiscardo, who loved her tenderly, and had been slain by her father on account of that love.

The Book of the Heart Seized by Love

There were many other relics there, of which the tale says naught, since neither Coeur nor his companions chose to kiss them as they had those previously mentioned. And when the Mass had been said and the service was over, they sought Lady Pity so as to obtain her response, as to the counsel she might give, that they had requested the previous eve. Lady Pity summoned Courtesy, and spoke to the companions as follows:



The God of Love presenting a 'royal letter' to a messenger
Christine de Pizan, Various works (also known as 'The Book of the Queen')

France, Central (Paris); c. 1410–c. 1414

British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CXXI: LADY PITY INSISTS THAT COEUR SWEAR LOYALTY TO AMOR

‘My children, you shall now receive
The thoughts I mused on yestereve:
You asked that I might counsel you,
So, you might fruitfully pursue
Your present aim; first Coeur must swear,
And never from this true path err,
To serve Amor, most loyally,
Now and ever, where’er he be.
Such is right, be you assured,
For Amor is my sovereign lord,
Who founded this same Hospital;
So, think no ill, but promise all.’

CHAPTER CXXII: SHE COUNSELS THEM REGARDING THEIR QUEST

With these words, Lady Pity took a book and made Coeur take on oath on it and swear to serve the god of Love, Amor, well and faithfully and to observe the commands which Amor would give him when he spoke to him. And Coeur promised, most willingly, since he was wholly desirous of serving the god of Love, and so achieving his aim in quest of Sweet Mercy. One he had so sworn, lady Pity spoke once more, as follows:

‘Be not concerned, my friends, that I
Have made Coeur take an oath; thereby,
I remain loyal to Amor,
For I have sworn the same before,

Promising him my fealty,
Fidelity, and loyalty.
My counsel I shall give you now,
As best I can, such is my vow.
Just as you seek to realise
A most marvellous enterprise,
So many another likewise sought,
And found reward at Love's fair court.
But leave that thought now where it lies –
Tis, ever the outcome makes us wise –
And let us turn to the matter here,
How to win Sweet Mercy; draw near,
And list to my counsel to achieve
What you desire, for I believe
Two things you must pursue; in short,
The first: go swiftly to Love's court.
At the Castle of Pleasure, he
Resides; ask of him, most humbly,
Permission to depart that day,
To win Sweet Mercy, without delay;
That would be best, it seems to me,
Since he is the lord of that country.
The second point you must pursue
Is to make a swift journey to
The evil House of Rebellion,
There, Refusal and Rejection
Reside, who, saddening many,
Hold captive the fair Sweet Mercy,
That most gracious young lady,
Whom, imprisoned, they savagely
Abuse; whom you must ask sweetly,

To win a single kiss, only;
Though if you do all will be well.
Yet first you must fight for a spell,
For Refusal will challenge you,
To battle, and Rejection, too.
They would rather suffer death
Than permit that kiss, in a breath;
Unless they are bribed secretly,
Naught else will serve to set her free.
Also, the slanderers dwell there,
Who speak ill of every affair,
For if you think that they are true
You should know that they speak of you
Not openly, but on the sly.
So agile are their tongues, say I,
And so many lies do they tell
That none of them, though they are well
Endowed with bribes, can ever cease
From speaking ill, just as they please.
Though knowing naught of the matter,
Thus, they go about their chatter,
Ever displeased with some lover,
Envyng joy in another.
But for the moment let them be,
The Devil may have them, for free!
Hearken, now, and do as I say,
And never any distance stray
From your companion Largesse.
And adhere to Promise, no less,
Whom you will find has no equal
That dwells in the Love-God's castle.

For a small fee, Promise will do
As well as a scythe in August dew.
To give little, yet promise much,
Doth scarcely one's true master touch,
But guard your own self, above all,
From faithlessness, whate'er befall,
For once your promise is given
You must do as you were bidden.
As for Refusal, Rejection,
Deceive them, without compunction.
And when you are before Amor,
I will aid you, you may be sure:
I go now to seek Sweet Mercy,
And to speak to her privately,
On your behalf, for oft I call
On her, despite sour Refusal,
Who troubles her with grief, that same,
Yet he dares not deny my claim,
Nor stop me speaking to her there,
Whene'er I wish sweet speech to share,
Because that villain knows Amor
Will not suffer it, tis his law,
Who gives me full authority
To visit all his company,
All those folk whom he doth approve.
Refusal, Jealousy may move,
Yet with the aid of God on high
Mercy will not your suit deny,
Whom, I shall greet, as I say,
Though he thinks me far away.
Shame and Fear – God curse that pair –

I must plead with, in this affair,
For Refusal sends them ahead,
Such that they oft to those are led,
Wretched lovers, love makes so ill,
That, with ballads, whole sheets they fill,
And songs expressing their affection.
He, and his ally Rejection,
Thus, lay waste the whole country,
All Love's realm, as does Jealousy,
Who seeks to counter our defence,
Though she comes I know not from whence,
And has wrought Love ill; a mortal
Blow she deals to this Hospital,
For so many lovers she sends here,
I can scarcely house them, I fear,
Though twice the revenue I'd earn
If none of them I sought to spurn.
Also, she was the first to tell
(That hypocrite, I know so well!)
Refusal the news that there came
To this place, one, Coeur by name,
Who possessed a great desire
To win Sweet Mercy; news full dire.
Upon which, her two slanderers
Confirmed those very words of hers,
Without a hint of confusion.
Which brings me to my conclusion:
Come and breakfast, be not slow,
For, upon your quest, you must go.'

CHAPTER CXXIII: THE COMPANIONS PLEDGE TO AVENGE FAIR-WELCOME'S IMPRISONMENT

Listening to the speech that Lady Pity, the prioress, had addressed to them, Coeur and Desire were astonished to hear her speak of that hypocritical old dwarf Jealousy, whom they had left behind, some time ago, at the hermitage where she held Fair-Welcome captive, as the tale has told. Coeur could not prevent himself from asking Lady Pity whether Jealousy had recently arrived, and she replied that it must have been a week ago that Jealousy had re-joined Refusal's company.

Coeur and Desire ended the conversation with Lady Pity and talking between themselves agreed that, if they could find Jealousy, they would take revenge for her treacherous imprisonment of Fair-Welcome.

CHAPTER CXXIV: COEUR AND COMPANY SET OUT FOR THE CASTLE OF PLEASURE, PITY FOR THE HOUSE OF REBELLION

Pity now took Coeur by the hand and led him to breakfast; and when they had eaten and drunk enough, they took leave of Lady Pity, the prioress, and the Hospital's matron, Courtesy, thanking them for providing such excellent lodgings, as well as the good counsel that Lady Pity had given them. In departing, they passed through the Hospital, taking leave of the poor, sick lovers, several of whom they recognised, then took to the road, heading straight in the direction of the fair Castle of Pleasure, as Lady Pity had advised, in order to pay homage and reverence to the god of Love, and ask permission to win Sweet Mercy.

But for the moment the tale ceases to speak of them, and tells of Lady Pity, the prioress, so as to relate how, in order to aid Coeur, she went to the House of Refusal and Rejection, in order to speak to Sweet Mercy. At this point, the story says that, once the three companions, Coeur, Desire, and Largesse had taken leave of Lady Pity, the prioress, as you have heard, little time went by ere she took the road straight to that House of Rebellion, where she found Refusal at the door. He regarded her askance, spitefully, but she

did not hesitate to enter nonetheless, for Amor had conferred on her the power and authority to visit all those who were members of his company. But not without him protesting, for Refusal could not resist saying a few words in the following tone:

‘Where is this old woman going?
The Devil grant her what’s owing!
Though Sweet Mercy should trust in her,
By God, no good will it offer.’

CHAPTER CXXV: LADY PITY SEEKS OUT SWEET MERCY

Yet, for all that the false and rebellious villain, Refusal, could say, or rather mutter between his teeth, Lady pity entered nonetheless, and went straight to Sweet Mercy’s chamber, where she found Shame and Fear, who kept that chamber under surveillance. Also present were the two slanderers whom Ill-Talk had previously sent there, as the story explained. Beside them was Jealousy, telling tales of the trouble and ruin that in times past had come upon lovers, while the two slanderers hung upon her every word.

When they saw Lady Pity entering the room, their voices dropped, though they continued to mutter and chatter together, saying that the Devil must have led the old woman there. But Lady Pity, who had heard the gist of it, gave no sign, for she knew their evil manners well enough. Rather, she greeted Sweet Mercy, sat down beside her, and spoke to her in as hushed a tone as she could, such that Jealousy and the slanderers strained to hear her, and spoke to Sweet Mercy as follows:

**CHAPTER CXXV: AND TELLS
HER OF COEUR AND HIS QUEST**

'My most sweet and lovely daughter,
Sensible and noble ever,
I am much troubled and dismayed,
That you to prison are betrayed,
By Refusal, that false rebel,
And those who without a quibble
Support him, Fear and Jealousy,
And these slanderers, whom I see
With you; ten years in their presence,
And you'll not hear a word of sense;
Yet you a fair and lovely maid,
Sweet, kind, and not meant for the shade,
Are worthy to have, and not by chance,
The greatest lord that dwells in France.
Thus, it is, my fair maid, you see,
On account of your rare beauty,
A fine young lord has ventured here,
Whose name is Coeur, it would appear,
Who's suffered many an ill for you,
In private, and in public too,
For he has entered on a quest,
At his dear friend Desire's behest,
Seeking to win you, my maid,
Crossing the sea, all unafraid,
Though many a torment he met there,
I'll not deny, in this affair;
Many another brave feat too,

He has wrought, in battle for you.
Much has he suffered, that I know,
Scarce able to escape death's blow,
But he's a noble lad and true,
In form and face, both, fair to view,
Which shall serve his cause well here.
So do not hold your love so dear
That you would seek to send him hence;
He's well-deserved fair recompense.
And he has gone to seek Amor,
So as to gain his leave, what's more,
To try and win you, if he can,
Despite all those who'd thwart his plan.
Think then on what to him you'll say,
And how you'll answer him this day,
And to him be not ungracious,
Or harsh, or coy, or capricious,
For he'll not linger on the way,
But hasten here, and bring, I say,
With him, to keep him company
His noble friends, as you will see.'

CHAPTER CXXVI: SWEET MERCY BLUSHES ON HEARING OF COEUR

As the lovely Sweet Mercy listened to Lady Pity's words, she changed colour, seeming redder about the face than she was accustomed to appear, but this suited her so well that none on seeing her could have denied that she was the fairest being in all the world. And she thought, moreover, that he of whom Lady Pity spoke was that Coeur of whom Jealousy and the slanderers had talked: truly it must be him, for they had

often spoken ill of him, mocking this Coeur and the pains he had endured on his quest for her, saying that he was quite mad in seeking to come there.

