

Machaut, *Remede de Fortune* 905–2892 (extracts)

Song between touch and thought

Guillaume de Machaut (1300-77)

Text edited by Wimsatt and Kibler, Translation by Sarah Kay

Music transcribed by Christopher Preston Thompson from Machaut MS C, F-Pn fr. 1586

[Extracts from the complainte "Tieus rit"]

[905-920]

Tieus rit au main qui au soir  
Et tieus cui - de que Joie ac -

pleu - re, Et tieus cui - de qu'A -  
queu - re Pour li ai - dier, qu'el -

mours la - - - - - beu - - - - re  
le de - - - - - meu - - - - re.

Pour son bien, qu'el - le li court  
Car For - tu - ne ne tout ce de -

1.  
seu - re Et mal l'a - tour - - - - - ne;  
veu - re,

2.  
Quant el - le tour - - - - - ne, Qui n'a - tent  
Met ce - lui

mi - e gist qu'il a - - - - - jour -  
qui qui - - - - - mas en - - - - - l'our - - - - -

25  
ne; Pour tour - ner; qu'el - le  
ne; Le seur - mon - té au

28

ne se - jour - - ne,  
bas re - tour - - ne,

31

Ains tour - ne, re - tour - ne, et bes -  
Et le plus joi - eus mat et -

34

1.  
tor - ne, Tant qu'au des - seu - re  
mor - ne

38

2.  
Fait en po d'eu - - - re.

.....

Amours, ce n'est mie raison  
de me donner tristeece en don  
1355 en lieu de joieus guerredon;  
ains est pechiés,  
quant je suis sans condicion  
tous mis en ta subjection.  
Or me mes a destruction  
1360 et entrepiés  
qui deüsses estres mes chiés,  
car par toy m'est li dés changiés,  
et par toy de joie essiliez  
sans occoyson  
1365 sui, et de ma dame eslongiés.  
Mais s'auques einssi dure m'ies,  
confort n'espoir de mes meschiés  
ne garison.

Et quant Esperance ne joint  
1370 a mon cuer, einçoys s'en desjoint,  
se Fol Espoir a li se joint  
n'est pas merveille,  
puis que tu fais si mal a point  
que tu m'as maté et empoint  
1375 par ton mesfait en l'angle point,  
vueille ou ne vueille.  
La n'est il bien que je recueille;  
la mon vis de lermes se meuille;  
la n'est il riens que me conseille,  
1380 ne qui me doint  
confort dou mal qui me travaille;  
la san je douleur nompaille;  
la Pytié dort; la Desirs veille,  
qui trop me point.

.....

Las! dolens! C'est ce qui esface  
en moy d'Esperance la grace;  
c'est ce qui a la mort me chace  
et fait penser  
1405 qu'ensement comme uns chiens de chace  
après sa beste fuit et chace  
et la sieut partout a la trace  
pour li tuer,  
einssi Desirs de saouler  
1410 mes fols ieus d'assés remirer  
de la belle et bonne sans per  
la douce face  
me berse et chace sans cesser  
et me cuide a la mort mener.  
1415 Mes humblement vueil endurer  
quoy qu'il me face.

Mes il n'a pas si grant pouoir  
de moy faire douleur avoir  
com j'ay bon cuer dou recevoir;  
1420 or y parra:  
se pour ce que j'ay povre espoir  
de ma douce dame veoir  
et qu'Amours m'a en nonchaloir,  
qu'il me fera?  
1425 M'occira il? Il ne pourra,  
car ma loyauté m'aidera.  
Qu'ai je dit? Einçoys me sera  
contraire, espoir;  
car puisqu'Amours me grevera  
1430 et Fortune qui honni m'a,  
ma grant loyauté m'occirra,  
si com j'espoir.

