

THREE OVIDIAN TALES OF LOVE
(*Piramus et Tisbé,*
Narcisus et Dané,
and *Philomena et Procné*)

edited and translated by
RAYMOND CORMIER

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Philomena and Procné: "Wild Justice"

Life of the Author. Chrétien de Troyes is one of the great names in French literature and certainly one of the most eminent in Arthurian literature. An inspired storyteller and master stylist, Chrétien was primarily interested in his characters and in the technique of his writing. More than a link in the Arthurian chain from Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain to Malory's Morte d'Arthur and beyond, Chrétien was the principle French articulator of the oldest legends on King Arthur and composed the oldest known Arthurian romances.

In his frequently-cited prologue to Cliqés, a Byzantine-adventure romance dating from the 1170s, Chrétien claims to have previously composed adaptations of Ovid's Ars Amatoria and Remedia Amoris. In addition, he mentions "The Change (Muance) of the Hoopoe, the Swallow, and of the Nightingale." This latter text is in fact his only extant Ovidiana. Discovered in 1884 by Gaston Paris buried in the Ovide moralisé, attribution to the Champenois poet has been disputed over the past century. The present writer is convinced that Gérard-Zai's historical and diplomatic research will now put to rest any future doubts or hesitations. Dating from the early 1160s, Philomena (and Procné as we call it in this edition) is indeed by Chrétien de Troyes and belongs in his canon, even though many modern literary critics and Chrétien specialists seem often to want to forget the text. This choice fable must have been a tempting enterprise for the young clerc, a committed devotee of the classics, so obvious in all his romances.

Artistic Achievement. Chrétien's retelling follows the broad contours of Ovid's plot. A certain monarch, Pandion of Athens, has two cherished daughters: Philomena, a breathtaking and gifted beauty, and Procne, whom the father marries to Tereus, king of Thrace. A somber wedding, foreboding evil, precedes the ominous birth of a handsome son, Itis. Five years pass by and Procne yearns to see her sister. Tereus offers to sail back to Athens and bring her back. But upon meeting Philomena he is overwhelmed by passionate love. Eventually he gets to take her back to Thrace, where, in a deep wood he violates her and cuts out her tongue to conceal his crime. Tereus then returns to Procne and informs her that her sister is dead. But, though left under guard, Philomena embroiders silently her story in a tapestry—"the too clear web," as Matthew Arnold calls it in his poem Philomela. This signe of misfortune reaches Procne, who understands, discovers Philomena, then hides her, until she can wreak vengeance ("wild justice," in Francis Bacon's words) on her husband at dinner by serving him Itis' body in a stew. Philomena appears and flings the boy's gory head in Tereus' face. Stripped of all human emotions, the three characters in their paroxysm are metamorphosed--Tereus into a hoopoe, Procne into a swallow, and Philomena into a nightingale.

This brutal tale is still very much the young tyro's brilliant school exercise, an apprentice's application of the principles of rhetorical composition, without much attention to harnessing sens and matiere to a good conjointure. Its rather simplistic bipartition--split by the authorial self-reference at v. 734, causes Philomena's buoyant and elated mood to contrast with the tragic ending, and the regal fare served in seemly surroundings at Pandion's Athens palace adumbrates ironically the final gory meal served to the perjurer-rapist.

There is a fascinating moral ambiguity to the tale that leaves unresolved Ovid's tyrannical, savage, and treacherous love. For Tereus' is not a fine amor, freely chosen, ennobling, chivalric: "For unless I'm mistaken, love does not involve the surrender of one's reason" (vv. 485-486).

Chrétien's moral reflection is undercut by Love's domination over Tereus, whose will becomes a plaything of Amor's power. This is the kind of subtle casuistry that will also inform the vocabulary of the whole Tristan legend.

Thus Chrétien provides a powerful psychological portrait of compulsion in Tereus' unrestrained outburst of animal lust after the heroine (the suddenness of which recalls Uther Pendragon's unbridled zeal over the sensuous Igera). The work depicts as well a gripping and realistic vengeance scene as the two outraged sisters cook up the mangled body of Itys (Old Fr. Itis) for his father's dinner. Thus Tereus, like some latter-day Saturn, eats his child by Procne.

The medieval adaptation emphasizes Tereus' evil (and non-courtly) will (volanté) to ravish his sister-in-law Philomena; yet the refined distinction between "yearning" and "lusting" (desir, voleir) stressed in Thomas' Tristan does not yet appear. In the course of a third person description recounting Tereus' mental state of rage (vv. 479-90), Chrétien alludes to the Ovidian paradox on the "Law of Love" and the "Law of Man," or between Folly (which, under Love's rule, becomes Reason) and Reason (under Love's dominion, Folly). A pleasant interlude, following Pandion's assent and the dinner-reception, is modeled on the Provençal alba, or "dawn song." Unlike the troubadour poet who complains that dawn means a separation from his beloved, Tereus rejoices over the sunrise because his nocturnal anguish will end with it (vv. 661-663). Chrétien turns tradition topsy-turvy.

With pleas and tears, Tereus gains control of the innocent lamb (v. 704): "Thus like a guileless shepherd has [Pandion] acted, without fail...". In Ovid, the rape scene is concise and forceful; Chrétien actually softens the insanely passionate moment. Once in a forest not far from home, Thracian Tereus first approaches Philomena in a rather friendly way, far from civilization still, but, nevertheless, he does at least attempt courteous behavior. This scene heralds the rise of a division between the graphic descriptions of the "realistic" group of troubadour poets and the more sensitive, Northern conception of courtly love--as both Frappier and Lazar suggest.

Even before Tereus manages to take his pleasure of her, once realizing his intentions, Philomena utters a long series of anaphora, an apostrophe to the monster (vv. 835 ss.). Chrétien omits the Ovidian motivation for Tereus' shameful act of cutting out her tongue afterwards. In the Old French it is done more arbitrarily. Tereus appears more blameworthy in Chrétien's eyes (cf. esp. vv. 900 ss.) because of his traitorous deception of and bad faith toward King Pandion (with regard to his real reason for removing Philomena from Athens)--and toward his spouse Procne (regarding the truth about Philomena's whereabouts --he tells her she is dead).

Procne, crushed by this false news, exposes a long tirade, full of anaphora and apostrophes to death. She then prepares a curiously authentic sacrifice to Pluto ("Sire des Deables, v. 1019) for the repose of the soul of her sister! In a kind of "reverse euhemerism," Ovid's pagan text thus becomes christianized. Added to the ceremony are curious religious elements that are not in the direct Ovidian source text. (We speculate on their derivation in the Critical Notes).

On the other hand, Philomena manages to foil her forest guardian by weaving in a multicolored tapestry her story: she recounts the horrible adventure with her brother-in-law. The Wheel of Fortune turns to her favor so that she can soon find a way of having her sister see the tapestry (vv. 1156-1212) and understand her plight and duress.

Besides delaying the conclusion considerably with descriptive and suspenseful syntax, Chrétien has carefully crafted the scene in which Procne beheads her son Itis and carves up his body for stew. He even includes a little moralizing sermon regarding human nature and pity which forbid slaying one's own child. "Possessed by the devil," Philomena and Procne bring the tragic fable to a dénouement in nearly as violent a fashion as Ovid's original horror-tale. If any should wonder why loud conservative laments were raised in condemnation of Ovid--indeed of all such vernacular writings, the "dangerous dung of antiquity"--a reading of this truly "baroque" (avant la lettre) and bloody story will provide sufficient answers.

Restored to a degree with medieval trappings, Ovid's well-constructed, priceless "gem" takes on a moralistic, more emotional, prolix, and complex shading, but not enough, however, to detract from the elemental obsessions in the story.

