

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

Je languis d'amere mort
Sans avoir nul reconfort
De vous, ma tres douce amie,
Si que ma joie est faillie
Se Pitié ne vous remort.

Car le douleur que je port
Si souvent me point et mort
Que vivre je ne puis mie

Longuement en tel deport,
Se par vo tres dous acort
N'ai de vous aucune aÿe.

Dont je suis en desconfort,
Quar Fortune, a si grant tort,
M'est adès si anemie
Et Espoir, qui ne dort mie,
Si m'eslongue de son port.

Je languis d'amere mort...

Je vivoie liement,
Douce creature,
Se vous saviés vraiment
Qu'en vous fust parfaitement
Ma cure.

Dame de maintieng joli,
Plaisant, nette et pure,
Souvent me fait dire "Ai mi"
Li maus que j'endure

Pour vous servir loyaument,
Et soiés seüre
Que je ne puis nullement
Vivre einssi, se longuement
Me dure.

Je vivoie liement...

Car vous m'estes sans mercy
Et sans pité dure,
Et s'avés le cuer de mi
Mis en tel ardure

Qu'il morra certainement
De mort trop obscure,
Se pour son aligement
Merci n'est prochainement
Meüre.

Je vivoie liement...

I languish in bitter agony
without receiving any comfort
from you, my sweetest friend,
and so my joy is finished
if Pity does not move you.

For the grief which I bear
so stabs and gnaws at me
that I surely cannot survive

long in this state,
unless through your sweetest accord
I have some aid from you.

Thus I live in distress,
for Fortune, most wrongly,
is my constant enemy,
and Hope, who never sleeps,
banishes me from her port.

I languish in bitter agony...

I would live happily,
sweet creature,
if you truly understood
that in you is
my perfect cure.

Lady of fair comportment,
pleasing, proper, and pure,
often I am forced to sigh "Ah me!"
by the pains which I endure

For serving you loyally,
and be sure
that I cannot in any way
survive like this, if it lasts
much longer.

I would live happily...

For towards me you are merciless
and hard, without pity,
and you have thrust my heart
into such fire

That it will certainly die
a most dismal death,
if for its relief
your mercy is not soon
ripe.

I would live happily...

Quiconques veult d'amours joïr
Doit avoir Foy et Esperance.
Sans ces deus ne puet nulls chevïr
Quiconques veult d'amours joïr,
Car l'un tient l'amant en desir,
E l'autre li donne alejance.
Quiconques veult d'amours joïr
Doit avoir Foy et Esperance.

En amer a douce vie

Et jolie,
Qui bien la scet maintenir,
Car tant plaist la maladie,
Quant norrie
Est en amoureux desir,
Que l'amant fait esbaudir
Et querir
Comment elle monteplie.
C'est dous maus a soustenir,
Qu'esjoir
Fait cuer d'ami et d'amie.

Qu'Amours par sa signourie
Humelie
L'amoureux cuer a souffrir,
Et par sa noble maistrie
Le maistrie,
Si qu'il ne puet riens sentir
Que tout au goust de joïr
Par plaisir
Ne prengne, je n'en doubt mie.
Einsi saous de merir,
Sans merir,
Fait cuer d'ami et d'amie.

Si doit bien estre cherie
Et servie,
Quant elle puet assevir
Chascun qui li rueve et prie
De s'aïe,
Sans son tresor amenrir.
De la mort puet garentir
Et garir
Cuer qui de santé mendie;
De souffisance enrichir
Et franchir
Fait cuer d'ami et d'amie.

Esperance qui en mon cuer s'embat
Sentir me fait d'amer la douce vie,
Mais Faulx Dangier le refuse et debat
Esperance qui en mon cuer s'embat.
Cheoir ne puet se Franc Cuer ne le bat,
Qui de doulcour tiengne la seignourie.
Esperance qui en mon cuer s'embat
Sentir me fait d'amer la douce vie.

Whoever wishes to enjoy love
must have Faith and Hope.
Without these two none can succeed—
whoever wishes to enjoy love—
for the one keeps the lover burning with desire
and the other gives him relief.
Whoever wishes to enjoy love
must have Faith and Hope.

To be in love is a sweet life
and a happy one
for him who knows how to live it,
for the malady is so pleasing
when it is fed
with amorous desire,
that it emboldens the lover
to discover
how it multiplies.
It is a sweet trouble to bear,
which brings joy to
the heart of a lover and his lady.

For Love by her sovereignty
abases
the loving heart to suffer,
and by her noble mastery
rules it,
so that it can feel nothing
but that which tastes wholly of joy
through pleasure:
of this I have no doubt.
Thus in full she rewards,
without their earning it,
the heart of a lover and his lady.

So Love must be cherished
and served,
so much can she help
everyone who seeks and prays for
her aid,
without diminishing her treasure.
She can protect from death
and heal
a heart that begs for health;
she enriches with self-sufficiency
and liberates
the heart of a lover and his lady.

Hope, which enters into my heart,
Makes me feel the sweet life of love,
But False Dominion refuses and battles
Hope, which enters into my heart.
He shall not fall unless fought by Sincere Heart,
Who is sovereign in sweetness.
Hope, which enters into my heart,
Makes me feel the sweet life of love.