Car mes cuers ne se pourroit feindre  
d'amer ma dame ne refraindre;  
1435 ainçoys est tousdis l'amour greindre  
qui en moy maint,  
ne riens ne la porroit estaindre;  
car quant elle me fait plus teindre,  
dementer, gemir, et complaindre,  
1440 tant plus m'enceint.  
J'ay oÿ recorder a maint  
que quant uns malades se plaint,  
que sa douleur fait de son plaint  
un pou remaindre.  
1445 Las! et c'est ce qui mon cuer taint,  
c'est ce qui plus griefment l'ataint,  
c'est ce qui tout mon bien estaint,  
sans joye ateindre,

pour ce que riens de ma pensee  
1450 ne scet ma dame desiree,  
seur toute creature amee  
dou cuer de mi,  
ne la tres dure destinee  
qui m'est pour lui amer donnee,  
1455 ne comment s'amour embrasee  
est tout en mi  
mon cuer qui est siens sans demi,  
ne comment je pleure et gemi  
souvent pour s'amour et fremi,  
1450 qui enflamee  
est en moy, dont je di: "Aymi!  
Occirrés vous dont vostre ami  
entre les mains son anemi,  
dame honnouree?"  
1465 C'est de Desir qui mon cuer flamme  
et point de si diverse flamme,  
qu'en monde n'a homme ne fame  
qui medecine  
y sceüst, se ce n'est pas ma dame  
1470 qui l'art, qui l'esprent, qui l'enflame  
et bruit d'amoureuse flame,  
n'elle ne fine.  
Fortune est sa dure voysine,  
et Amours l'assaut et le mine,  
1475 dont mourir cuit en brief termine  
sans autre blanme.  
Mais s'ainssi ma vie define,  
a ma dame qu'aim d'amour fine,  
les mains jointes, la chiere encline,  
1480 vueil rendre l'ame.

*[Extracts from the narrative:  
the first touch, followed by exposition]*

1570 Et quant elle vit mon estat,  
si en sousrist moult doucement;  
lors se traÿ courtoisement  
vers moy pour savoir de mon estre,  
et si me prist par la main destre  
1575 de la sienne, blanche et onnie,  
pour miulz savoir ma maladie.  
si senti mon pous et ma vaine  
qui estoit foieble, mate, et vaine.

....

1581 Car bien pensoit, la bonne et sage,  
que du cuer me venoit la rage  
qui si griefment me demenoit  
et que d'ailleurs ne me venoit.

....

1977 Lors d'une voys clere et serie  
douce, saine, en tel melodie  
commença son chant delez mi,  
1980 c'un petitet m'i endormi.

....

And when [Hope] saw my condition she  
smiled most sweetly; then she stepped  
toward me courteously to inquire how I was,  
and took me by my right hand with her  
smooth white one in order to know more  
about my sickness. And she felt my pulse  
and my vein that was feeble, weak, and  
faint.

For the good, wise lady rightly thought that  
the madness that was so painfully ravaging  
me came from my heart, and from nowhere  
else.

Then with a clear and peaceful voice, sweet  
and health-giving, to a tune like this, she  
began her song beside me so that I dozed off  
for a while.

[The chant royal, "Joie, plaisance"]

[1985-2032]



8 Joy - e, plai - sance, et dou - ce nour - re - tu - re,  
 Car vraye A - mour en cuer d'a - mant fi - gu - re  
 Dont cilz qui vit de si dou - ce pas - tu - re,  
 Mais ceulz qui sont en tris - tesse, en ar - du - re,  
 Qu'A-mours, qui est de si no - ble na - tu - re

9



8 Vi - e d'on - neur pren - nent maint en a - mer;  
 Tres dous Es - poir et gra - ci - eus Pen - ser:  
 Vi - e d'on - neur puet bien et doit me - ner,  
 En plours, en plains, en dou - lour sans ces - ser,  
 Qu'el - le scet bien qui aim - me sans faus - ser,

17



8 Et plus-seurs sont qui n'i ont fors poin - tu - re,  
 Es - poir a - trait Joie et Bonne Ad - ven - tu - re;  
 Car de tous biens a a com - ble me - su - re,  
 Et qui di - ent qu'A-mours leur est si du - re  
 Scet bien pai - er as a - mans leur droi - tu - re:

25



8 Dou - lour, ar - dour, plour, tris - tesse, et a - mer.  
 Dous Pen - ser fait Plai - sance en cuer en - trer.  
 Plus qu'au-tres cuers n'en sa - roit de - si - rer;  
 Qu'il ne peu - ent sans mo - rir plus du - rer,  
 C'est les loy - aus de joy - e sa - ou - ler