Tereus' rape is an act of violence visited upon Nature's beauty, Philomena. As is the case with Chrétien's other fine creation Enide, "Nature had taken more pains with her than with any other living creature, and had outdone herself with this maiden" (vv. 166-169). Tereus, the quintessence of commonness, sterility, and especially hypocrisy, tries to co-opt, then destroy that perfect image.

This beast would seize from the beauty her power--perhaps a metaphor for vetera sapientia, all the acculturated wisdom transmitted to and through antiquity and here revitalized, not unlike the metonymy we find in the figure of Hamlet's father. In this view, infanticide and cannibalism are justified. The "Wild Justice," to borrow Bacon's term and Jacoby's title--the revenge episode--is not strong or graphic enough! It stands for the artist who would destroy in turn those bent on eliminating his creativity and imagination. At this level, the tale is mindful of Fitzgerald's Great Gatsby. The life of Itis (Itys), Tereus' double and progeny, must end since rhetoric and poetry have been muted forever.

Sources and Influence. Chrétien's Philomena survives in the thirteenth-fourteenth century work known as the Ovide moralisé. Composed by a Minorite friar who was perhaps a Poitevin writer (sometimes identified as Chrétien Legouais) the massive work seems to have been undertaken at the behest of Jeanne de Champagne, Philip the Fair's queen (d. 1305). The author's allegorical interpretations often conflict one with the other, not surprising in this vast encyclopedic compilation of some 72,000 lines.

The Philomena and Procné story, as we call it, was adapted from Book Six of Ovid's Metamorphoses (vv. 426-674). It is indeed a pure gem of atrocity. With Chrétien, the telling becomes slightly modified, though amplified at length, with a heavy use of psychological analyses of interior states. Ovid's 248 hexameters become nearly 1500 octosyllables in Chrétien's hands. Not unexpectedly, he suppresses much of the conventional elements of antiquity, the Furies, for example, and the various learned mythological references. Neither "clerc" nor "prestre" chant over the wedding between Tereus and Procné; yet, as in Ovid, it forebodes ominously, suggested by the melody of four inauspicious birds (in Ovid, the screech-owl alone). When the couple's first child is born, they celebrate a feast like that of Teruagan (a pagan deity in the Chanson de Roland). The banal and almost automatic portrait of Philomena fills nearly ninety lines, but Chrétien pauses just before beginning to offer a good example of undercutting within an Ovidian convention; we refer to the author's avowal that he should not be ashamed to fail to describe the maiden properly, since neither the language nor knowledge of Plato, Homer, or Cato could handle it either. In his pedantic descriptio, which in itself recalls Enide in Chrétien's first Arthurian romance; several key characteristics emerge: Nature's great efforts to design her; Philomena possesses many gifts and the knowledge of various crafts; her father holds her in great affection; and she is literate. Frappier calls her a "mythological princess, almost a courtly high brow."

From a technical point of view, besides the suppression of much of the mythological tissue and mention of the gods (but not all, by any means), amplification is effected through frequent direct discourse. Pandion is besought by Tereus, not once as in Ovid, but twice, which enables the poet to present the villain-hero and the heroine in an intervening conversation full of one word stichomythic responses in the dialectic mode.

Other features include Ovidian disquisitions (drawn from other texts, e.g., the Ars Amatoria or Remedia Amoris) by the Old French author on the nature, character, and effects of love. Writing in a "sub-antique" (as Panofsky might call it), rather lyrical style, Chrétien dis- courses on love's changeability and fickleness, its blindness, or its munificent promises but skimpy gifts.

Besides the source text from the Meta- morphoses (consulted by Chrétien in a glossed version, no doubt), it has been shown recently that Hyginus' fable on the Philomena story was also among Chrétien's sources. I should like to point to the Medea episode in Ovid's epic for a likely source of Procné's ritual sacrifice in the Old French text.

In addition to the numerous echoes of this story throughout Chrétien's five romances (in particular, Erec et Enide and Cligés), both Ovid's Philomela episode and the Old French Philomena and Procné had a profound and continuing later influence, especially in English literature. Chaucer's Legend of Good Women includes a retelling; and Shakespeare's first tragedy, Titus Andronicus, shows unmistakable signs of Ovidian justification: one recalls with horror the rape and mutilation of Lavinia and the pathetic scene of her turning, with her stumps, the pages of Ovid's Metamorphoses to the Philomela story--in order to identify her attackers. The cannibalism theme is echoed starkly in Act V, where Lavinia catches the villains Chiron and Demetrius' blood in a basin which is used as an ingredient for a pie served to their mother, the evil Empress Tamora. Lavinia's shame has no other possible end but death at her father Titus' hand.

Numerous major poets have written about the Philomela myth--such as Keats and Arnold; and T.S. Eliot has alluded to the tale in his modern poem, The Waste Land.

Philomena et Progné

Pandions fu d'Athenes rois
Poissanz et larges et cortois.
Deus filles ot, que mout ama:
L'une avoit non Philomena,
5 L'autre Progné: ce fu l'ainznee.
Cele fu a mari donee.
Uns rois de Trace la requist,
Don Pandions mout liez se fist.
Mout liez s'en fist?--Voire.--Por quoi?
10 Por ce qu'il la dona a roi.
A roi? Mes a tirant felon.
Tereüs ot li tiranz non,
Cui Pandions sanz grant proiere
Dona Progné sa fille chiere.
15 Males noces fist Tereüs,
Car n'i fu Himeneüs,
Li deus qui as noces dut estre.
Ains n'i chanta ne clers ne prestre,
Ne n'i ot nul signe de joie,
20 Mes tote nuit a sa voiz roie
Chanta sus la chanbre li dus
Et li huaz et li cucus
Et la fresaie et li corbiaus.
Cil signes ne fu mie biaux,
25 Ainz fu de duel et de pesance
Tote cele senefiance.
Mout fu lor assamblee male,
Car es chanbres et an la sale
Volerent tote nuit maufé,
30 Atropos et Tesiphoné
Et totes males destinees.
Quant les noces furent finees,
S'en mena Tereüs sa fame
An Trace come haute dame.
35 La orent antr'aus deus un fil.
A mal eür l'eussent il!

Philomena and Procné

Pandion, the powerful, liberal, and courteous King of Athens had two daughters, whom he loved greatly, named Philomena and Procné. The latter, who was older, was given in marriage to her suitor, a king of Thrace, and Pandion rejoiced. Rejoiced? -- Yes, indeed. -- And why? Because he married her to a king. To a king? Rather to a wicked tyrant named Tereus; Pandion gave her away without much pleading. The wedding with Tereus was inauspicious because Hymen, the god who should preside at weddings, was not present. Nor did any man of learning or priest chant at the ceremony, nor was there any sign of joy. But all night with its raucous voice the owl sang over the wedding chamber, along with the screech-owl, cuckoo, wood-owl, and the crow. These signs were not at all good, rather they were grievous and worrisome, all these forebodings. Their union was under an evil omen, for in the chambers and in the great hall flew the demons, Atropos and Tisiphone, and all sorts of fateful spirits.