En attendant d'amer la douce vie
Fait Doulz Espoir labour estre plaisirance.
Dangier, Refus du tout l'amant desfie
En attendant d'amer la douce vie,
Ayns Grant Espoir forment au cuer le lie
Pour gueroiier contre toute gravance.
En attendant d'amer la douce vie
Fait Doulz Espoir labour estre plaisirance.

While awaiting the sweet life of love,
Sweet Hope turns labor into pleasure.
Danger and Refusal utterly defy the lover
who awaits the sweet life of love,
but Great Hope gives his heart strength
to do battle against all wrongs.
While awaiting the sweet life of love,
Sweet Hope turns labor into pleasure.

Rose sans per, de toutes separée,
Nulle ne se doit a vos comparer,
Car vos estes sur toutes coronée,
Rose sans per, de toutes separée
Et de biauté la vraye flour parée:
Si chascuns vos doit bien apeler
Rose sans per, de toutes separée:
Nulle ne se doit a vos comparer.

Rose without peer, apart from all others,
none may be compared to you,
for you are crowned above all,
rose without peer, apart from all others,
and true flower clothed in beauty,
thus everyone should justly call you
rose without peer, apart from all others:
none may be compared to you.

Je voy mon cuer en un bactel nager
Par haute mer sans juste gouvernaille;
Deux nautonniers a, dont chascun bouter
Fait le bactel de refort et travaille.
Li uns se fait apeler Esperance,
Li autres, Desiers; si atent desfiance,
Et si dous Deus en ce rien ne le vaille.

I see my heart sail forth in a boat
on the high seas, without a good captain;
two sailors has he, and each tries
to steer the boat with vigorous effort.
One of them is called Hope,
the other, Desire; thus a challenge awaits,
and gentle God is of no help in this.

En atendant souffrir m'estuet grief payne
Et en languor vivre c'est ma destinée,
Puis qu'avenir ne puis a la fontayne,
Tant est de ruissius entour avironée.
Telle vertu si grant li a Dieu dounée
Qu'el puet assouvir chascun a souffisance
Par sa dignité et tres noble puissance.

While waiting, I must suffer grievous pain
and to live and languish is my destiny,
for I am unable to reach the fountain,
so surrounded is it by streams.
God has granted it the very great virtue
of refreshing everyone to the utmost
through its dignity and most noble power.

Les grans ruissiauz qui la font leur demaine
Si ont les conduis de la font estoupée,
Si c'on n'i puet trouver la droite vaine,
Tant est courompue l'iaue et troublée.
Gouster n'en puis une seule halenée
Si Unble Pitie n'a de moy ramembrance
Par sa dignité et tres noble puissance.

The large streams which make their domain there
have so obstructed the passages of the fountain
that one cannot find the true source,
so polluted and turbid is the water.
I cannot taste a single mouthful
if Humble Pity does not remember me
through its dignity and most noble power.

Si pri a Dieu que a droit la ramaine
Et la purifie sanz estre entamée,
Quar verement, c'est chose bien certaine,
Je n'en puis aprochier nuit ne matinée.
Et s'a moy estoit qu'ainsi fust ordenee,
Je vivroye en espoir d'avoyr bone estance
Par sa dignité et tres noble puissance.

Thus I pray to God that he restore it
and purify it without it being broached,
for truly and most certainly
I cannot approach it by night or day,
and if it could be so arranged for me,
I would live in the hope of having good health
through its dignity and most noble power.

En attendant, Esperance conforte
L'omme qui vuolt avoir perfeccion:
En attendant se deduc et deporte,
En attendant li proumet guerredon,
En attendant passe temps et sayson,
En attendant met en li sa fiance:
De toulz ces mets est servis a fayson
Cilz qui ne sceit vivre sans Esperance.

Esperance tient overte la porte,
Adont chascuns puet avoir guarison.
Esperance est de si noble sorte
Que cilz ne doit prendre confusion
Qui l'a o soy, et sanz li ne puet on
Avoir loing temps de playsir habundance:
Dont prendre assés puet consolacion
Cilz qui ne sceit vivre sans Esperance.

Pour ce conoy et voy qu'elle m'ennorte
A li tenir, et j'ay cause et rayson
Quar ja schay bien que s'elle estoit morte
Pou y veroit le mien entencion.
Dont je vos pris en ma conclusion
Que Bel Acueil priés pour m'alagance:
En attendant suy [sanz] presoncion
Cilz qui ne sceit vivre sans Esperance.

While waiting, Hope comforts
the man who seeks perfection:
while waiting, she amuses and entertains him,
while waiting, she promises him reward,
while waiting, time and seasons pass,
while waiting, he places his trust in her.
From all these dishes is amply served
the man who cannot live without Hope.

Hope holds open the door
through which each may find healing.
Hope is of such noble make
that he who has her with him
should never come to harm, and without her
one cannot long enjoy pleasure's abundance:
from which he can take some consolation,
the man who cannot live without Hope.

Therefore I acknowledge and see that she exhorts me
to hold to her, and I have cause and reason,
for I know well that if she were dead
my intent would come to little.
Thus, in conclusion, I beg you
to pray to Fair Welcome for my relief:
while waiting I am, without presumption,
the man who cannot live without Hope.