CHAPTER CXXVII: SHE URGES LADY PITY TO HASTEN COEUR'S ARRIVAL

Hence, Sweet Mercy began to feel affection for Coeur in her thoughts, since Lady Pity had touched her heart in speaking of the pain and torment he had suffered on her behalf. But she did not dare speak in reply, for fear of Jealousy and the slanderers who were present. So, she took Pity by the hand and, pressing it hard, thereby signalled to the former to have Coeur hasten there as quickly as he could. Lady Pity then took her leave, preparing to quit that place, but not without inciting murmurs and scornful comments from the slanderers, regarding her lengthy meeting with Sweet Mercy.

But now the author ceases to speak of Pity and Sweet Mercy, along with Refusal and his accomplices, and renews the tale of the three companions, Coeur, Desire and Largesse, in order to relate a part of their adventures.

CHAPTER CXXVIII: COEUR AND HIS COMPANIONS REACH THE CASTLE OF PLEASURE

The tale tells that when the three companions, Coeur, Desire, and Largesse had taken leave of Lady Pity, and departed from Love's Hospital, as related previously, they took to the road on foot, lacking mounts if you recall, since they had given them to their servants when they embarked on their sea-crossing. They marched on until they reached the foot of the rock upon which sat the Castle of Pleasure.

The day was fine and clear, and the sun had reached that height corresponding to the hour of Tierce. The three companions raised their heads and gazed at the beautiful castle but they were so dazzled by the light reflected from the castle, struck as it was by the rays of the sun, that they

were quite confounded. It was hardly surprising, given the great beauty of that splendid fortress, which seemed rather a celestial or spiritual thing than a terrestrial one. And though no tongue could describe the great riches, marvels and beauties of that lovely place, the tale, nonetheless prepares to describe something of them, though by no means all, it being beyond the author's capability, but a part at least.



Jerusalem

Book of Hours, Use of Paris ('The Hours of René d'Anjou')

France, Central (Paris); c. 1410–c. 1414

British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CXXIX: A DESCRIPTION OF THE CHATEAU

The noble castle was sited upon a rock made of emerald, which was traversed by veins of natural diamond in such vast quantity that it seemed as much formed of diamond as emerald. The surface of the four walls of this lovely chateau were of crystal, and at each corner was a great tower made of pure, gleaming rubies, the least of which was larger than the whole of a man's body: and these towers were covered with large sheets of mother-of-pearl, the size of a hand, and the battlements between the aforesaid towers were covered with plates of pure gold, nobly enamelled with the Love-God's device, that is to say: 'With winged heart'. This device each one bears that is a faithful lover and a servant of Amor, wearing it beneath the left breast, and by this one ever recognises them.

Moreover, each tower was surmounted by a great garnet shaped like an apple, and the portal of the aforementioned lovely castle was formed of lozenge-shaped chalcedonies and agates, while at the highest point of the portal, adorning the summit, was a most splendid oriental pearl, as large as a cannonball, such that a man could not have clasped it in his arms.

This fair chateau was completely surrounded by a forward defensive wall made of sapphire, and to give a clearer idea of the place, it resembled, one might say, that of Saumur in Anjou, sited beside the Loire, except that in size and grandeur it was half as large and as spacious again. It was therefore no wonder, given the description relayed by the tale, that it shone brightly when the sunlight fell upon it. Although not half the beauty of the castle has been conveyed, the tale ceases to tell of it here, being unable to do so fully, and returns to our subject, that is, the fate of the three companions.

CHAPTER CXXX: THE THREE COMPANIONS REACH THE MAIN PORTAL

The tale now relates that Coeur, Desire and Largesse, after remaining in a state of stupefaction a moment, being dazed by the shining beauty of the chateau as indicated, came to themselves. And when their sight returned, they began to climb the rock by way of one of the veins

of diamond, though with a deal of suffering for the jagged surface pierced their shoes, and their feet beneath. They dared not look at the chateau above them because of its dazzling aspect, but persevered, so that in no great time they surmounted the rock and came to the first gateway, which was made of cypress and cedar wood, inlaid with ivory.

Since the gate was not closed, they passed beyond to the drawbridge, which was cloaked in shadow since the sunlight fell upon the gateway behind them, but it was a pleasing shade for the sun's rays played over the crystal of which the castle walls were made in such a manner that they escaped the previous dazzlement they had experienced. All three raised their eyes at once for they were desirous of viewing the wondrous beauty of the chateau.

They gazed at the splendour of the portal, which they had not viewed before, and saw, above the doorway, two large statues of yellow amber, adorned with alchemical gold derived in turn from the fifth element, the quintessence, and with precious stones, richly cut in relief. These statues each held a mirror, made from a large sheet of diamond, six feet in diameter, in which the gateway they had passed through was reflected. The names of these two statues were written at their foot: the one was Fantasy, and the other Imagination, and together, as mistresses of the work in hand, they had conceived and overseen the construction of the aforesaid chateau. And above each of their heads in large engraved letters was written:

Who e'er gazes in my mirror,
Yet is not a faithful lover,
The god of Love would have him know
He'll repent in an hour or so:
For ire, and grief, he'll have shortly,
That, in loving, deals but falsely,
And, openly revealed, he'll see
His lies and his deceptions here,
All his deceit and trickery.
Beware, if such a fate you fear!

CHAPTER CXXXI: FAIR-WELCOME GREETS THE THREE COMPANIONS

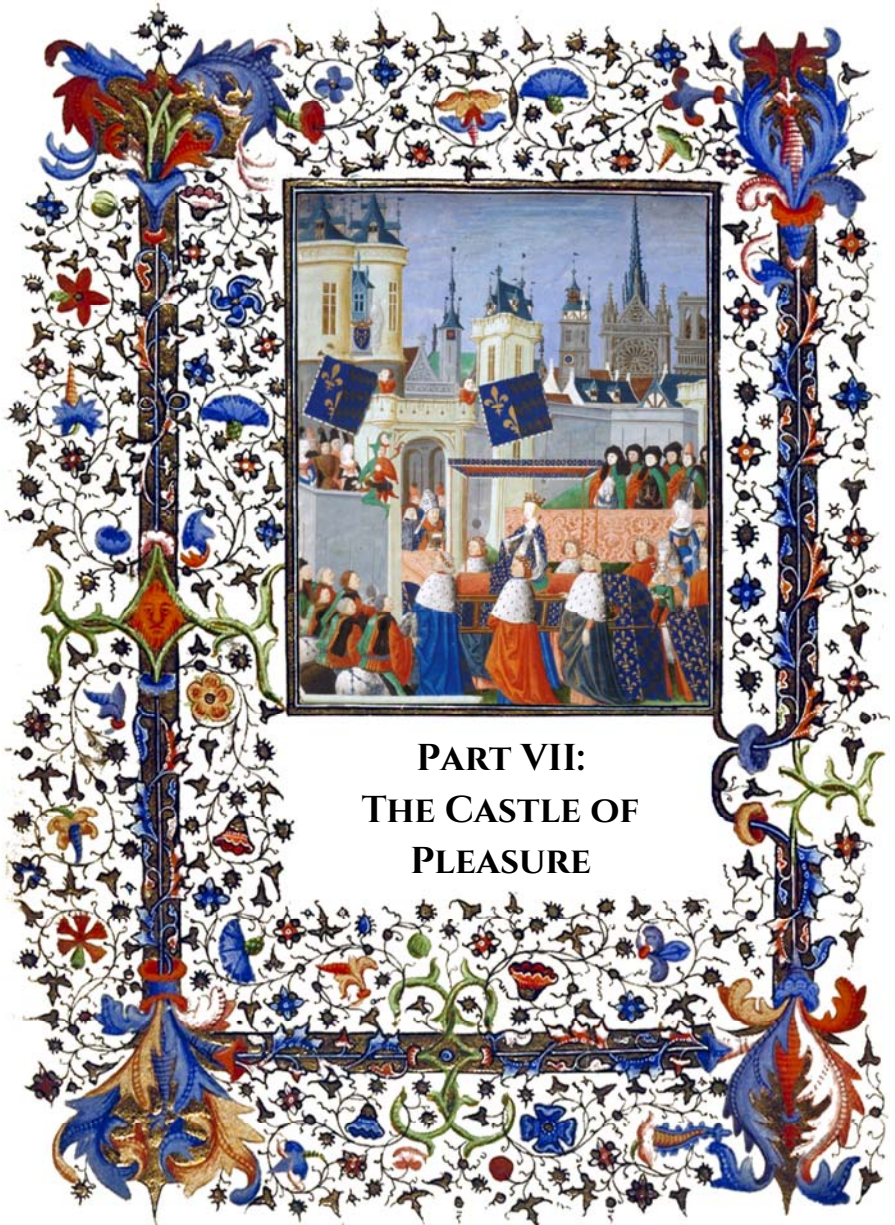
When the three companions, having reached the drawbridge before the Castle of Pleasure, had viewed the magnificent portal and the two statues above the gate, and read the statues' names, and the verses above their heads, they crossed the bridge, which was lowered, and gazed at the closed doors, wrought of ivory, which had been studded with gold, with consummate artistry. There they halted; Coeur could not refrain from reading the verse above the portal, nor could he remove his eyes from the two lovely statues. Desire then said to himself that Coeur was well caught, and had no means of escape from Amor.

Now, while they were giving their close attention to the two statues, and the mirrors the statues held, behold a handsome young man emerged from the wicket-gate in the ivory portal, bearing a white sparrowhawk on his fist. And if you ask me who he was, I reply that this was Fair-Welcome, the same whom Jealousy had held prisoner in the hermitage, and whom Lady Hope had since freed, as the tale previously related, and who had exited the gate to exercise and feed his hawk.

Desire recognised him on sight, having known him before, and he, in turn, recognised Desire. So, they embraced, congratulated each other, and were joyful. Then Desire presented Fair Welcome to Coeur, who was delighted to meet him. After this greeting from Fair-Welcome, Desire drew him aside a little and told him of their quest and the reason for their being there, begging him also to go to Amor and seek an audience for them, that Coeur might pay homage to the god, for he possessed the fervent wish to become Amor's servant, and remain in his service for evermore.



THE END OF PART VI OF 'LE LIVRE DU COEUR D'AMOUR ÉPRIS'



CHAPTER CXXXII: COEUR AND HIS COMPANIONS ENTER THE CASTLE OF PLEASURE

Fair-Welcome re-entered the castle leaving the wicket-gate open. He went to find Amor and told him of the three companions' arrival, and of the quest Coeur had undertaken at the behest of Desire, and of Coeur's wish to swear fealty and pay homage to him, and of the travails Coeur had undergone on his way to serve him. And Amor, who listened attentively, commanded that the companions be brought to him, for he knew that Coeur felt the effects of being struck by one of the arrows he had set in flight, and had heard that Coeur was a fine young man, and so wished to see him.