When the wedding was over Tereus took his noble wife to Thrace. There a son was born to them, which would be to their sorrow. (1-36)

Le jor que li anfes fu nez
 Celebra trestoz li regnez
 Et feste an firent chascun an
 40 Aussi come de Tervagan,
 Car Tereüs le comanda.
 Li anfes crut et amanda
 Si fu mout biaux dedanz cinc anz.
 Itis ot non. Ce fu diaus granz
 45 Qu'il ne vesqui plus longuement.
 Je vos dirai assez comant
 De lui avint a la parclose,
 Mes ainz vos dirai autre chose.
 Ja avoient, si con moi sanble,
 50 Plus de cinc anz esté ansanble
 Antre Progné et son seignor.
 De Philomena sa seror
 Ot talant que veoir l'alast,
 Mes qu'a son seignor ne pesast.
 55 Un jor a parole l'an mist,
 Si li jura mout et promist
 Que, se il la leissoit aler
 A sa seror outre la mer
 Que mout tost s'an retourneroit
 60 Ne gueires ne sejourneroit,
 Et se il li deffant la voie,
 Tant qu'ele sa seror ne voie
 Don li prie ele qu'il l'aut querre
 Si l'amaint an la soe terre.
 65 Cil li respont qu'ele remaingne.
 Et del remenoir ne se plaigne,
 Qu'il ira, quel que tans qu'il face,
 Et si l'an amanra an Trace.
 Tot maintenant ses nes comande
 70 Tereüs garnir de viande,
 De maz, de voiles et de trez.
 Ja est tot fet. Anz est antrez.
 Il ot o lui grant compaignie.
 Au departir Progné li prie
 75 Que sa seror tost li amaint.
 Atant se sont an mer anpant,
 Tandent les cordez et les voiles
 Et s'an vont au cors des estoiles.
 Siglent de jorz, siglent de nuiz.

On the day of the child's birth, Tereus ordered the whole kingdom to celebrate and hold an annual festival similar to the one for Tervagan.

The child grew and throve, and at five was quite handsome. Itis was his name. 'Twas a great pity he did not live longer. I will relate, indeed, how he came to his end, but first will recount another matter. Procné and her spouse were living together more than five years, I believe, when she felt a need to see her sister, but did not want to trouble her spouse about it. One day she gave her word and promised and swore that, if he let her go across the sea to Philomena, she would not stay long and would return very soon. And if he forbade the trip so that she might not see her sister, then she would ask him to go in her place and bring her sister to his land. He answered that she should stay and not worry about it, and that he would go, however long it might take, and thus would bring her back to Thrace.

Forthwith Tereus orders his ships filled with provisions and readied with masts, sails, and main-yards. All is done, and now his large company is lodged. As he departs, Procné begs him to return soon with her sister. Thereupon they set out to sea, stretch lines and spread sails, and fix their course by the stars. They sail day and night. (37-79)

80 Ce fu granz diaus et granz enuiz
 Que passé furent a un sible,
 Et trop lor fu la mers peisible,
 Et de grant mauvestié li vint
 85 Quant ele le roi ne retint,
 Car mout an fust granz maus remes.
 Pandions ot parler des nes
 Qui a son port sont arriveés;
 Les noveles li sont contees
 90 Que ses jandres veoir le vient.
 A l'ancontre aler li covient.
 Maintenant li vet a l'ancontre,
 A l'issir del havle l'ancontre,
 Sel salue et le beise mout
 95 La boche et les iauz et le vout.
 Tant l'esjoit que tot le lasse.
 Totes ses sanz salue a masse,
 Si lesian maine an sa cité,
 Puis li anquierit la verité
 100 De sa fille et de son neveu,
 S'il sont bien lié et sain et preu,
 Et Tereüs a ce respont
 Qu'andui lié et sain et preu sont,
 Si le saluent cil et cele,
 105 Puis li dist que plus ne li cele
 Quel est l'acholson de sa voie:
 "Sire," fet il, "a vos m'anvoie
 Progné, qui mout grant desir a
 De parler a Philomena.
 110 Vostre fille par moi vos mande,
 Et se ma proliere i amande,
 Je vos pri que li anvoiez.
 Tant vos iert que vos la raiez,
 Car s'ele ja la ne demore
 115 Qu'un seul jor ne qu'une sole ore,
 Si cuit je que mout vos iert tant
 Que vos la raiez ceste part.
 Et por ce vos met an covant
 Que, des que je verrai le vant
 120 Douz et peisible a retorner,
 Ne la leira point sejourner
 Que je tantost ne la remaingne.
 Mais or est droiz que je me plaingne
 De li que n'est a moi venue."
 125 Atant est d'une chambre issue
 Philomena eschevelee.

It is very grievous and vexatious that they
 cross without obstacle and that the sea is so calm
 for them... for great harm will come of the visit.
 If only the king kept her back, much evil would be
 avoided....

Pandion heard about the ships arriving in his
 harbor. He received the news that his son-in-law
 had come to see him. It was proper to go meet them
 and he did so forthwith. At the harbor's exit he
 greeted Tereus warmly and embraced him on the
 mouth, the eyes, and the face. Pandion rejoiced
 so much he was fatigued by it all. All Tereus'
 people he greeted en masse and led them into
 Athens. Then he inquired about the well-being of
 his daughter and grandson, whether they were
 happy, healthy, and sound. And Tereus answered
 that both were quite well and that they sent
 greetings to him. Then he revealed the occasion
 of his visit.

"Sire," he said, "Procné sends me here be-
 cause she feels a great need to speak with Philo-
 mena. Through me your daughter asks you (may my
 own prayer help the cause): I beg you to send her
 with me. You will want to have her back soon.
 Even if she stays only a day or a single hour,
 I should think that you would want to have her
 back here with you (as soon as possible). And for
 this reason I promise you that once I see the wind
 soft and calm enough for a return, I will not let
 her stay away, and will return her immediately.
 But now it is right for me to complain: she has
 yet to come greet me!"

Thereupon Philomena issued from the chamber,
 with her hair down-- (80-125)

Ne sanbloit pas nonain velee,
 Car granz mervoille iert a retreire
 Son jant cors et son cler vieire,
 Que ne poïst, ce croi, sofire
 130 A totes ses granz biautez dire
 Li sans ne la langue Platon
 Ne la Omer ne la Caton,
 Qui mout furent de grant savoir.
 Don ne doi je pas honte avoir
 135 Se je apres ces trois i fail,
 Et j'i metrai tot mon travail.
 Desqu'anpris l'ai, n'an quier recroire:
 Plus dirai qu'an ne porroit croire,
 Primes del chief et puis del cors.
 140 Plus estoit luisanz que fins ors
 Trestot sa cheveleüre.
 Tel l'ot Deus faite que Nature
 Mien esciant i fausist bien,
 S'ele i vosist amender rien.
 145 Le front ot blanc et plain sanz fronce;
 Les iauz plus clers qu'une jagonce;
 Large antr'oel, sorciz aligniez;
 Nes ot ne fardez ne guigniez;
 Le nes ot haut et lonc et droit,
 150 Tel con biautez avoir le doit;
 Fresche color ot an son vis
 De roses et de flor de lis;
 Boche riant, levres grossettes,
 Et un petitet vermeillettes
 155 Plus que samiz vermauz an grainne,
 Et plus soef oloit s'alainne
 Que pimanz ne basmes n'ançans.
 Danz ot petiz, serrez et blans;
 Manton et col, gorge et peitrine
 160 Ot plus blans que n'est nule ermine;
 Autresi come deus pomettes
 Estoient ses deus mamelettes;
 Mains ot gresles, longues et blanches,
 Gresles les flans, basses les hanches.
 165 Tant par fu bien fet li sorplus
 Que tant bele rien ne vit nus,
 Car Nature s'an fu penee
 Plus que de nule autre rien nee,
 S'i ot tot mis quanqu'ele pot.
 170 Avuec la grant biauté qu'ele ot
 Sot quanque doit savoir pucele.

quite unlike a veiled nun. Now it would be so great a marvel to describe her noble body and bright face that neither the wisdom nor the language of Plato, Homer, or Cato, who were very wise, could have done justice to all her great charms. Thus I should not be ashamed if, after these three, I fail, for I shall put into it all my effort. Since I have begun I will not recant, and shall say more than one would think, first about the head and then the body.