33

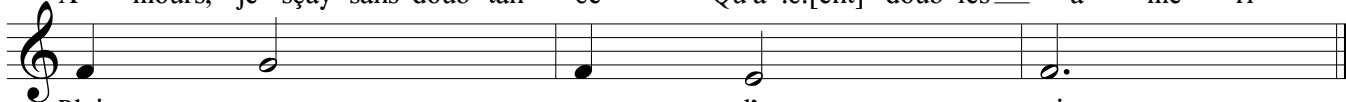


8 Ce di - ent; mais ac - cor - der Ne me puis, qu'en la sous-fran - ce  
 Si ne doit plus de - man - der Cilz qui a bonne Es - pe - ran - ce,  
 Ne d'au - tre mer - ci rou - ver N'a de - sir, cuer, ne be - an - ce  
 Je ne puis y - ma - gi - ner Qu'il ai - ment sans de - ce - van - ce  
 Et d'eaus fai - re sa - vou - rer Ses dou-çours en ha - bon - dan - ce;

40



8 D'a - mours ait nul - le gre - van - ce, Car tout ce qui vient de lui  
 Doulz Pen - ser, Joye, et Plai - san - ce; Car qui plus re - quiert, je di  
 Pour ce qu'il a Souf - fi - san - ce; Ne je ne sçay nom - mer cy  
 Et qu'en euls trop ne s'a - van - ce De - sirs. Pour ce sont ains - si,  
 Et les mau - vais par sen - ten - ce Sont com - tra - i - tres fail - li  
 [envoi] 48 A - mours, je sçay sans doub - tan - ce Qu'a .c.[ent] doub - les a me - ri



8 Plaist a cuer d'a - mi.  
 Qu'A - mours l'a guer - pi.  
 Nulle au - tre mer - ci.  
 Qu'il l'ont de - ser - vi;  
 De sa court ban - ni. [to envoi]  
 Ceuls qu'i t'ont ser - vi.

[*Extracts from the narrative: the second and third touch, Esperance reveals who she is*]

2033 Et quant elle ot son chant finé  
vers moy a son chief encliné,  
2035 en riant doucement, com celle  
que je tieng pour vierge et pucelle;  
si mist sa main dessus mon chief  
et me demanda derechief:  
Comment t'est? Que me diras tu?  
2040 Ay je ton chief bien debatu?  
Que te semble de ma chançon?

....

2094 Lors prist .i. anel en son doy,  
2095 bel, bon, chier, précieux, et riche,  
et doucement ou mien le fiche.  
Et je qui encor soumilloie—  
non pas fort, car bien entendoie  
ce qu'elle avoit chanté et dit  
2100 en rime, en musique, et en dit—  
senti la froideur de l'anel;  
et lors d'esperit pou ysnel  
me tournay au mieus que je pos  
vers li et lessay le repos  
2105 ou sa belle voys clere et saine,  
plus douce que nulle seraine,  
qui les homes scet enchanter  
par la douçor de son chanter,  
m'avoit mis.

....

2126 Lors parlai, si com je pouoie,  
et li dis sans faire demeure:

....

2141 “Ma dame, qu'il vous vueille plaire  
que je sache de vostre affaire  
vostre non et vostre venue,  
et comment estes cy venue.”

....

And when she had finished her song she bowed her head toward me, smiling sweetly like the one I believe to be a Virgin Maid, placed her hand on my head and asked me straight out, “How are you? What do you have to say to me? Have I discussed your concerns well? What do you think of my song?”

Then she took a ring from her finger—beautiful, endowed with virtues, valuable and splendid—and sweetly places it on mine. And I, who was still dozing—not deeply, for I could perfectly hear what she had composed and sung with its rhyme, music, and text—felt the coldness of the ring; and then, somewhat slow-wittedly, I turned toward her the best I could, and left the state of rest into which her beautiful, clear and full voice—sweeter than any siren who knows how to bewitch men with the sweetness of her song—had put me.

Then I spoke as best I could, saying to her without delay:

“My lady, may it please you for me to know something about you—your name and where you come from, and how you came here.”