Fair-Welcome returned to the gate, swiftly, and summoned the three companions, who were still gazing at the noble portal of that splendid chateau and at the two statues, and the wondrous mirrors the statues held. Coeur admired all this to so great an extent that he almost forgot his aim of entering the castle and paying homage to the god of Love. But when they heard themselves summoned, they entered therein, and Fair-Welcome took Coeur by the hand and told him to come and speak with Amor.

When, on having passed through the first gate, they found themselves beneath the portal, Coeur perceived a large and ancient wicker-basket hanging from the vaulting above, such as was woven in former times, suspended by a golden chain as thick as one's arm. Coeur wondered what the purpose of that simple wooden basket might be, and why it was dangling from so magnificent a chain. As he was pondering on the aforementioned basket, his gaze fell upon a pair of rusted iron shears, about a foot and a half long, resembling those with which they shear the sheep at Berry. Between the jaws of these shears a large hank of hair was caught, black as earth, and six feet or more in length, hair which seemed more like that of a man than a woman, so thick, coarse, and heavy it appeared.

Gazing at it, thus, he was not slow to note that beside these shears, hanging from a golden chain was a large leather bridle and iron bit, a saddle and a pair of golden spurs, bound together and hanging from a like thick and solid golden chain. And further, there was also suspended there, attached by

two clasps of pure gold, a distaff wound with flax, with a spindle hanging by a thread at its side. Some distance away stood a large wooden statue, blackened by smoke like an idol, holding a sergeant's wand, and attached by the waist to a similar gold chain.

Once Coeur had spent a moment regarding the aforesaid statue with its wand, he raised his eyes and saw on high in a corner two blades set at right angles, hanging from two hooks of pure gold, thick, massive, heavy and marvellously solid. These shears were like those used for cutting silk cloth, while from one of the angles of these shears hung a beautiful basket, richly worked with precious stones, a panier of such a kind that one could not at first see why it hung beneath the blades, or more exactly from one of the angles, as you have heard. But I recall that it was full of skeins, and little spindles, wound with silk in diverse colours, and with little scissors, punches, rounded mallets, and other tools used in the production of silken cloth.

Coeur had not the time to inspect these things as he wished, yet could not rest without asking Fair-Welcome what the items signified. And Fair-Welcome, seeing Coeur's profound astonishment, could not help but smile, saying to Coeur:

CHAPTER CXXXII: THE MEANING OF THE OBJECTS DISPLAYED NEAR THE ENTRANCE

'O Coeur, who marvel to espy
These things, and seek the reason why
They hang, on high, here in this place,
And would learn, of my good grace,
What is their purpose, I shall tell;
In doing so, God aid me well.
The basket that you saw before,
Is the same one, you may be sure,
In which Virgil was suspended,
By a maid, who such intended;
And knew the means by which to lure

That mage within, furthermore,
Saying else he ne'er would see
What lay within so secretly.
And he, enamoured of that same
Entered in, and was much to blame,
For doing so, since she, thereon,
Hoisted him high, and then was gone,
Leaving the mage suspended there.
His wisdom proved not worth a hair,
While all the people came to view
Him thus suspended, as would you.
Amor it was punished him so,
For Virgil, I would have you know,
Esteemed as slight the Love-God's power,
Who left him there many an hour,
In that same basket, in this place.
It served him not, in his disgrace,
To be a mage, clerk, sage, I say,
For homage he was forced to pay,
While begging the god for mercy;
The basket, in his memory,
Will hang forever there, on high,
While o'er the earth yet wheels the sky.
The shears your viewed there, at its side,
Are those (by none is this denied)
With which brave Samson's locks were shorn,
Who from it died, his great strength torn
Away from him; thus did Amor;
Delilah, with the shears you saw,
Did the deed, and the man betrayed.
Love of vengeance Amor displayed,

And rightly so; he who would hear
The tale entire, tis long I fear,
Too long indeed for me to tell,
Nor will I, for you know it well,
You've heard it many times before,
I think, at least ten times or more.
Now the next you saw, the bridle,
Together with the ancient saddle,
Are those with which, around his yard,
Aristotle was ridden hard.
Love's sweetness the sage had scorned,
And so, despised, Amor, once warned,
Took vengeance through the cunning ruse
Of she who every wile did use
To set the saddle on him there,
Which saddle then her weight did bear,
While she gave her fine mount the spur,
This being so well done by her,
That all his science was worth naught;
By Amor he was truly caught,
For he, from wit and sense released,
Was ridden hard as any beast.
Recall the distaff that you saw;
The very same, you may be sure,
Was used by Sardanapalus,
His flax and spindle left to us.
He too, Amor, set down beside
The women, and curtailed the pride
The which had led him to misprize
The deeds of Love; before all eyes
He was brought to base subjection,

In the manner that I mention.
A little further on, you viewed
The idol, somewhat roughly hewed,
That Solomon worshipped, of old,
With his wives, till his blood grew cold.
Amor humbled him in this guise,
For all that he was thought so wise.
And so he was, most certainly,
Yet there is none, though great he be,
So full of science, or majesty,
That Love gains not the victory.
The rest that hangs there, you should know,
The shears and basket, there on show,
From those golden hooks suspended,
As a warning are intended,
For such these objects signify.
Listen to me, and I will try,
Ere I shall depart this place
To give the reasons, with God's grace,
As to why they are hanging here:
The shears and basket, in the air,
The spindles, tools, and silken thread,
Whose clear meaning fills my head.
And ensure, that when I'm done,
Understanding you'll have won,
And a warning taken to heart.
So, hark to me, ere I depart,
For I will seek the truth to tell,
And trust that you will listen well.
You should know that midst the brave
That ever their attention gave

To valour, and to deeds of arms,
Midst those men whose coats-of-arms
And skill was held in high esteem,
One of the best, so wise men deem,
Was brave and noble Hercules,
The tales of whom will ever please,
So full was he of steadfastness,
Of strength, and skill, and sheer prowess.
Who would set out to tell his tale,
Must speak until their voice doth fail.
He wrought many a valiant deed,
Many, in combat, he saw concede;
Lion or boar, he held his ground,
And so despatched all that he found.
And yet it came about one day,
That his proud heart he gave away
To the queen, Omphale the fair,
For whom the flames of Love did flare
So brightly within that proud heart,
That he forgot the soldier's art,
Tourney and battles, and fierce war,
In lance and charger set no store,
So foolish in his love for her
That as her fool he did caper.
Merely to breathe her breath so sweet,
He carded wool, sat at her feet,
Or cut a silk thread for that same,
Whene'er instructed by the dame.
Such is the tale that's signified
By the basket and shears beside:
He was so enamoured indeed

That he learnt, as she decreed,
All the science of weaving there.
He, entangled in that affair
By Amor, she set to weaving
Fine fabrics of her conceiving,
Which Hercules need not, surely,
Were it not for that mad folly
Urged on him by Amor, have done;
Though tis the fate of many a one.
Such is the meaning, so beware,
Of the shears you see hanging there.'

CHAPTER CXXXIII: THE COMPANY MEET WITH LADY IDLENESS

At this point, the tale relates that after hearing Fair-Welcome's explanation as previously presented, namely that it is the cleverest and the strongest who are most often ensnared, Fair-Welcome began to smile, prompting the others to do likewise, and they continued their progress so. Coeur whispered in Desire's ear, asking the latter to speak on his behalf before Amor, since he was so anxious, and his heart so agitated that he himself would prove unable to speak a word. Desire indicated that he would do so willingly.

They all walked on together, Fair-Welcome leading, followed by Desire, Coeur and Largesse. They exited from the passageway into a large square courtyard, broad and spacious, and paved with little blocks of jasper each a foot square, some red, some green and some white: a prospect wondrous to view, so highly polished was the jasper and its colours so bright and pleasant to the eye. In the midst of this courtyard, there was a square fountain, wrought from a similar crystal to that of the castle-walls: the pieces of crystal held by clasps of pure gold. And at the centre of the fountain was a great golden basin enamelled and adored with gems, into which the water tumbled before falling to the square crystal-clad base. The water gushed from the beak

of a gold phoenix enamelled in white. Beneath this had been fashioned glowing embers also in gold, in which rubies were encased (hundreds of thousands, I believe) such that the embers were reflected so resplendently in the water it seemed as deeply red in colour as a fine claret.

Close to this fountain Coeur perceived a most lovely lady, young and of noble form, richly dressed and sumptuously adorned. Nonetheless, she appeared to possess one fault: namely that, considering the nature and artistry of her appearance, she seemed a little too casual in manner. She held a noble falcon on her fist, which she seemed to cherish more than anything, and in fact, the noble and gracious falcon seemed most pampered, for it made no move to fly, nor appeared troubled by anything it viewed.

The lady seemingly desirous of bathing the hawk in the fountain, saw, at that moment, Fair-Welcome followed by the three companions walking towards her. When they were so close that they might have touched her, Fair-Welcome bowed, as did the others, while she took several paces and came to embrace them, wishing them welcome. They halted thus beside the fountain with the lady, Idleness, asking her for news of what the god of Love might be doing at that moment.

Lady Idleness replied that the god of Love, her lord, was at that time in close counsel, and with none but his mother principally, though two of the most privileged and trusted of his counsellors and a secretary were present: that, at least, was in truth what she had heard in his mother Venus' chamber, which she had recently left so she might bathe her falcon in the fountain. Coeur now advanced, dipped his hand in the water, and touched it to his mouth. He perceived by its perfumed odour that it was nothing other than rose-water, perfectly pure, at which he wondered greatly. Lady Idleness, seeing his astonishment, took him smilingly by the hand, saying that he ought not to be so astonished, for within the lovely chateau there was many another outstanding marvel, greatly surpassing this; and if he wished to see a more wondrous thing still, she would show it to him.

Coeur then begged her, in God's name, to reveal it, desirous as he was of viewing and hearing all he could as regards things marvellous and strange.



A queen with four women playing musical instruments

Giovanni Boccaccio, in anonymous French translation (*Le livre de femmes nobles et renomées*)

France, N. (Rouen) c. 1440

British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CXXXIII: THEY ENCOUNTER TWO SIRENS

Speaking with them thus, Lady Idleness began to walk in company with Fair-Welcome and Coeur, followed by Desire and Largesse. They had not ventured more than thirty or forty paces, beside a rivulet that flowed from the lovely fountain and bordered the courtyard, when they came to a square basin, of two lance-lengths at least on each side, filled with the fountain's water to nigh on a foot below the edge, which held a pair of tame,

domesticated Sirens who approached people when summoned by whistling. Lady Idleness, being used to whistling thus, or calling, to them to draw them near, did the latter, and one of them, with the bearded face, hair and eyebrows of a man, instantly approached, while the other was not slow in following. The latter had a sweet and lovely face, lacking a beard, and without, in truth, the least fuzz on her chin. The golden threads of her hair descended to the water's surface, and floated upon it to the length of a foot or so; moreover, she had shapely breasts, firm and pointed, and rounded arms, while in her hand she held a little flower, which she bit upon as though she was about to amuse herself by eating it.