Her whole head of hair shone brighter than pure gold. God had made Philomena in such a way that even Nature would indeed fail if she wished to improve upon this maiden. Her forehead was white and wide, without a wrinkle; her eyes clearer than jacinths. There was some space between them, and her eyebrows were even, with no make-up or falseness about her. Her nose was high, long, and straight, just as beauty demands. Her face was freshly colored like roses and lilies. Her mouth smiling, with full lips, slightly crimsoned, somewhat more than scarlet-dyed silk. And her breath smelled sweeter than spices, balms, or incense. Her teeth were small, close, and white. Her chin and neck, throat, and bosom were whiter than any ermine; like two small apples were her two tiny breasts. Her hands were delicate, long, and white; her sides slender and her hips low. So perfect was the rest of her that no one ever saw so fair a person, for Nature had taken more pains with her than with any other living creature, and had outdone herself with this maiden. Besides her great beauty, Philomena was knowledgeable in all that a young woman should know: (126-171)

Ne fu mains sage que bele,
 Se ja la verité recort.
 Plus sot de joie et de deport
 175 Qu'Apoloines ne que Tristanz:
 Plus an sot voire voir dis tanz.
 Des tables sot et des eschas,
 Del vieil jeu et del "sis et as,"
 De la bufe et de la hamee.
 180 Por son deduit estoit amee
 Et requise de hanz barons.
 D'esperviers sot et de faucons
 Et del jantil et del lanier;
 Bien sot feire un faucon muier
 185 Et un ostor et un tercuel,
 Ne ja ne fust ele son vuel
 S'an gibier non ou an riviere.
 Avuec ç'iert si bone ouvriere
 D'ovrer une porpre vermoille
 190 Qu'an tot le mont n'ot sa paraille.
 Un diaspre ou un baudequin
 Nes la Mesniee Hellequin
 Seüst ele an un drap portreire.
 Des autors sot et de grameire
 195 Et sot bien feire vers et letre,
 Et, quant li plot, li antremetre
 Et del sautier et de la lire:
 Plus an sot qu'an ne porroit dire,
 Et de la gigue et de la rote.
 200 Soz ciel n'a lai ne son ne note
 Qu'el ne seüst bien vieler,
 Et tant sot sagement parler
 Que' solemant de sa parole
 Seüst ele tenir escole.
 205 La pucele vint a son pere,
 Qui la face ot vermoille et clere;
 An un samit estoit laciee,
 Et Tereüs l'a anbraciee
 Si la salue et beise ansamble.
 210 Sa granz biautez son cuer li anble
 Et sa tres bele contenance.
 Pechiez le met an esperance
 De mauvestié et de folie;
 Amors vilainement le lie. --

she was no less wise than beautiful, if the truth
 be told. She knew more about games and amusements
 --ten times more--than Apollonius or Tristan. She
 could play checkers and chess, the old six and
 ace game, and she knew the slap and trap game too.
 Because of her love of pleasures she was eyed and
 courted by high noblemen. She was familiar with
 sparrow hawks and falcons, with gentles and
 lanners. She knew also how to moult a falcon,
 goshawk, or a tercel. Never was she at ease except
 while hunting or fishing. Moreover, she was so
 skilled in working precious purple cloth that she
 was without equal in the whole world. She would
 know how to make arabesques in silk or embroidered
 vestments, and could even portray in cloth a
 family array of merry pranksters. She knew her
 Latin authors and how to compose verse and prose;
 and if she pleased, she could accompany them with
 psaltery and lyre. Better than one could describe
 could she pluck or play the vielle; and she could
 strum any lay or tune or note at will. She knew
 how to speak so wisely that by words alone she
 could teach.

The maiden came to her father, her face all
 ruddy and clear, her attire of laced silk. And
 Tereus embraced her, greeted her, and they kissed.
 ... Philomena's dazzling beauty seizes his
 heart. Pitifully he has evil and foolish desires.
 Vile, churlish love now binds him. (172-214)

215 Vilainement?--Voire, sanz faille:
 De vilenie se travaille,
 Quant il son cuer viaut atorner
 A la seror sa fame amer. --
 Por ce, s'ele iert sa suer germaine,
 220 N'estoit mie l'amors vilaine,
 Car uns lor deus que il avoient
 Selonc la loi que il tenoient
 Establi qu'il feissent tuit
 Lor volanté et lor deduit.
 225 Tel loi lor avoit cil escrete
 Que quanqu'il lor plect ne delite
 Pooit chascuns feire sanz crime:
 Itel loi tenoit paiennime.
 Por ce se poïst cil deffandre,
 230 S'il fust qui l'an vosist reprendre,
 Ne ce qu'il li pleisoit a feire
 Ne devoit nus a mal retreire.
 Mes or leissons lor loi ester.
 Qui porroit Amors contrestre
 235 Que trestot son voloir ne face?
 Mal issi Tereüs de Trace
 Por aler Philomena querre,
 Qu'Amors a vers lui prise guerre,
 S'est angigniez et mal bailliz,
 240 Qu'au cuer li est li feus sailliz
 Qui de legier art et esprant.
 La pucele antre ses braz prant
 Et si li dist: "Ma douce amie,
 Vostre suer vos salue et prie
 245 Que vos veigniez deduire o li,
 Et je meïsmes vos an prie,
 Se ma proiere i puet eidier.
 S'estre poïst por Deu proïier,
 Pieç'a que vos fussiez an Trace,
 250 Qu'il n'est oner que Progné face
 Fors qu'ele vos puisse tenir.
 Se je li leïssasse venir,
 Ele fust ça a vos venue,
 Mes je l'ai de la retenue
 255 Tot a force, contre son cuer.
 Mout par a grant fain vostre suer
 De vos veoir une quinzainne.
 Gardez que sauve i soit ma painne,
 Si proïiez mon seignor le roi
 260 Que venir vos lest avuec moi.

Vile? Yes, for sure. Love torments him with vile-
 ness, for it wishes to make his heart love his
 wife's sister. (Now if she were his own sister it
 would not be illicit, because one of the gods they
 had established that they could do anything they
 wanted or pleased. Such a law had this god written
 for them that one could do whatever pleased or
 delighted, without offense. Such was the pagan
 law. Therefore, if anyone wished to blame or
 reprimand him, Tereus could defend any of his
 pleasureful acts whatsoever. But now let us leave
 their law.)

Who can contest Love or ever keep it from
 its goal? To his sorrow did Tereus leave Thrace to
 seek Philomena, for Love had begun its siege,
 tricking and mistreating him.

The fire that catches and burns easily has
 burst into flames in his heart. He takes the lass
 into his arms and says to her:

"My sweet friend, your sister sends greetings
 and beseeches you to come disport with her, and I,
 too, beg of you to come. If my prayer will help,
 it would be to pray God that you will soon be in
 Thrace. Procné makes no other petition except that
 she may embrace you. If I had let her, she would
 have come to you here by herself, but I kept her
 from doing so, by force and against her will. Your
 sister has been hungering to see you for a fort-
 night. Take care that it is worth all my trouble,
 and ask my lord the king to let you come with me.
 (215-260)