2151 “Je suis li confors des amans  
qui font les amoureux commans;  
je les aide; je les conseil;  
je sui de leur estroit conseil;  
2155 je les deffen; je les deporté;  
je les secour; je les conforte  
contre Desir qui les assaut  
et fait maint doulereus assaut;

...

2286 Esperance sui appelee.

“I am the consolation of lovers who obey  
Love’s commands; I help them; I counsel  
them; I am their closest adviser; I defend  
them; I cheer them; I come to their rescue; I  
comfort them against Desire who assails  
them with many a painful attacks.

I am called Hope.”



[*Esperance discourses, then sings this balladelle,*  
*“En amer a douce vie”*]

[2857-2892]

En a mer a dou - ce vi -  
Car tant plaist la ma - la - di -

5

e Et jo - li - e, Qui bien la scet  
e Quant nor - ri - e Est en a - mou -

9

1.

main reus te de nir,

13

2.

sir, Que C'est

17

l'a douz mant mauls fait es - bau - dir sous - te - nir,

21

Et que -rir Com - ment el - le mou - te -  
 Qu'es - jo - ir Fait \_\_\_\_\_ cuer d'a - mi et \_\_\_\_\_ d'a -

25

pli - mi -

29

1. e. Qu'a -  
 2. Et \_\_\_\_\_

Stanza 2

34

mour par sa seig - nou - ri - e  
par sa nob - ble mais - tri - e

38

Hu - me - li - e L'a - mou - reus cuer a  
Le mes - tri - e, Si qu'il ne peut riens

42

souf - - - - - frir,  
sen tir

47

Que tout au goust  
Ains si sa - ouls

51

de jo - ir Par plai - sir Ne  
de me - rir Sans me - rir Fait

55

prengne, je n'en doub - te mi -  
cuer d'a - mi et d'a - mi

59

63

2. Stanza 3

Si doit bien es -  
Chas - cun qui li

tre - che - ri - e Et ser - vi - e, Quant el - le  
rueve ou pri - e De s'a - i - e, Sans son tre -

68

tre - che - ri - e Et ser - vi - e, Quant el - le  
rueve ou pri - e De s'a - i - e, Sans son tre -

72

puet sor as se men

1.

76

vir rir. De De

2.

80

la mort puet ga-ran  
souf fi - sance en - ri

84

tir \_\_\_\_\_ Et ga - rir Cuer \_\_\_\_\_ qui de san-  
 chir \_\_\_\_\_ Et fran - chir Fait \_\_\_\_\_ cuer d'a - mi

88

té \_\_\_\_\_ men - di - men - - - -  
 et \_\_\_\_\_ d'a - mi - - - -

92

1. | 2.

- - - - e;  
 e.



## Song Translations

[*From the complainte*]

[905-20]

He who laughs in the morning weeps in the evening, and he who fancies that Love labors for his benefit finds she attacks him and brings him harm, and thinks Joy is running to his aid when she hangs back. For Fortune, as she turns, consumes everything; she doesn't wait till daybreak to turn but rather turns, turns further, turns upside down, until she raises up high the man who lies defeated in the gutter and returns down below the one who was raised up, and makes the happiest man feel laid low and miserable in no time.

[1353-68]

Love, it is not in the least right to give me sorrow as a gift instead of a joyful reward; on the contrary, it's wrong of you when I've put myself unreservedly in your power. Now you destroy me, and trample me underfoot who ought to be my head; it's thanks to you that my dice have changed and that, for no reason, I have been robbed of joy and parted from my lady. But if you are so harsh toward me, I have no hope of consolation or cure for my misfortunes.

[1369-84]

And since Hope does not attach to my heart, but rather detaches from it, it's no wonder if Foolish Hope attaches itself there, for you [Love] hurt me so, and by your own wrongdoing you have weakened and goaded me and pinned me in a corner, whether I like it or not. There is nothing good for me there, my face is wet with tears, there is no creature to advise me or give me any consolation for the ill that ravages me; there I feel incomparable pain; there Pity sleeps and Desire stands vigil, goading me excessively.

[1401-16]

Alas! Unhappy me! This is what effaces the grace of Hope in me and drives me to my death and makes me think that, just like a hunting hound chases and runs down its quarry and follows its every trace in order to kill it, in the same way Desire, sating my foolish eyes with gazing intently at the sweet face of my matchless, lovely, and perfect lady, hunts and pursues me relentlessly and means to drive me to my death. But I intend to endure meekly whatever he does to me.