Idleness and Fair Welcome called to them, and indicated that they should sing to the company. And, in less time than one could say a paternoster, the manly one of the two began to sing a melody in a bass voice, followed by the female who provided the upper voice in a sweet, clear tone, most agreeable to hear; the two voices seeming truly in harmony with the heavens. The text they uttered the author knew not, and speaks not of, and in truth Coeur knew not what language they sang in.

CHAPTER CXXXIII: FAIR-WELCOME PRESENTS COEUR TO THE GOD OF LOVE.

After remaining there awhile, the company advanced further and saw a dovecote of pure silver set upon four chalcedony and agate columns, while from it rose a host, a countless flock, of green parakeets, which then flew back to it in the way doves will return to such a dovecote. Coeur begged Fair Welcome and Lady Idleness to tell him why the god of Love had given over the dovecote to parakeets rather than to doves, since the flesh of doves and pigeons made far better eating than that of parakeets, without considering that it was a great shame to eat such beautiful birds as parakeets. To which Lady Idleness replied that the nature, as well as the rank, of her sovereign lord, the god of Love, obliged him to feed on the hearts of parakeets, to maintain his strength, a thing which his doctor of medicine, Comfort, encouraged him in; it was for that reason that Amor stocked his dovecote with so many.

At this, Coeur fell silent and grew pensive, while none of the others at that moment uttered the least word. But, after a short while, the cupbearer to the god of Love, Sigh, who was charged with bringing water to his master, was heard calling instructions to the cooks. Fair-Welcome now took Coeur by the sleeve and advanced, saying that it was time to go and pay reverence to the god of Love, who had emerged from council. So, they entered the great hall, to which Amor had already repaired, magnificently dressed in his royal robes. Grasping a Turkish bow in his hand, he was amusing himself by sending a host of feathered arrows flying through the open windows of the hall, careless of where they landed. But on seeing Fair-Welcome, hand-in-hand with Coeur, walking directly towards him, he advanced two paces, while Fair-Welcome set one knee to the floor, as did Coeur and his companions, and addressed the god of Love, saying:

CHAPTER CXXXIII: FAIR-WELCOME ADDRESSES AMOR

‘Sire, news I bring to you, once more:
Finding these travellers at the door,
They have asked, nay begged of me,
If I to them a friend would be,
To lead them to you, whom they seek,
For tis to you that they would speak.
See here is Coeur, a man of sense,
He humbly sought this audience,
To pay you homage, while the rest
You know full well, I would suggest.
For, by God, I’d prove no liar
Were I to claim that brave Desire
Is your good servant; every pain
He takes, to lead to your domain
Such folk, and tis at his behest
That Coeur set out upon his quest.’

CHAPTER CXXXIV: AMOR REPLIES TO FAIR-WELCOME

And when the three companions had paid reverence to the god of Love, he inclined his head towards them, held out his hand to each in turn, and bade them rise. Then he replied to Fair-Welcome's opening words, and spoke in the following fashion:

'Long have we known that brave Desire
Is our good servant, and no higher
Praise can I give than saying that he
Seeks out our comfort, endlessly;
Prompt and eager, wise and steady,
To work our bidding, always ready.'

CHAPTER CXXXV: COEUR ASKS DESIRE TO PRESENT HIS REQUEST, WHICH HE DOES

Then Coeur signalled to Desire to pursue his request, and speak to Amor on his behalf. All three knelt, Desire that is, Coeur and Largesse, and Desire spoke to the god of Love, saying:

'Most excellent high prince and lord,
All-powerful sovereign, e'er assured
Of our obedience, for your power
Rules o'er we mortals, truly. Our
Fate, it proves, without exception,
This or that side of the ocean,
At least once in our lives, to fall
Beneath your harsh yoke, one and all.
See Coeur here, who, at my behest,
Set out boldly upon a quest,

That of winning fair Sweet Mercy,
If you will permit it; humbly,
He asks that you grant him licence,
And here will make you obeisance,
Swear allegiance, and homage pay,
Which shows true wisdom, and today
Seeks counsel, if it pleases you,
As to what he might say or do
To win Sweet Mercy, and this he
Asks, too, with due humility.
And he seeks, that he might succeed,
Your fair company's aid, at need.
For Mercy is ensnared, we see,
By a false, savage company.
Refusal is e'er a rebel,
And Jealousy proves so cruel,
Rejection shows scant more grace
Nor the slanderers, in that place.
If Coeur were to offer battle,
He'd risk death, despite his mettle,
Or wounding, of a certainty,
Were he devoid of company,
While I know that if we possess
The force we need, then success
Soon must follow, and ill they'll fare,
Refusal and Rejection, there.
And all their wretched company.
By my faith, they'll but fail and flee;
Believe me, whether wrong or right,
We'll slay them all, and end the fight!
Never have they done ought but harm,

To those whom love's delights do charm,
Thus, your prerogative, flouting,
Many a sacrilege, committing;
For the noble Hospital of Love
They attacked, and false did prove.
If tis pleasing to you, consent,
And so, bless Coeur's humble intent.'

CHAPTER CXXXVI: THE LOVE-GOD GIVES HIS REPLY

When Desire ended his speech, having communicated Coeur's request, the god of Love began to smile, and nodding his head, replied as follows:

'Desire, you are as bold as ever!
You never alter in your manner,
Ever as ardent and as eager,
And as daring, in your nature.
Tis not right for any of you
To threaten others in my purview.
Refusal is of our company,
And Rejection belongs to me;
We think naught of the slanderers.
Jealousy? We seek naught of hers.
Leave this boasting to another!
Talk to me of something other:
After hearing your petition,
Regarding Coeur's proposition
To grant him leave, you'll understand,
His request is no slight demand.

We must seek the wise advice
Of our good Council, and think twice.
I'll speak to Venus, my mother,
To whom my love is owed ever.
Now to our dinner we must go,
Then we'll gather, and you shall know.'

CHAPTER CXXXVII: AMOR TAKES COUNSEL; COEUR VIEWS THE TAPESTRIES

Then Amor took Coeur by the hand, since he wished to know him better, and lead him and his companions into a reception room and had them dine in his presence. Ask not if they were served many good and appetising things. And while they conversed and told their tale, a young man appeared who told Amor that Lady Pity, the prioress of the Hospital of Love, had arrived. Amor replied that she was most welcome there, and ordered her to be led to his mother Venus, an order no sooner given than executed.

They ate and drank at their ease, and when they had finished dining and rendered thanks, behold Honour entered, accompanied by Renown, Valour, Humble-Request, and several other lords, who had joined the army gathered to counter Ill-Talk and the slanderers: they had come to learn what he wished them to do. They saluted him, and he greeted them in turn, and welcomed them most warmly. Above all others, Coeur and Desire welcomed them most gladly, rejoicing greatly, as well as Largesse who had known them a long while, And Coeur thanked them for the great courtesy they had done him in freeing him from Sadness and Trouble's prison, and in their presence related the tale of that deed from end to end.

Lady Venus soon entered the chamber, as she was in the habit of visiting her son, the god of Love, after dining, who showed her great reverence. After a moment, she drew him aside, and called to Lady Pity who had joined her. Then she summoned to her Loyalty, Honour, Renown, Valour, Fair-Welcome and several members of his Council, and sent the rest away. Coeur and his companions then walked about the room.

Part VII: The Castle of Pleasure

The tale ceases to speak of the god of Love for the moment, who was now holding Council, in order to describe, in detail, the aforesaid room and the tapestries hung upon its walls, and turns to Coeur to relate what he saw there. Firstly, the room was paved with squares of topaz, emerald, ruby, and sapphire, arranged in mosaic with motifs of personages and flowers, accompanied by Greek or Arabic lettering. The benches and chairs were of pure gold, the tables and trestles of silver.

The room contained ten great silken tapestries, ornamented with gold thread, woven in the style of Arras. On the first tapestry situated near the seats of honour, the personage and lettering displayed were as follows:



A court gathered in a room decorated with tapestries
Jehan Froissart, *Chroniques*: Netherlands, S.; Last quarter of the 15th century
British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE DETAILS OF THE FIRST TAPESTRY: IDLENESS AND YOUTH

‘My true name is Idleness, first go I,
Bearing the banner of Amor on high,
For tis most fitting that I must, and do,
Owning no pleasure but to sport anew.
My face is ever joyous, and gay, likewise,
I am ready to sing, and dance, and play,
My long train carried by Youth, who, I say,
Loves to serve me, and praise me to the skies.’

CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE SECOND TAPESTRY: SWEET-GLANCE AND FAIR-SEEMING

To the left of this tapestry was another, woven in an identical style and manner, though differing in the personages and lettering, which ran as follows:

‘I am a noble archer, courteous ever,
Named Sweet-Glance, Fair-Seeming is this other,
Charged with firing a dart from laughing eyes.
Beware who must, when taken by surprise;
Whether in play or no, I grant no mercy,
Be he young or aged, wealthy or poor.
Thus, in the end, none shall escape the law
Amor ordained, and it too pleases me.’

CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE THIRD TAPESTRY: PLEASURE

The third tapestry displayed this lettering beneath it:

‘I am called Pleasure. While there is no need,
Since Foolish Presumption, who pays no heed,
Oft clasps my heart to his, in joyous folly,
I serve, a slave, a captive totally,
My all held by more than a mere finger.
Amor grants it so, to whom I am bound,
Else the sweet, fair, and loving, I have found,
Will love me not, nor adore me ever.’

CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE FOURTH TAPESTRY: ARDENT DESIRE

The lettering beneath the fourth tapestry read:

‘Ardent Desire am I, blindly I go,
Without a staff, and where? I do not know;
Yet following after Vain Hope, as you see,
Knowing not why, but that I, endlessly
Trust all will be well; for at the sound
Of her sweet voice, I forever advance.
Amor wishes it; tis his ordinance,
Though no reason for it have I e’er found.’

**CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE FIFTH TAPESTRY:
MEMORY AND DEEP THOUGHT**

‘Memory I am called; deep Thought and I,
We forge without cease, as you here can spy,
(Of sprays of columbine, and sighs, ever
On pain’s anvil, and with effort’s hammer,
For lovers whose lady shows no mercy)
Chaplets of drooping flowers; you may dismiss
This if you will, in your dreams of bliss,
But such is Love’s reward; thus, it must be.’

**CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE SIXTH TAPESTRY:
PRESUMPTION AND ILLUSION**

‘Presumption am I, and here’s Illusion:
We two come her with the sole intention
Of catching cranes, if we but can, in flight
Tis why we run and leap, so that we might
Seize them in the end, in our mad folly.
Yet when we fail to capture them, Amor
Bids us not repent, but go seek the more,
Saying we’ll gain the prize, eventually.’

CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE SEVENTH TAPESTRY: WILL

‘Will is my name; from the amorous heart
Proud and haughty, ever I draw apart,
And rightly complain, in my discontent,
That others think me weak and impotent;

And ever I show a fierce and hostile face,
Through Incapacity who leads me on,
So feeble and so miserable a one,
That I am grieved to find him in this place.'

CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE EIGHTH TAPESTRY: DELIGHT

'Delight am I; playful, smiling ever,
Joyous, and gay, and so grieving never,
Demanding naught else but to feast and play,
Though tis denied, for Grief must cry and bray
And fill my ears with many a grievous sigh,
Whenever he sees me fit for pleasure.
Wrongly, thwarting me, in no small measure,
Saying that I must ever have him by.'

CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE NINTH TAPESTRY: FOLLY

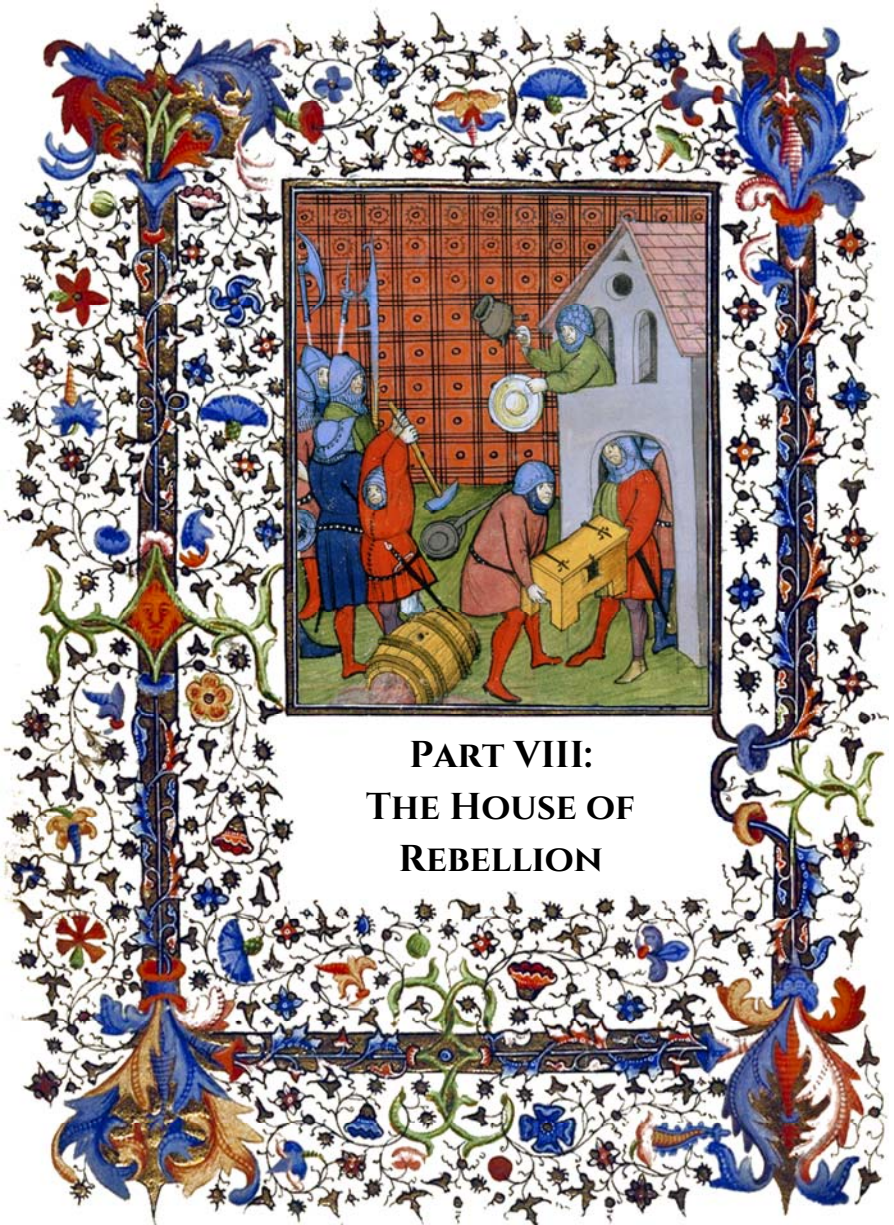
'Folly, I am called, who changes the face
Of Reason, till she, in every place,
Displays a foolish visage, seeming mad.
So as to make her love what may be had,
I flatter her with lies, and suborn her
With smooth and oily words, sweeter than balm,
So that she seeks love, where there is but charm,
Wasting her time, misleading her ever.'

CHAPTER CXXXVII: THE TENTH TAPESTRY: REASON

'Reason am I, who wrongly am condemned
To be set next the door, without a friend,
Such that none hear the slightest news of me.
Love, Youth and Idleness do this, you see;
Memory, Thought, Illusion, take their lead,
And rebellious Will, and foolish Pleasure,
And Desire, seeking for hidden treasure,
Calling on Vain Hope, paying me no heed.'



THE END OF PART VII OF 'LE LIVRE DU COEUR D'AMOUR ÉPRIS'



**PART VIII:
THE HOUSE OF
REBELLION**

CHAPTER CXXXVIII: AMOR GRANTS COEUR THE PERMISSION HE SEEKS

There were no other tapestries hanging in the aforesaid salon, though there was a wall-hanging, and a canopy above the table, whose curtains of golden cramoisy, stretched above the seats of honour, were wondrously luxurious. Having described the room, the tale recommences by speaking of Amor, who had gathered his Council. He first asked advice of his mother, Lady Venus, then of the others in order, regarding Coeur's request, conveyed to him by Desire, as you have heard. Their counsel having been given, they rendered their final conclusion: that Coeur be retained in Amor's service, for he was worthy of serving at a royal court, while all thought he would prove a good and loyal servant, and valiant moreover, while he had shown, as to the quest, that he had undertaken it solely at Desire's behest.

However, they were all of the thinking that Amor should make Coeur swear on oath to serve him faithfully, and to observe his commandments scrupulously. That being done, it seemed to them that Amor should grant Coeur permission to win Sweet Mercy, and be accompanied by several of Amor's friends, but should absolutely forbid him to slay Refusal or Rejection, since they were of Amor's court, rebellious and little loved though they were; for, if they were not so, too many people would trouble Amor. However, there was no problem in him giving them a good beating to render them more amiable. As for Jealousy, and the slanderers, let him put them to death if he could capture them, for they had ever been, and were yet, a source of every manner of harm to Amor and his company.

This being their conclusion, it was decreed that Honour, the most prominent among them, should announce that same. So, Coeur and his companions were summoned. They knelt before Amor, but he made them rise and commanded Honour to inform them of his decision, having taken the advice of his counsel.

Honour bowed, and then began to relate, in an ordered and most rhetorical manner, all that had been discussed, and agreed. Coeur thanked

Amor most humbly, but he was not pleased, nor was Desire, to be forbidden from slaying Refusal and Rejection, for it seemed to them that, while that pair lived, they could not achieve their quest as they wished. Nonetheless, pleased or no, Coeur knelt, having saluted Lady Venus reverently, and addressed Amor in the following manner:

‘High and puissant god, of old,
Lord on earth, to whom I hold,
I thank your grace, and most humbly,
Yet am not contented, wholly,
For it seems quite wrong to me,
That they should not cease to be,
Vile Refusal and Rejection,
Both in need of swift correction.
Yet patience is, I understand,
Required of me; tis your command.
It nonetheless, seems a marvel,
That such is your word and counsel:
Refusal your servant ever,
And Rejection. Tis but error,
Surely, for if that pair were dead
All faithful lovers would instead
Of seeking, as I, for mercy,
Obtain such far less painfully.
But let that go. I beg of you,
Grant me certain of your friends,
For on their aid my quest depends,
And let those same accompany me.
I ask of you, in amity,
First Pity, then Fair-Welcome too,
To aid the task that I pursue,

And lend me Promise, for Pity,
Advised the same, most strongly,
When she counselled me to seek
Your court, else my fate is bleak.
Of your grace, let Humble-Request
Accompany me, on my quest.
Then grant me leave to go, my lord;
Delay I cannot long afford.'

CHAPTER CXXXIX: COEUR SWEARS TO SERVE THE GOD OF LOVE

Then Amor began to smile, and said to himself that Coeur was somewhat hot and hasty. He consulted his Council, whose assessment was that Coeur had not asked for any of Amor's people who could not readily be spared; and so, it was decreed that Loyalty, in the name of the god of Love, should receive Coeur's oath, whereby he would pledge good and faithful service to Amor and undertake, henceforth, to respect his commandments. Loyalty then took up a book, had Coeur place his hand upon it and received his oath, expressed in these terms:

'Coeur, swear and promise, here this day,
Always, faithfully, to obey
And serve the god of Love, ever,
From this duty failing never;
And flee from Chastity, in winter,
As swiftly as in full summer;
And exercise your intellect
In showing Love your due respect.
If his commandments you would know,
Read all, and understanding show,

Of the fair *Romance of the Rose*,
That doth the art of love enclose;
For you'll find within all the ten
Commands he has imposed on men.
Take good care to study it well,
For it will serve all doubts to quell.
Flee, too, the wicked slanderers,
For harm they'll do to you, those curs;
And guard yourself from Jealousy
Ever a cunning enemy.
Evil to him who slays them not,
When captivity proves their lot!
Yet vengeance, in this connection,
On Refusal and Rejection
You must not take, nor Fear nor Shame;
Amor would have you spare those same,
For he has long enjoined them to
Spare no pains, but keep in view
Sweet Mercy, and so guard her well.
The reason for it, I shall tell:
Too many suitors she would find
Annoying her, time out of mind.
As to four blows from your baton,
Amor would care not a button,
Tis the right reward, of old,
For those who do more than they're told.
Amor welcomes your fealty:
Now, bow to him on bended knee,
As a sign of your reverence,
And of your true obedience,
And certain of his company,

The Book of the Heart Seized by Love

He will lend you, presently,
(All those that I have heard you name),
To aid your just and valiant aim.'



The castle of Jealousy

Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung (*Roman de la Rose*)

Netherlands, S. (Bruges) c. 1490–c. 1500

British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CXL: THE VENUS TAPESTRIES

Then Amor summoned Lady Pity, Fair-Welcome, Promise, and Humble-Request, and ordered them to go with Coeur on his quest to win Sweet Mercy, for he had suffered enough distress, and it was high time that he was rewarded in that fashion. Yet they must guard themselves from doing anything contrary to that which Loyalty had said, a requirement to which Lady Pity, Fair-Welcome, Promise and Humble-Request willingly agreed.