Ne cuit que riens li doie nuire,
 S'il vos leisse venir deduire
 A vostre seron par de la.
 Tant me dist, ains ne le cela,
 265 Quant je de li le congié pris,
 Que ses sire ne les amis
 Ja mes a nul jor ne seroie
 Se sa seron ne li menoie,
 Et certes je voldroie miauz
 270 Estre foibles, chenuz et viauz,
 Qu'ele me feist leide chiere,
 Or si proiez, m'amie chiere,
 Vostre pere que, s'il li plest,
 275 Avuec moi venir vos an lest."
 Cele, qui n'estoit mie fole,
 Li respont: "Sire, ma parole
 Anvers la vostre que vaudroit?
 Se vos esgardiez a droit
 Vos devriez proier einçois,
 280 --Tel est la costume as François --
 Que cil qui viout la chose avoir,
 S'il a tant proesce et savoir,
 Del avoir se painne et travaille,
 Et s'il avient que il i faille
 285 N'espleitier ne puisse par lui,
 Lors doit feire proier autrui."
 "Demeisele, voir avez dit,
 Et neporquant un seul petit
 I poissiez bien amander:
 290 Primes deüssiez demander
 Se je l'an ai requis ou non."
 "Par mon chief, ce deüsse mon!
 Se je tant de reison eüsse
 Anquis et demandé l'eüsse.
 295 Mes or me dites neporquant:
 Avez le vos ne tant ne quant
 A reison mis de cest afeire?"
 "Bien li ai dit, sanz noise feire."
 "Que vos respondi?"--"Nule chose." --
 300 "Don n'i convient il point de glose.
 Des que respont ne vos viout randre,
 Assez me puet ma suer atandre,
 Qu'ele ne me verra des mois.
 Bien sai que mes sire li rois
 305 N'a talant que congié me doingne.
 Ne li plest pas ceste besoingne."

There can be no harm, I think, if he lets you go
 disport with your sister across the sea. This much
 she told me, hiding nothing at all, when I took
 my leave of her, that I should no longer be either
 her lord nor her friend unless I return with her
 sister. And, indeed, I should rather be feeble,
 hoary, and old than to fall from her esteem. So
 please, my dear friend, ask your father, if it
 please him, to let you come with me."

She, who was not foolish at all, answered:

"My lord, what is my word worth compared to
 yours? If you are to do it correctly, you should
 ask first--such is the French custom--for if you
 want something, and have enough nobility and
 wisdom, you should take the trouble, effort, and
 work to obtain it; and if it happens that you fail
 and cannot be successful alone, then you ought to
 find others to work on your behalf."

"My dear, you have spoken the truth, and yet
 you could improve on it a little. You should have
 first asked whether I already made the request."

"My word, indeed I should have done so. If I
 were so rational I would have first asked and
 inquired about that. But now please tell me, have
 you in any way spoken to him of this matter?"

"I have, in fact, mentioned it, without
 insisting."

"What did he say?"

"Nothing."

"Then there is no explanation needed now,
 until he wants to give you an answer. My sister
 will wait for me a long time and will not see me
 for months. I know in fact that my sire the king
 does not want to give me leave. This idea does not
 please him." (261-306)

"Ne li plest mie?"--"Non, ce croi."
 "A quoi le savez vos?"--"A quoi?
 A ce qu'il ne vos viaut respondre."
 310 "Autrement le poez espondre
 Et antandre an autre meniere:
 Il oi tote ma proiere
 Et escouta mout volantiers,
 Que mot ne dist andemantiers,
 315 Et por ce cuit Je qu'il li plest,
 Qu'assez otroie qui se test."
 "N'est pas voire ceste sentance,
 Qu'ancor somes nos an dotance
 De l'escondit ou de l'otroi."
 320 Lors redist Tereüs au roi:
 "Sire, rois d'Athenes li sages,
 Bien vos est contez mes messages
 De par vostre fille Progné.
 Se tuit li home qui sont né
 325 Vos requeroient d'un afeire,
 Si devriez vos por moi feire
 Einçois que por aus toz ansamble,
 Et por voz filles, ce me sanble,
 Au mains feire le devriez,
 330 Se vos por moi nel feisiez,
 Car cele le vos a mandé,
 Et ceste me ra comandé
 Que je vos an prie et m'an paingne
 Tant que je avuec moi l'an maingne."
 335 Pandions sur sa main s'apuie,
 Cui ceste chose mout enuie.
 Enuie qu'enoier li puet,
 Mes a respondre li estuet.
 "Amis," fet il, "vos savez bien
 340 Que, Je n'ai an cest siecle rien
 Que vos tot a vostre pleisir
 Ne poissiez prandre et seisir
 Se vos mestier an avieez,
 Mes je croi, se vos savieez
 345 Les biens que ma fille me fet,
 Ja ne me metriez an plet
 De ce don vos me requerez.

"It does not please him at all?"
 "I don't think so."
 "How do you know?"
 "How? Because he does not wish to give an
 answer now."
 "But one can explain it and take it in
 another way: he heard me out, listening to my
 request, then said nothing. For this reason I
 think it pleased him, because he who is silent
 grants much."
 "That is not really his decision, because we
 remain unsure whether he will refuse or accept."
 Then Tereus spoke to the king: "Sire, wise
 King of Athens, my message, on behalf of your
 daughter Procné, has been given. Even if everyone
 in the world were to ask you for something, it
 seems to me you should grant my request before all
 theirs, and you should do so at least for your
 daughters, if you won't do it for me. Now Procné
 has requested this favor of you, and she has also
 ordered me to ask; so I beseech you now and will
 exert myself until I bring her away with me."
 Pandion leans on his hand, for this matter
 vexes him greatly. Yet however much it vexes him,
 he must respond:
 "My friend," he says, "you know perfectly
 well that of anything in this world that I
 possess, if you are needy, you can have and keep
 as much as you want. But I think that if you knew
 what happiness my daughter brings me, you would
 never place before me a plea like this. (307-347)

Toz seroie desesperez
 S'un jor estoie sanz ma fille.
 350 Croce m'estuet et aneille
 Des or mes por moi apoier.
 S'il ne vos devoit enoier,
 De ce don vos m'avez requis
 Seroit respiz et termes pris."
 355 "Respiz?"--"Voire."--"Tot a delivre.
 Combien?"--"Tant come j'ai a vivre,
 Car sachiez bien certainement:
 Ne vivrai mie longuemant,
 Car je sui viauz et foibles trop.
 360 Plus ai vescu ne fist Jacob
 Ne Abraham ne Esaü,
 Si ai mout de mes biens eü,
 Mes or n'ai mes rien qui me pleise;
 An ma fille sont tuit mi eise;
 365 Par li vif je tant solemant,
 Car n'ai autre sostenement.
 Se vos li sole me tolez,
 Ma vie acorchier me volez.
 De ce vos faz seür et cert
 370 Que ma fille me garde et sert
 Et nuit et jor et soir et main;
 N'i leisse autrui metre la main
 N'a mon lever n'a mon couchier.
 Ma douce fille m'a tant chier
 375 Qu'ele me chauce, ele me vest,
 Et ses servises tant me pliest
 Que, se ne fust ses reconforz,
 Grant pieç'a que je fusse morz.
 Por ce vos pri, se vos m'amez,
 380 Que cest don quite me clamez."
 Or n'est pas Tereüs a eise,
 Car il n'ot chose qui li pleise
 Et del tot cuide avoir failli.
 Or se tient mout a maubailli.
 385 Ne set que feire ne que dire,
 Mes mout est maz et mout sospire
 Et fet sanblant que mout li grieve
 Quant il sa volanté n'achieve,
 Volanté qu'est mauveise et fole.
 390 Tote a perdue la parole,
 Qu'il ne dit mot, einçois se plaint.
 Sa folie son savoir vaint.

Why, I should be full of despair if I were to be
 one day without my daughter; I should need a cane
 and crutches to lean on ever after. And so it
 should not vex you if this request you have made
 is delayed and fixed at an appointed future time."

"Delayed?"

"Yea."

"Quite willingly... For how long?"