[1417-32]

But he has not so much power to cause me pain as I have a brave heart to receive it. Now we will see: because I have little hope of seeing my sweet lady, and love kills me with her indifference, what will Desire do? Kill me? He won't be able to because my steadfastness will support me. What am I saying? Perhaps, on the contrary, it will bring me down; since Love and Fortune, who has brought disgrace on me, will harm me, my steadfastness will be the death of me, I hope.

[1433-48]

For my heart cannot feign, nor refrain from, loving my lady; rather the love within me keeps growing and nothing can extinguish it; for the more Love makes me change color, lament, groan, and complain, the more she hems me in. I've heard many say that when a sick man complains, his suffering causes some aspects of his complaint to lose their effect. Alas, and this is what darkens my heart and assails it the most painfully and extinguishes all my well-being, without my ever attaining joy,

[1449-64]

because my desired lady—beloved of my heart above every other creature—knows nothing of my thoughts, nor of the very harsh fate that I get for loving her, nor of how my love for her is on fire within my heart's core, which is hers entirely, nor how I continually weep and groan and tremble because of my love of her, which flames within me, causing me to say “Ah, me! Do you mean to slay your lover amid the hands of his enemy, esteemed lady?”

[1465-80]

This comes from Desire, who inflames my heart, shooting it through with hostile flames so there is no man or woman in the world who could heal it, except my lady—and she is the one who burns it, sets it alight and makes it flame and consume away with such an amorous flame that has no end. Fortune is Desire's harsh ally, and Love attacks and undermines [my heart], so I think I will die soon, through no fault of my own. But if this is how I am to die, with hands pressed together and head bowed I wish to surrender my soul to my lady, whom I love with a pure love.

[*The chant royal*]

[1985-93]

Joy, pleasure, and sweet sustenance, a life of honor—many find these in love; yet there are some who find in it nothing but pricking, aching, burning, unhappiness, and a bitter taste, so they say: but I cannot agree that there is any hurt in Love's suffering, for everything that comes from Love is pleasing to a lover's heart.

[1994-2002]

For in a lover's heart, true Love represents sweetest Hope and gracious Thought. Hope brings in Joy and Felicity; and sweet Thought introduces Pleasure into the heart. Someone who has good Hope, Sweet Thought, Joy and Pleasure should ask for nothing more; if anyone does seek more, I tell you, Love has left him.

[2003-11]

Anyone who lives on such sweet nourishment can and should lead a life of honor, for he is filled to the brim with all good things, more than any heart would know how to desire. And he has no desire, or heart, or longing to ask for any other favor, because he has Sufficiency. And I cannot name here a single other favor [to ask for].

[2012-20]

But those who sorrow or burn, or are endlessly in tears, lamentation, and grief, and who say that Love is so harsh to them that they can't endure it any longer but will die, I cannot picture to myself that they love without deceit or that Desire does not have too much the upper hand over them. They are like this because they deserve to be.

[2021-29]

For Love whose nature is so noble that she can tell who loves without falsehood, knows how to pay lovers what is due to them and fill the upright with joy and make them relish her sweetnesses in abundance, while the wicked are condemned to be banished from her court like a guilty traitor.

[2030-32]

Love, I know without a doubt that you have rewarded 100 times over all those who have served you.

[*The balladelle*]

[2857-68]

To be in love is a sweet and happy life, if one knows how to lead it well, because the malady's so pleasing when it's sustained by amorous desire that it emboldens the lover to seek out ways to increase it. It's a sweet pain to bear, which brings joy to a lover's and a lady's heart;

[2869-80]

for I have no doubt that Love, through her dominion, humbles the loving heart so that it can suffer, and rules it by her noble mastery so that it cannot feel anything without finding in it the taste of enjoyment though pleasure. Thus she rewards, without their deserving, a lover's and a lady's heart.

[2881-92]

So Love must be cherished and served, since she can help everyone who requests and invokes her aid without diminishing her treasure. She can protect and save from death a heart that begs for health; she fills with sufficiency and liberates a lover's and a lady's heart.