It was time for supper, and Lady Venus wished to retire to her chamber; though, first of all, the companions in quest of Sweet Mercy took their leave of her, since they wished to depart early in order to carry out their undertaking. Signalling her agreement, she took each by the hand and commended them benignly to God. Then she walked directly towards her chamber, in a remarkably elegant manner. I can say naught of her apparel, for reasons of brevity, but also because I am incapable of describing them correctly; but I can at least assure you that she was beautiful, and arrayed like a goddess.

The tapestries in her chamber were all of satin cramoisy, embroidered with pure gold and pearls, depicting various personages, and displaying a verse regarding each, as follows:

CHAPTER CXL: THE FIRST TAPESTRY: PLEASANT-MANNER AND FRIENDLY-COUNTENANCE

‘Pleasant-Manner and Friendly-Countenance
Snare true hearts in memory’s net, where they
Make sad hearts languish, on mere sufferance,
Ere they win ease (not simply tolerance),
Lost in pensive sadness, many a day.’

**CHAPTER CXL: THE SECOND TAPESTRY:
YOUTH, BEAUTY AND IDLENESS**

‘Youth and Beauty, their time have wasted not:
In the form of Idleness, their taut net
They have extended jointly, in this spot,
So strongly are they bent, no wiles forgot,
In trapping winged hearts, aloft as yet.’

**CHAPTER CXL: THE THIRD TAPESTRY:
JOYFUL-MIEN AND GRACIOUS-WELCOME**

Joyful-Mien and then Gracious-Welcome
Tie the feet with bonds of acquaintance,
Thus, sweetly, they make loving hearts become
Their willing servants by a ruse, in sum
They capture them, with ne’er a remonstrance.’

**CHAPTER CXL: THE FOURTH TAPESTRY:
FRIENDLY-MIEN AND COURTEOUS-MANNER**

‘Friendly-Mien and fair Courteous-Manner,
At the left side of Seductive-Seeming,
Have set their net at the oak-wood’s corner,
Awaiting the appointed hour, as ever,
When some frail winged heart comes flying.’

**CHAPTER CXL: THE FIFTH TAPESTRY:
FOOLISH-PRESUMPTION AND HOPE**

‘Here, with fondest Hope, Foolish-Presumption,
Expecting some poor heart to flutter by,
Has limed a branch, on high, with illusion;
And what chance now, in its wild confusion,
Has that lost heart to free itself, and fly?’

**CHAPTER CXL: THE SIXTH TAPESTRY:
SADNESS AND GRIEF**

‘Sadness and Grief own cages wrought of sighs,
And woven with the flowers of columbine,
In which many a winged heart now lies,
And these they make to sing, e’er their demise,
Notes of woe that those strong bars entwine.’

**CHAPTER CXL: THE SEVENTH TAPESTRY:
ROGER BON-TEMPS**

‘Seeing all these simple hearts thus caught,
And then ill-treated for their foolishness,
With none to pity their mistake, in short,
I withdrew my heart, and freedom sought,
To set it far from care, and from excess.’

**CHAPTER CXL: THE EIGHTH TAPESTRY:
AN ELDERLY SAGE**

'I count this Roger Bon-Temps, here, as wise.
He who, in good time, withdrew his heart,
That, in Amor's glade, taken by surprise,
He might not be so caught, nor plucked likewise,
Midst many another, trapped with subtle art.'



A hermit instructing a squire

Jean de Courcy, Alain Chartier, Romon Lull, Christine de Pisan (*Le Chemin de Vaillance*)

Netherlands, S. (Bruges), before 1483

British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CXLI: THE COMPANIONS DINE WITH AMOR, AND THEN TAKE THEIR REST

Here, the tale relates that Amor delayed not in commanding that the tables be laid, which order was executed swiftly by those assigned to the task. Amor had Honour dine at his table, with the companions of the quest opposite him, and ask me not if they were well served. After dining, once the tables had been removed and thanks rendered, Amor conversed awhile with the companions. Then he ordered that a bed-chamber be prepared so they might take some rest, and that the castle gates be opened for them the next morning, for he knew that they wished to leave at an early hour, and that Coeur and Desire were impatient to be on their way. All was done according to his command, and with this the companions took leave of Amor and wished him goodnight, and Amor, in turn, saluted them in commending them benignly to God.

They withdrew, and retired to sleep, all three in the one room, in order that they might rise together and ready themselves quickly in the morning. But first they arranged for a Mass to be said at dawn, and Largesse slipped a few coins into three or four purses, as judged necessary. Then they lay down to rest, and having talked of their enterprise awhile, they slept till the break of day.

CHAPTER CXLII: LADY PITY AND FAIR-WELCOME ARRIVE AT THE HOUSE OF REBELLION

At dawn, Desire was the first to wake, and called to his companions, then he went to Lady Pity's door to call to her. The latter rose and readied herself, immediately, while Desire, returning to the room in which he had slept, found his companions dressed for attending Mass. They then walked off together, passing by the room of Lady Pity, to whom they wished good morning, she returning their salute and going with them to hear the Mass.

Once the Mass had been said, they left the Castle of Pleasure and went, on foot, in the direction of the House of Rebellion, where Sweet Mercy might be found. The aforesaid place was no more than two miles or so from the castle, less than a league certainly.

Coeur and Desire ordered Pity and Fair-Welcome to go on ahead and agreed that Fair Welcome would re-join them to inform them of Sweet Mercy's attitude towards them, even though Lady Pity had already indicated her favourable disposition towards Coeur and Desire on the last occasion she had visited her. She set out on the road immediately, accompanied by Fair-Welcome, and they walked so swiftly that in but a little time they arrived at the House of Rebellion. They found Resistance at the door, having already risen, for he took great care in the guarding of Sweet Mercy. On seeing Lady Pity and Fair-Welcome, he bristled with indignation, wrinkled his brow, and could not refrain from speaking, as follows:

CHAPTER CXLII: RESISTANCE ADDRESSES THEM

'Behold, this vile old mackerel,
Come here looking for a quarrell
The Devil take her, if he chooses!
Yet her time she merely loses,
As does, indeed, this youth also,
Fair-Welcome, who plays the beau,
And keeps the crone good company.
If they were not of Amor's party,
This pair would never enter here.
For they'd ne'er guard it well, I fear.'

CHAPTER CXLIII: FAIR-WELCOME MAKES REPLY

Fair-Welcome gazed at him, reddening with anger, and could not help replying in these terms:

'Be silent, rebellious villain!
Never a fair word, tis certain,
Ever leaves your lips, say I.
What concerns you not, you cry
Aloud; now let us pass swiftly,
For we would speak with Sweet Mercy.'

CHAPTER CXLIV: HE RETURNS WITH NEWS, AND COEUR ADVANCES ON THE HOUSE OF REBELLION

With this, they entered the mansion, and went straight to Sweet Mercy's chamber, who reddened when she saw Lady Pity. But she dared not say a word because of Shame and Fear who were watching her closely, as were Jealousy and the slanderers who were present. Then Lady Pity sat down beside her, and asked how she had done since the last time she had seen her. She added, in a whisper, that Coeur, of whom she had spoken the other day, was on his way and would soon be there. Sweet Mercy blushed more deeply, which was perceived by the slanderers, who told Shame and Fear of it, and ran off to announce that same to Refusal and Rejection.

Lady Pity demanded the greatest possible discretion of Sweet Mercy, if she wished to send a message to Coeur, her true friend; saying that she could do so by means of Fair-Welcome, who would return to Coeur promptly. Sweet Mercy indicated to Fair-Welcome that Coeur should come to her as soon as possible; she dared not speak in other than a whisper, being so closely watched.

Fair-Welcome then left Sweet Mercy's presence, leaving Lady Pity with her, and went in haste to re-join Coeur and the other companions whom he found already but a crossbow-shot distant from the mansion. With a glad countenance he gave the news, announcing how he and Lady Pity had found Sweet Mercy, who awaited his arrival with eagerness. Yet they must be prudent, for Refusal, Rejection, Jealousy and the slanderers, with Shame and Fear were ever watchful, within the mansion, and they suspected, so he thought, that Coeur would soon be there.

So, each raised the stave with which they had been furnished before leaving the Castle of Pleasure, and Coeur gazed on his good sword and hauberk, as well as his steel helm, which he was never without, and said to himself that he would give Jealousy and the slanderers a deal of trouble if he met with them. Once each had taken up their stave, as best they could, they advanced on the mansion together, and, in but a little time, were at the door of the House of Rebellion, where they found Refusal, who was awaiting their arrival, clad in an old thickly-woven vest, his head covered by a rusted bassinet, of ancient design. He was fat and ugly, deformed and hideous, and had the look of a rebellious individual of ill character. He held in his hand a large branch cut from a medlar, and was full of anger and discontent, and ready to fight. Desire spoke first, addressing him in these words:

‘Refusal, we must enter here,
For we would wish, be it clear,
To speak awhile with Sweet Mercy
Whom we have all come to see.’

CHAPTER CXLV: REFUSAL REPLIES TO DESIRE’S CHALLENGE

On hearing this, Refusal gazed at him, so furiously that, with regard to his visage, sparks seem to leap from his helmet’s visor. He replied angrily, in these terms:

‘Off with you, and be on your way,
My fine sirs: God guide you, this day!
Whom do you think to mock at, so?
Take your staves, and baggage, and go.
Swiftly, direct yourselves elsewhere,
Tis not to my good self, I swear,
You should address such words. Away!
Let God give you welcome, I say.’

**CHAPTER CXLVI: HUMBLE-REQUEST
SPEAKS COURTEOUSLY TO REFUSAL**

Then Desire and Coeur, ardent and angry as they were, thought to vent their fury, and fight. But Humble-Request restrained them, and said they should let Refusal be, for he himself would say a few words. He then addressed Refusal, in the following manner:

‘Refusal, lord Amor’s command,
Through myself you understand,
Is that you let this company
Enter in, without treachery,
That to Sweet Mercy they may speak,
Such is his will, for her they seek,
And be not displeased if they
Spend some time with her, in that way;
All they do, is done with honour,
Coeur indeed desires naught other.’

**CHAPTER CXLVII: REFUSAL, IN TURN,
REPLIES INSULTINGLY TO HUMBLE-REQUEST**

Then Refusal raised himself on his toes, and proudly and fiercely, mocking and scorning Humble-Request, Amor’s emissary, replied thus:

‘So, you, my son, raised in the school
Of fine words, take me for a fool!
You may well know how to address
Those who prize mere verbal excess.
Tis not so here, if tis elsewhere!

Never shall I such language bear.
Do the worst that you're able to,
By God, this door is closed to you!

CHAPTER CXLVIII: PROMISE RESTRAINS COEUR

At this, Coeur delayed no more: he unsheathed his good sword and prepared to attack Refusal, who himself thought to return the compliment with a blow to the head. But Promise drew Coeur back, so that he could not strike, and begged the companions to allow him to speak. They accorded him space, and Promise addressed Refusal in the following manner:

'Refusal, tis right to afford
The courteous a fair reward.
Let us enter; in recompense,
You'll surely prove your own good sense,
While I will promise faithfully
Gold and silver to pay, in fee,
And in such quantity, indeed,
You'll ne'er be poor, or rue the deed.'