"For as long as I live. Because you must know
 that I am very old and feeble and will not live
 much longer. I have lived longer than Jacob,
 Abraham, or Esau, and have profited much from my
 life. But now I have so little happiness; my
 daughter is my only comfort. It is through her
 that I continue to live, for I have no other
 sustenance. If you take just her alone from me,
 you will cut short my life. My daughter watches
 and serves me night and day, morning and evening.
 She allows no one to help with my rising nor at
 my bedding. My sweet daughter holds me so dearly
 that she puts on my boots and dresses me. Her
 services please me so much that, were it not for
 her consolation, I should have died long ago. For
 this reason I beg of you, if you hold me dearly at
 all, please clear me of this request."

Now Tereus was not comfortable, for he did
 not have what he wanted and thought he had failed
 completely. Now he considered himself ill-treated.
 He knew not what to do or say, but was very down-
 cast and full of sighs; he made believe he was
 very hurt because he had not achieved his wish--an
 evil and foolish desire. He stood completely
 speechless and uttered nothing but laments. His
 folly conquered his wisdom.... (348-392)

Folie? Mes Amors, ce cuit,
 Cele qui tot vaint et destruit
 395 Et quant li plect an petit d'ore
 Le veincu remet au desore.
 --Est don Amors de tel vertu
 Qu'ele fet vaintre le veincu?
 -- Oïl, ce tesmoingnent et dient
 400 Cil qui d'Amor braient et criënt,
 Et de puis que cil le temoingnent
 Qui Amor servent et ressoingnent,
 Don puis je par reison prover
 Qu'an ne puet leauté trover
 405 An cele Amor qui si tost change,
 Qui ses amis de li estrange
 Et retient noviaus soudoiers
 Et done a toz igaus loiers. --
 Par foi, don est Amors leaus,
 410 Qu'ele done loiers igaus. --
 Ainz est desleauté aperte,
 Que chascun selonc sa desserte
 Et selonc ce que il miauz vaut
 Doit ses loiers monter plus haut.
 415 Mes je sai bien comant ce vient
 Qu'Amors les plus mauves retient
 Et refuse çaus qui miauz valent.
 Savez por quoi li meillor falent?
 Por ce qu'Amors ne set eslire
 420 Qui est li miaudre ne li pire.
 --Ne set? Don n'est ele pas sage. --
 --Si est. Mes ele a tel corage
 Qu'il ne li chaut ne nul savoir,
 Quant sa volanté puet avoir.
 425 Amors est plus que vanz legiere;
 Por ce est fausse et mançongiere
 Que de prometre est large et riche
 Et de doner avere et chiche,
 Ne ne fet mal se a çaus non
 430 Qui sont an sa subjection;
 Çaus bote Amors et çaus justise
 Qui se painnent de son servise,
 Ne por enui ne por contreire
 Nese pueënt de li retreire,
 435 Car nus qui ains amast a certes,
 Queus que an fussent les dessertes,
 N'an fu recreüz ne lassez,
 Car nus n'an porroit faire assez.

Folly? But it is rather Love, I think, that con-
 quers and destroys all, and, if it wants after a
 while, raises the vanquished to their feet. Has
 Love such power that it can cause the vanquished
 to be vanquished? O yes, indeed! For so witness
 and swear it those who whine and cry about Love.
 And since those who care for and serve Love bear
 witness to this, then I can prove by reasoning
 that there is no justice in that Love which
 changes so quickly, which alienates its faithful,
 retains new followers, and gives equal rewards to
 all.

Indeed, then, Love is just in that it con-
 fers equal rewards. No, rather this is obviously
 just, for each should receive according to his
 merits, and the one who is worth more should have
 higher rewards. Yet I know indeed how it happens
 that Love keeps to the wicked and refuses the
 worthy. Do you know why the best fail? Because
 Love does not know how to choose the best from
 the worst.

Does not know? Then Love is not wise.

Oh, yes it is. But Love's nature is such that
 no knowledge distracts it as long as it can do its
 will. Love is no more than a light wind, for it is
 false and deceitful, generous and abundant in
 promises but avaricious and short with giving. And
 it harms only those who are its subjects. Love
 strikes and chastises only those who take pains to
 serve the master. Neither through trouble nor mis-
 fortune can they retreat. For no one who ever
 loved truly, whatever the rewards, was ever
 altogether refreshed or fatigued by it, because
 one can never do enough for Love. (393-438)

Amors fet tot quanqu'ele viaut
 440 Et cil qui plus s'an plaint et diaut
 Plus alume et plus an esprant,
 Car joie ne solaz n'an prant.
 Amors est maus don la mecine
 L'anfermeté plus anracine.
 445 Nus ne set queus est la santez,
 Car por feire ses volantez
 Guide sa delivrance querre:
 Des lors le lie plus et serre.
 Don fust mout sages Tereüs,
 450 S'il s'an vosist retreire ansus
 Et raler s'an sanz la pucele
 Mes tant la voit cortoise et bele
 Et de totes biautez adroite
 Que, s'a son voloir n'an exploite,
 455 Toz vis cuidera anragier,
 Car ne s'an puet descoragier.
 Que fera don? Ne set que face.
 La pucele sovant anbrace
 Et sospire formant et plore.
 460 Ja ne cuide veoir cele ore
 Qu'il la taingne a sa volanté.
 Si l'a Deables anchanté,
 Qui de mal feire ne repose,
 Que par soi seul panse et propose
 465 Qu'a force prandre li estuet,
 Se par amor vaintre nel puet,
 Ou par nuit mener an anblee,
 Mes po avoit jant assanblee,
 Si dotoit tel chose a anprendre
 470 Que ne poist bone fin prandre.
 Por ce au plus qu'il puet se cuevre,
 Que fole et vilainne fust l'uevre
 Se la citez fust estormie
 De la jant qui iert andormie,
 475 Car ja d'aus n'an alast uns vis.
 Fors de cestui pansé l'a mis
 Reisons, que ne sai don li vint.
 Esmervoil moi comant ç'avint
 Que Reisons fist a cele foiz,
 480 Car trop iert durement destroiz.
 --Destroiz? De quoi?--De plus qu'amer,
 Qu'amors ne doit nus ce clamer. --

Love does anything it wants, and the more you complain and grieve, the more it will kindle and burn within, for you cannot take joy or solace in it. Love is an illness whose medicine causes the pain to go deeper. In love, no one knows what health is; one thinks only to do its bidding and seek deliverance. Whereupon Love binds even more and tightens its grip....

Thus Tereus would have been very wise to withdraw and go off without the maiden. But he considered her so very courtly and fair, and so obviously gifted that, if he did not succeed in his desire, he thought he would go completely mad, for he could not undo his intention.

What will he do then? He knew not.

He embraced the lass over and over, sighed aloud, and wept. He thought he would never live to see the moment when he would possess her as he wished.

Thus has the Devil, whose evil does not rest, enchanted Tereus, so that alone he thought and planned to take her, if need be, by force, if he could not conquer through Love; or else he would take her away secretly at night, although his retinue was small and he hesitated to undertake something that might not end well. From this he shrank, then, as indeed he should, for such a plan would be foolish and base; if those asleep in the city were awakened none of them would escape alive. The only exception was Tereus in whom reason provoked these thoughts, and I don't know why. I am, in fact, surprised by this visit of reason, for he was indeed sorely distressed. By what? By more than Love, because no one should call all this love. (439-482)

Amors?--Non voir.--Et quoi?--Outrage,
 Desleauté et forsenage,
 485 Car, s'au voir cuit bien assener,
 N'est pas amors de forsenner.
 Trop est forsenez Tereüs
 Et si forsane plus et plus:
 Por ce me vient a grant mervoille
 490 Que nule raisons le consoille.
 --Reisons? Comant?--Ja se retret
 Del foi pansé qu'il avoit fet,
 Et dit qu'ancor viaut essaiier
 S'il porra vaintre par proiier.
 495 Lors recomança sa proiier;
 Au roi parol an tel meniere:
 "Sire," fet il, "bien sai et voi
 Que petit ferliez por moi
 Quant ce don m'avez refusé.
 500 Por neant ai mon tans usé,
 Quant je ving oan ceste part.
 Or m'an repant, mes c'est a tart,
 Si m'an irai si con je ving.
 Ains mes por si fol ne me ting
 505 De rien nule que je feisse.
 Mon vuel oan ne vos veisse
 Ne n'eüsse la mer passee.
 Povre achoison avez trovee
 De vostre fille qui vos sert!
 510 Se je por ce ma voie pert,
 Trop me serai an vain lassez.
 Don n'avez vos serjanz assez
 Et puceles por vos servir?
 Bien vos poez de li sofrir
 515 Tant solemant trois jorz ou quatre,
 Se la leissiez venir esbatre
 A sa seror, qui ça m'anvoie.
 Por po de chose ai fet grant voie,
 Si m'iert mout grief se je i fail,
 520 Non por li, mes por mon travail,
 Et plus por el, qui plus m'enuie,
 Car Progné me dist que m'an fuie
 Ne ja mes a li ne retor,
 Car failli avroie a s'amor,
 525 Se sanz sa seror revenoie.

Love? No, indeed. Then what? Excess. Disloyalty.
 Madness. Because, unless I'm wrong, Love does not
 involve the surrender of one's reason. Tereus
 was quite mad now and kept getting worse. There-
 fore it astonishes me that reason should give
 him counsel. Reason? How? By turning him away
 now from his foolish idea.

And he says he wants to try once more to
 convince with his request. He begins anew his
 plea, speaking to the king in the following way.

"Sire," he said, "I see now and understand
 that you would do little for me since you have
 refused my favor. I have wasted my time coming
 here today. Now I am sorry, though it's too late,
 and I shall depart just as I came. In anything
 I've ever done before, never have I been taken
 for such a fool. Now I wish I had never seen you,
 or ever crossed the sea. You have lost an oppor-
 tunity for your helpful daughter. If thus I lose
 my plea, I shall have exerted myself in vain....
 But don't you have many servants and maids to
 assist you? Certainly you can endure just three or
 four days with them....; if only you were to let
 Philomena come enjoy herself with her sister, who
 has sent me here. For very little shall I have
 made a long trip, and it would be very irksome
 for me to fail; and not just for my spouse, but
 especially for my effort, and even more so given
 the trouble involved, which grieves me now because
 Procne said that I ought to leave and never return,
 and that I should lose her love if I came back
 without her sister. (483-525)

Por ce ne sai que feire doie,
 Car se je m'an vois an essil,
 Mout avrai grant duel de mon fil,
 Et plus de li, se je la les,
 530 Car revenir n'i cuist ja mes.
 Por ce plor, si con vos veez,
 Qu'a mervoillles sui esfreez,
 Quant vos por si po me failliez.
 Biaus sire, car la me bailliez
 535 Par tel covant qu'einçois quinzainne
 La vos ramanrai liee et saine,
 Et de ce que je vos promet
 Ma foi an ostage vos met
 Et toz les deus an qui je croi.
 540 Par seiremant et par ma foi
 La me bailliez seurement."
 Ha! Del felon! Come or li mant!
 Come or le traist et deçoit!
 Pandions, qui plorer le voit,
 545 Ne cuide mie qu'il li mante;
 Por ce qu'an plorant se demante
 Culde qu'il plort de grant pitié.
 Tant a li fel tiranz luitié
 Par fiancier et par jurer
 550 Et par proier et par plorer
 Qu'il espleita si con li plot.
 Pandions tenir ne se pot
 Qu'il ne plorast avueques lui.
 Si fort ploroient anbedui
 555 Que ne sai liqueus ploroit miauz.
 C'est droiz d'ome, quant il est viauz;
 Que de legier plone sovant.
 "Amis," fet il, "par tel covant
 Que promis m'avez et juré
 560 Et par fiance asseuré
 An manras ma fille demain.
 Je la vos baille an vostre main,
 Mes sachiez que mout me grevez.
 Gardez la si con vos devez
 565 Et ramenez jusqu'a cort terme.
 Ja mi oel ne seront sanz lerne
 Ne mes cuers liez, por rien qu'avaingne,
 Jusque ma fille a moi revaingne.
 570 Se m'amor volez retenir,
 Don pansez del tost revenir
 Et de ma fille ramener.

Therefore I don't know what to do. If I go off
 into exile, I will suffer a great loss--if I were
 to leave her. For I could never return. Thus, I
 weep, as you see, and am extremely perturbed,
 since you fail me in such a small matter. Good
 sire, please give her to me, with the agreement
 that I'll bring her back happy and healthy in a
 fortnight. And for this promise, I do hereby
 pledge my faith to you, by all the gods I believe
 in. Under my oath and by my faith, hand her over
 to me in full surety."

Ha! What a scoundrel! See him lie now! And
 how he betrayed and deceived the King here.
 Pandion saw the tears and was convinced that
 Tereus was not lying. Since he was lamenting while
 weeping, Pandion thought he wept out of great
 pity; so much has the treacherous tyrant
 struggled, with promises and oaths, with pleas and
 tears, that he obtained his wish. Pandion could
 not keep from weeping with him. The two wept so
 loudly that I know not which cried more. Such is
 a man's right, when he is old, to weep often for
 little.

"My friend, he says, "according to the agree-
 ment you have made and sworn to me, which is
 vouchsafed by your pledge, you shall take my
 daughter with you tomorrow. I commend her to your
 care; but know that you oppress me greatly. Guard
 her as you ought to, and bring her back to me
 soon. My eyes shall be ever tearful and my heart
 heavy, happen what may, until my daughter returns
 to me. If you wish to keep my affection, consider
 returning soon to bring my daughter home. (526-
 572)

Certes, mout vos devez pener
 De feire ce que je vos pri.
 Gardez nel metez an obli."
 575 "Non ferai je," dist Tereüs,
 "Sire, ja mes n'an parlez plus,
 Car plus m'iert tant qu'a vos assez
 Que de ça soie repassez
 Et que je l'aie ramenee."
 580 Atant la parole est finee,
 Que Tereüs plus ne demande,
 Et Pandions li rois comande
 Que tost soient mises les tables.
 Li seneschaus, li conestables,
 585 Li panetier, li eschançon,
 Chascuns ot cure et cusançon
 D'atorner et d'apareillier
 Ce qu'apartient a son mestier.
 Li un corent les tables metre,
 590 Li autre se vont antremetre
 De doner l'ëve an plusors leus.
 Leanz n'ot nul serjant oiseus,
 N'escuier, ne vaslet adroit,
 Qui ne servist de que que soit.
 595 De bien servir se painnent tuit,
 Mes Tereüs ne se deduit
 An nul servise qu'an li face
 S'au jant cors non et an la face
 De la pucele regarder,
 600 Qui lez lui seoit au soper:
 C'est ses boivres, c'est ses mangiers.
 Mout par est vers li losangiers
 Et mout la sert et mout l'atret,
 Mes ne set nus por quoi le fet
 605 Fors lui, qui ne se viaut netreire
 De sa grant felenie feire
 Quant leus sera, mes trop li tarde.
 A grant mervoille la regarde,
 Qu'a nule autre rien n'est pansis,
 610 Au mangier ont longuemant sis
 Et mout li pleisoit a seoir,
 Plus por la pucele veoir
 Que por boivre ne por mangier,
 Si n'avoient il a dangier
 615 Paons ne cignes ne feisanz
 Ne vins deliiez ne pleisanz,

Indeed, you ought to try hard to do what I ask of you. Be careful not to forget this."