CHAPTER CXLIX: LARGESSE INTERVENES

Refusal heard Promise out, and softened a little, but would not agree to his demand, for he never trusted the promises made to him. While they were conversing, Largesse joined them, and suddenly threw a purse full of coins at Refusal's right ear, so violently that he was stunned, and ceased his gross and rebellious speech. As he threw the purse, Largesse offered Refusal a few words:

‘Refusal, let us go and see,
I beg of you, this Sweet Mercy;
We will not stay long, I maintain,
And you’ll receive as much again.

CHAPTER CL: REFUSAL, ONCE BRIBED, LEADS THEM TO SWEET MERCY’S CHAMBER

With this, Largesse took another purse full of deniers, and threw it disdainfully at Refusal’s other ear, with such force that he was stunned: but he was not so wild or fearful as not to do as the cur does, at who’s head one hurls a piece of bread, namely to seize it promptly. He sat on the ground, feigning to be hurt, but the wretch was unharmed. He clasped the two purses to him, and allowed Coeur and his companions to enter the mansion.

The bribe immediately rendered the way to Sweet Mercy’s chamber open, and they found her in the company of Lady Pity, who was pressing and exhorting her to show affection for the noble Heart seized by love. And when Coeur saw her, he was totally enraptured, for she was so beautiful and sweet that she seemed a veritable angel. I will abstain from describing her to you, for my art lacks the power to do so, and my pen the words, and to rightly depict the overwhelming loveliness and sweetness which was hers one would need to compose a far larger text than this.

Yet what I can say is that she was dressed in a robe and mantle of royal purple, that her tresses spread over her shoulders, and that on her head she wore a gold diadem adorned with precious stones. What can I say? She was by far the loveliest creature ever seen.

When Coeur and his companions had gazed at her attentively a while, they looked about them, and saw a company of ignoble wretches around her. Coeur asked Fair-Welcome who these people were, and Fair-Welcome replied:

‘Coeur, my friend, the slanderers are they,
Who ne’er speak the truth, by night or day,
Behold, there too is Jealousy,
And Shame, and Fear, I also see.
Such guard Sweet Mercy, God curse them!
May Saint Anthony’s fire seize them!
And yet it matters not a whit,
For we are here, their fate is writ.’

CHAPTER CLI: COEUR ASKS HUMBLE-REQUEST TO SPEAK FOR HIM

Then Coeur approached Sweet Mercy, but once before her he was so tongue-tied that he was unable to say a word, so Desire advanced, wishing to speak for him, but Coeur begged him to let Humble-Request speak instead, for he was most eloquent, and knew how to do so on behalf of all true lovers. Then Humble-Request took Coeur by the hand, with Desire on his other side, and approached as near as he might to Sweet Mercy and Lady Pity who was beside her. Saluting her, Humble-Request spoke thus:

‘Lady, may the Lord send to you
Joy, and health, and honour too!
Here is Coeur who suffers still,
For love of you, many an ill:
He comes here offering to serve
Straining every sinew and nerve,
As loyally as a man can do;
Have pity then, tis all for you;
Do so, in sweetness and mercy,
And think not that he seeks any
End but to ensure your pleasure,

Nor offend by any measure.
An ill death he would rather face
Than fail now to obtain your grace.
Wait no longer then, but make
Him your servant, for pity's sake!

CHAPTER CLII: SWEET MERCY REPLIES

When Humble-Request finished speaking, Sweet Mercy looked towards Lady Pity, who was smiling, and from that moment she accepted Coeur as her servant and friend, for she saw that he was a handsome youth, noble yet humble. However, she dared not reveal the same, because Shame and Fear had their eyes upon her. Nonetheless, she could not help but reply, as Pity counselled, in these terms:

'Humble Request, indeed you know
How to speak well, and have done so,
But I would, willingly, learn indeed,
If tis yourself will serve at need,
For if Coeur does not make all true,
Surely you, by rights, must so do;
Though none, I think, in truth, my friend,
Needs to speak for him, in the end.'

CHAPTER CLIII: COEUR EXPRESSES HIS LOVE

Coeur, on hearing Sweet Mercy speak thus to Humble-Request, knew that she wished him to speak for himself. He sat down near to her, and in the tones of a man seized strongly by love, he stated his case as follows:

'Lady, I know not how to tell
Of the torment, the pains of Hell,
The anguish, and the suffering,
I've borne for you, nigh unending,
So devoted with every breath,
I am almost reduced to death,
Through the power of your beauty,
Which I would serve most loyally.
Also, regard I'd have you pay,
In part at least, to the true way
I suffer pain for love of you
Without reward, though such is due.
My recompense is yet to be,
Through which deep joy will come to me.
Retain me as your servant here,
Fair one; the honour I'll hold dear!
I know I'm not truly worthy,
Yet, of your sweet benignity,
If it please you, grant it, lady;
With the deed you will be happy.'

CHAPTER CLIV: LADY PITY ENCOURAGES SWEET MERCY TO ACCEPT HIS REQUEST

At these words, Lady Pity looked at Sweet Mercy, took her by the hand, and in a soft voice, with a trace of a smile, said this to her:

'Sweet Mercy, come, what think you now?
Poor Coeur was trembling, I avow,
While framing his reply to you.

Would her judgment then prove true
Who chose to yet reject his case?
By God, he has a handsome face,
He's noble, he's courteous, too
And, then, he's devoted to you;
So taken with your charms, can he
Be yet rejected, scornfully?
Retain him as your servant true,
And keep all error far from you.'

CHAPTER CLV: SWEET MERCY DEMANDS COEUR'S LOYALTY

Sweet Mercy, on hearing those words addressed to her by Lady Pity, was instantly touched at heart, and thought she had delayed overlong and thwarted Coeur too wilfully, he who seemed so fair and courteous; and turning towards him, she answered him as follows:

'Coeur you are false, a hypocrite,
Or too perfect indeed, for it
Seems, from everything you say,
That you do seek no ill, always.
Should you practise mere deception,
God send ill in your direction!
As for me, I'll not resist you,
But, with willing heart, enlist you,
As my servant and my friend,
Yet on your honour now depend.
Now, indeed, you must promise me
Ever to serve me faithfully,
And all your life, let not a day

Pass where you my trust betray,
Nor forget me; a sorry dish
Is neglect, and not one I'd wish.'

CHAPTER CLVI: COEUR SWEARS TO SERVE HER FAITHFULLY

On hearing Sweet Mercy speak thus, Coeur trembled with joy and changed colour, and replied, blushing, to her thus:

'My lady, I give thanks to you,
And swear that I shall e'er be true,
And will serve you most loyally,
Obeying, in all things, wholly.'

CHAPTER CLVII: COEUR IS NOW ATTACKED BY REJECTION AND REFUSAL

With this, Desire urged Coeur forward, indicating that the latter was too slow to act, and lingered too long in claiming a kiss from Sweet Mercy. Coeur therefore advanced to kiss the lady, but Shame and Fear interposed themselves instantly, and the slanderers began such an outcry that Rejection appeared, full of anger and spite, followed closely by Refusal, no less wrathful, each clasping a stave cut from a medlar tree.

As soon as they entered the chamber, and saw Coeur close beside Sweet Mercy, ready to embrace her, Rejection raised his stick, and dealt Coeur a great blow on the head, who if he had not had an iron cap beneath his head-covering would have been struck dead. And then, before the latter could lay a hand on his sword, Refusal, in turn, dealt him so violent a blow he was quite stunned. The pair of them struck him so hard, from left and right, that in no time at all they held the upper hand.

Yet Coeur came to his senses swiftly, and angered at being struck by these two wretches, grasped his sword and struck Refusal, who was before him, so firm a blow, that he raised a spark three fingers in length from the latter's helm; then he regained his stance and dealt Rejection so great a blow that he shaved off a piece of his right cheek. The blow was savage and forceful, but the sword turned in his grasp, such that it fell on the shoulder, and sheared away a large piece: if he'd been offered a hundred gold marks to counter, Rejection could not have raised his arm to strike a blow at that instant.

CHAPTER CLVII: BATTLE COMMENCES BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES

Then the slanderers, with Jealousy, Shame, and Fear, attacked both Coeur and his companions. The battle was fierce, harsh and cruel. Desire, Largesse, Fair-Welcome and Promise bore themselves well; but Humble-Request was content to look on, being only an emissary. What can I say? The battle continued until Coeur, through his prowess, overcame them and made Refusal, Rejection and all their company flee; he then searched the mansion from top to bottom, to make sure none were was hiding there, and to slay Jealousy and the slanderers if he found them within, knowing that they were enemies of his lord and master, the god of Love. But his efforts proved in vain, for they had been amongst the first to flee.

He returned to Sweet Mercy's chamber, and found her with Lady Pity, filled with fear at having watched them fighting thus. She was somewhat pale as a result, which complemented the hue of her cheeks, a fresh crimson like that of a rose in May. Coeur sat down beside her, reassuring her as gently as he could, and snatched a kiss.

However, the tale is silent a moment regarding this, and returns to speak of Refusal, Rejection, and their company for a while, they having fled, in order to tell a little of their affairs.



Armies of Venus

Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung (*Roman de la Rose*)

Netherlands, S. (Bruges) c. 1490–c. 1500

British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CLVIII: REFUSAL AND REJECTION GAIN SUPPORT FROM ILL-TALK

At this point in the narrative, the story relates that Refusal and Rejection and their troops, having fled Sweet Mercy's chamber, beneath the blows of Coeur and his company, were now about a

mile distant from the House of Rebellion. Refusal, who had been the first to flee like the villain that he was, looked back, and saw Rejection following him, sorely wounded. He waited for him, and once they were together, they both halted awhile, looking on either side of the road to seek a path of escape if anyone pursued them. They were not there long before, one after another, their followers arrived, wounded in head or arm. They gathered as best as they could, and took counsel together as to what to do.

One of the slanderers had heard tell, and was sure it was true, that his master Ill-Talk's troops had assembled in Amor's realm; and that, meanwhile, Honour had come to seek counsel and aid from Amor in order to attack them there; and he had since heard troubling news, that Honour had fought against them, and discomfited many. And thus, it had indeed fallen out, for Honour once arrived at the Castle of Pleasure, as the tale has recounted, had persuaded his master Amor to grant him reinforcements, to go and fight the slanderers, and had discomfited a goodly quantity. But he had not undone so many that there was still not a host remaining; that is why he advised Refusal, Rejection and their company to retreat, and go and find Ill-Talk. The latter, once he had heard the tale, granted them as many troops as they wished, for they told him of their desire to avenge the outrage that Coeur and his followers had inflicted on them.

They took with them forty of the most warrior-like slanderers in Ill-Talk's company, and lay in ambush in a little grove of trees before the House of Rebellion; and all this took no more than three hours, for Ill-Talk and his company were not far distant.

At this point the tale ceases to tell of Refusal and the rest, and returns to speak of Coeur and his people, who were passing the time conversing with Sweet Mercy, without being aware of the force that Refusal and his company were bringing against them.

CHAPTER CLIX: DESIRE URGES COEUR TO RETURN TO THE CASTLE OF PLEASURE

In this final part of our story, the tale relates that, once Coeur and his people had driven away Refusal, Rejection and all their company as you have heard, and Coeur had won a noble kiss of Sweet Mercy, they

entertained and amused themselves a good while together, as lovers will with their ladies. After some time, Desire, who forever embraced more than he could hold, urged and exhorted Coeur, as follows:

‘Now, Coeur, as the proud conqueror,
Will you rest thus, and seek no more?
Will you simply settle for this,
And be contented with a kiss!
Have you not heard it often said
“It was on empty air he fed”?
Begin again, more urgently,
In her ear, whisper, privately,
That you will lead her, at leisure,
To the fair Castle of Pleasure,
Where you both may spend your days
With the brave god of Love, always.’

CHAPTER CLX: LADY PITY ENCOURAGES SWEET MERCY TO COMPLY

On hearing these words, Coeur advanced seeking to embrace Sweet Mercy once more, as Desire had counselled, but she drew back a little, for she still recalled the words that Fear and Shame had previously addressed to her. But Coeur whispered in her ear that he would conduct her to the Castle of Pleasure where they would pass their days in the company of Amor and his mother Lady Venus. But she demurred, thinking that once he had led her to the Castle of Pleasure, he would seek to obtain more than a kiss. Yet, in the end, Lady Pity having asked and understood what they were conversing about, spoke thus to Sweet Mercy:

‘Come, reveal not your displeasure,
But seek the Castle of Pleasure,

With noble Coeur, my fair daughter;
For there indeed you'll find Honour,
Whom I have left there, with Amor.
Since Honour is there, evermore,
Tis fitting that you dwell there too,
None can slander you, if you do.'

CHAPTER CLXI: SWEET MERCY EXPRESSES HER FEAR OF ILL-TALK AND HIS FOLLOWERS

And, in the end, Lady Pity persuaded Sweet Mercy to go to the fair Castle of Pleasure, though the latter expressed regret, for she was fearful of meeting slanderers on the way, as had happened before, and not one limb of the young girl but trembled at the thought; she could not help uttering a few tremulous words as follows:

I pray to God to guide us now,
And joy, in this love, to allow,
Freely, at its first commencement,
Yet I feel sure that I will see,
Upon the road, in front of me,
Ill-Talk, our perverse opponent;
Curses on him and his vile crew!
For I have always hated all
Those that e'er claim what is not true
Of folk they viciously pursue.
Such may a sorry death befall!

CHAPTER CLXII: REFUSAL ATTACKS AND OVERCOMES DESIRE

Then Coeur delayed not, but took her by the arm; while Lady Pity placed herself at her other side, with Desire and Humble Request going ahead of, and the others behind, them. They took to the road in this manner, heading straight for the fair Castle of Pleasure. But they had not gone more than a crossbow-shot or more from the House of Rebellion before Refusal, Rejection and their company, as well as the forty slanderers hidden in ambush before that mansion of whom the tale has told, attacked them outright, and being full of anger and malevolence, well-armoured and furnished with staves, began to rain a shower of blows, with all their strength, upon Coeur and his people.

The latter, taken thus by surprise, defended themselves as best they could, but their defence was scarcely effective, for they faced odds of six to one. Nonetheless, Desire, who was brave and ardent, drew his sword and defended himself most valiantly, wounding two of his adversaries at the first encounter. But Refusal, noting that he was working marvels, said to himself that, if this fellow continued long at his task, he would do them much damage. He therefore made for Desire, and struck him on the head with his heavy stave, while the latter was fighting hard against the others, such a blow that he split his head open, and Desire fell beneath the blow like one dead. Then Refusal shouted: ‘Fall on the rest; this fellow is done for!’

CHAPTER CLXII: REFUSAL FELS COEUR AND TAKES SWEET MERCY PRISONER

In but a short time, Refusal and the slanderers wrought such havoc that almost all Coeur’s company were wounded. The latter, seeing his troops manhandled and overcome, began to set about him to left and right, severing legs and arms, and slaying so many adversaries that one might have deemed Coeur to be the most valiant warrior ever seen.

Now the base old crone, Jealousy, seeing him cutting through their ranks, began to cry out: ‘At him; if he continues longer, we shall soon lack

the power to resist!’ At this, Refusal, Rejection and their remaining troop of followers fell upon Coeur, who was now their sole adversary. Then Coeur leant against a massive tree which grew at that spot, and began to deal blows in such a manner that none who had viewed him could but have esteemed his courage.

Nonetheless, it proved in vain, for he lacked the strength to resist the slanderers assembled against him, and Refusal and Rejection who fronted them, fought so fiercely that they struck him whether he would or no. Yet it was not without reply from Coeur who landed such a blow on Refusal’s ancient bassinet that he knocked it forward towards the latter’s shoulders. Refusal, that great misshapen villain, when he felt that blow returned the like, with all his force, upon Coeur’s head, such that his iron cap failed to protect him. He was struck upon the jaw, and wounded on the head so cruelly that the bones of his skull could be seen.

Coeur fell like one dead, while the slanderers continued to attack him, not a mother’s son among them failing to land a blow. Then they withdrew, leaving him and his companions for dead, and surrounded Sweet Mercy whom they found in tears; as for Lady Pity she was no longer there, having hidden amidst the trees when she saw the battle about to commence.

CHAPTER CLXII: COEUR ASKS TO BE TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL OF LOVE, TO END HIS DAYS

Refusal now seized Sweet Mercy by the arm, and placed her under guard. Fear and Shame then led her to the House of Rebellion, and held her captive there under closer watch than ever. And when Lady Pity, who had viewed all this from her hiding-place among the trees, saw where Refusal and his company were headed, she ventured forth onto the field to discover whether her people were alive or dead. She found that they had regained their feet, and were on the road to the Castle of Pleasure, which was not two miles away, all except for Coeur, who was so grievously wounded that he seemed dead, moving not a limb.

Then Lady Pity sat down beside him, after drawing him into the shade of the tree, before the slanderers could see him, and she remained beside him until she heard him give a sigh. Ask not if Lady Pity was overjoyed, on

realising that he still lived! She dipped her hands in a water-filled rut that she found nearby and sprinkled a little over his temples. At last, she succeeded in rousing him fully from his swoon, and he began to look about him, and ask after his lady, Sweet Mercy, and his companions. Lady Pity told him to think no more on his lady, for she was once more in the hands of Refusal; as for his companions, they were, by now, within the Castle of Pleasure, where Love dwelt.

Then Coeur begged Lady Pity, in God's name, since his lady was again in Refusal's hands, to lead him to the Hospital of Love, where he would end his days in worship and prayer. And so, Lady Pity did as Coeur asked.

CHAPTER CLXIII: THE AUTHOR AWAKES

'Then from the anguish and the pain
My heart now felt, I woke again,
Suddenly opening my eyes,
I cried aloud, in my surprise,
To my chamberlain who lay
Upon his couch, dreaming away,
All night beside me in my room,
Yet woke now at my voice of doom,
And called out: 'Is there aught you need?'
And I replied: 'Ah, yes, indeed.'
And then I said, amidst my sighs:
'Oh, sweetest Lord of Paradise,
I fear that Amor has seized from me
My heart, and stolen it from me,
For, though I feel my side, I find
My heart is gone, and so my mind,
For not a murmur can I feel,
Beneath my hand, nor aught conceal
The wound his dart made in my chest,
When my heart departed my breast.

Filled with anguish now, am I,
Doomed to linger here, and sigh.’
Then he arose, my chamberlain,
And lit the candle, once again,
And then looked closely at my side,
To view the wound from which I sighed,
And found that there was naught to see,
And then addressed me, smilingly,
And told me to lie down once more,
And sleep again, for he was sure
In no way was I like to die.
He reassured me; by and by
I lay down, saying not a word,
For shame, although my fear yet stirred,
And it was long before I slept.
When, at dawn, from my bed I leapt,
I took paper and penned my dream,
With each event as it did seem
To show itself, that night, to me.
To each I pray, where’er they be,
Where tis read, excuse my folly,
For such the ills Amor doth bring
Nor young nor old escape his wing,
And many a time he doth make
Men dream while sleeping or awake;
While, thanks to him, none obtain
Relief from his snare; rather pain
Dogs them, until they cease to smile.
I’ll say naught, ere I rest awhile,
Except that this, to the world, was given
In fourteen hundred and fifty-seven.’



The Dream

Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung (Roman de la Rose)

Netherlands, S. (Bruges) c. 1490–c. 1500

British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts

CHAPTER CLXIV: RENÉ'S ENVOI TO HIS DEDICATEE, JEAN DUC DE BOURBON

My most dear and most beloved nephew and cousin, having read my text, you can now equally understand my sorry state, and can reflect at length upon the grievous pain I have experienced, through believing too soon, and pursuing too lightly, at the instigation of my eyes, the pleasure of my heart, in a manner above all harmful to its good health.

I pray you, when you have the leisure, to think, as best as you know how, of what you can offer in the way of sound advice, regarding what I should seek henceforth, in terms of a specific remedy and suitable regime that I might adopt, so that I would not be so often tempted and tormented by that subtle spirit, hostile to our wishes; namely the god of Love; he that ignites the heart with importunate desire, which drives men to love so fondly that they die of it, or languish so woefully that they enjoy not a single pleasant day.

And, since I know, of a certainty, that you have experienced this state, it is to you I speak, while begging you, should you find aught that I can do for you, to let me know, as that would give me great pleasure, for I am ready to do all in my power to execute, loyally, your wish and pleasure, as one bound and obliged so to do.

I pray to God that He will grant you your heart's desire, and as great a reward, and joy in love, as I would ever wish for myself.



THE END OF 'LE LIVRE DU COEUR D'AMOUR ÉPRIS'



ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR

Anthony Kline lives in England. He graduated in Mathematics from the University of Manchester, and was Chief Information Officer (Systems Director) of a large UK Company, before dedicating himself to his literary work and interests. He was born in 1947. His work consists of translations of poetry; critical works, biographical history with poetry as a central theme; and his own original poetry. He has translated into English from Latin, Ancient Greek, Classical Chinese and the European languages. He also maintains a deep interest in developments in Mathematics and the Sciences.

He continues to write predominantly for the Internet, making all works available in download format, with an added focus on the rapidly developing area of electronic books. His most extensive works are complete translations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*.