"I shall not, sire," said Tereus, "and speak no more of it. For the more I tarry, the longer the delay for me to go home and then to return her to you."

Now the interview is over, for Tereus asks nothing more, and King Pandion ordered the food tables set forthwith. The seneschal, the great squire, the baker, and the cup-bearer all took care and pains to ready and prepare what was fitting, each according to his position. Some hastened to set the tables, others kept bringing water to several places. They were not lazy servants or squires but adept valets who served everything proper, and they all exerted themselves to serve well.

But Tereus was not enjoying any of the service except for his glances at the noble body and face of the lass sitting next to him at the table. She was his drink, she his food. He acted the flatterer, served her often, and kept her company; but no one else knew why he was doing it: he wished to pursue his great wicked plan when the time came. But it takes so long...

He is amazed by her and thinks about nothing else. They sit for a long time at the meal, and it pleases him more to sit and watch Philomena at length than to drink or eat. And there is a generous abundance of peacock, swan, and pheasant, and a quantity of fine; pleasant wines. (573-616)

Mes largemant et a planté
 Orent tuit a lor volanté
 Quanqu'estuet a table real.
 620 Quant mangié orent li vassal
 Si se lievent et li serjant
 Donent l'ève an bacins d'arjant.
 Li baron lavent et essuient.
 Quant lavé orent si s'apuient
 625 Sur une couche tuit ansamble,
 Et chascuns dist ce qu'il li sanble,
 Soit biens ou maus, folie ou sans,
 Et li vaslet sont an apans
 De feire et d'atorner les liz.
 630 Ce ne fu joie ne deliz
 Au traïtor, au fel tirant,
 Qui de dormir n'avoit talant:
 Miauz vosist tote nuit veillier,
 S'il li leüst a conseillier
 635 A cele qui son cuer avoit. --
 Comant? Ele rien n'an savoit? --
 Non, par foi, car s'ele seüst
 Que cil an li son cuer eüst
 Por feire li honte et enui,
 640 Ja ne s'an alast avec lui.
 Tant ont parlé, tant ont veillie
 Que li lit sont apareillie,
 Si se couchent li baron tuit.
 Onques Terëus cele nuit
 645 Ne prist au lit pes ne repos,
 N'onques por dormir n'ot l'uel clos;
 Tant con tote la nuit dura,
 Tote nuit son lit mesura,
 650 Ou del travers ou del belonc,
 Et se demante par selonc,
 Que tant demore qu'il ajorne;
 Tote nuit se torne et retourne
 Et se relieve et se recouche.
 Cil qui gisoient an la couche
 655 A mout grant eise se dormoient
 Et de tot ce mot ne savoient,
 Et cil tote la nuit veilla,
 Que sa folie traveilla,
 Tant que la gueite de la tor
 660 Comança a corner le jor.
 Quant il oï le jor au cor,
 Qui li donast trante mars d'or
 Ne fust il pas d'assez si liez.

All eat their fill of seemly royal fare. After
 dining, everyone rises, and the servants bring
 water in silver basins for the lords to rinse
 their hands. And now, hands dried, they recline on
 couches and everyone speaks his mind, be it good
 or bad, foolish or wise. And the servants are busy
 making ready the beds. All this is hardly joyous
 delight to our treacherous, wicked tyrant who has
 no desire to sleep. He would prefer to stay awake
 all night, if only he were allowed to speak in
 secret with the one who held his heart.

What? She knew nothing of it? No, indeed, for
 if she knew that he had his heart set on her in
 order to disgrace and harm her, never would she
 have gone away with him.

They talked at length into the night, and the
 beds were prepared for all the lords to recline.
 Tereus found neither peace nor repose in sleep
 that night, nor could he even close his eyes. All
 through the night he measured the length and width
 of his bed, the whole night long lamenting over
 and over the lateness of dawn's coming. And all
 night he tossed and turned, sat up, and lay down.
 Those lying on the couch were all sleeping,
 peacefully ignorant of all this, while Tereus
 stayed up all night, for his folly was tormenting
 him. Then the watchman in the tower began to
 trumpet daybreak. As Tereus heard the horn of day,
 he was happier than if someone had given him
 sixteen pounds of gold. (617-663)

Ses conpaignons a esveilliez
 665 Ses fet lever isnelemant,
 Et cil a son comandemant
 Se sont mout tost apareillié.
 Li rois ot qu'il sont esveillié
 Et qu'il se hastent d'aus lever.
 670 Comant qu'il li doie grever,
 Comant qu'il taingne verité,
 Si a son covant aqité,
 Que sa fille li a bailliee.
 Cele an fu mout joieuse et liee
 675 Et mout ceste chose li plot,
 Mes sovant avient qu'an s'esjot
 Ancontre sa mesaventure.
 Mout cuidoit bien estre seüre
 D'aler bien et de revenir,
 680 Et comant poist ç'avenir
 Que s'apansast de la mervoille
 Que li tiranz li aparaille?
 Ja de ce ne s'apansast nus.
 Au port l'an mainne Tereüs
 685 Et Pandions les i convoie
 Et prie celui tote voie
 Qu'einsi come il li a promis
 Vaingne au terme qu'il li a mis.
 "Et tu," dist il, "ma fille chiere,
 690 Panse de tost venir aniere
 Et si te remembre de moi,
 Car tant sui liez quant je te voi
 Et tant ai de joie et de bien!
 Ma douce fille, tost revien.
 695 Revien tost. Se tu tost reviens
 Tost vandra ma joie et mes biens."
 Mil foiz reprant ceste parole
 Et mil foiz la beise et acole
 Et plus de mil foiz la retorne,
 700 Quant d'antrer an la nef s'atorne,
 Si la retient tant come il puet,
 Et quant retourner l'an estuet,
 Si la comande au traïtor.
 Einsi a fet del lo pastor!
 705 Pastor an a fet, sanz mantir,
 Se cil ne se viaut repantir
 De sa folie et de sa rage,
 Mes il n'an a mie corage,
 Ainz li tarde mout et demore.

He awakened his companions and had them get up quickly. They followed his orders and hastily prepared themselves. The king heard that they were awake and hastening to arise. Although it grieved him, he ordered his word observed and his promise kept, for he has now turned over his daughter to Tereus. Philomena was very joyous and happy, and this departure pleased her greatly. (It often happens, of course, that we rejoice before misfortune strikes.) Indeed she believed herself quite secure for safe passage and return. And yet how could she have imagined the horror the tyrant had designed for her? No one could have guessed it.

Tereus brought her to the harbor in Pandion's convoy, and the king asked all the while that they return at the time agreed, as promised.

"And you," he said, "my dear daughter, think of coming back soon, and remember me too, for when I see you, I am so happy, and joy and sweetness are mine! Sweet daughter of mine, come back soon, soon. If you come back soon, sweetness and joy will be mine again soon."

A thousand times he repeats these words and a thousand times kisses and embraces her, and a thousand times more he turns her around as she is about to enter the ship. And he detains her as long as he can; when she finally had to turn away, he commends her to the traitor.

Thus like a guileless shepherd has he acted, without fail, unless Tereus were to abjure his folly and rage. But such was not his intention, for he would rather just leave there and then. (664-709)

- 710 Au departir Pandions ploie
Et beise an foi le desleal
Qui panse traïson et mal.
Traïson panse. Cui qu'il griet
La fera il si con il siet,
715 Qu'ore a la force et la baillie.
Jusqu'a cort terme iert maubaillie
La pucele que il an mainne!
Tote est de vant la voile plainne
Et la nes ne cort mie lant,
720 Car vant orient a lor talant,
S'orient tost esloignié le port,
Ou Pandions ploie mout fort
Por sa fille qu'aler an voit.
S'il an ploie mout a grant droit,
725 Car ja mes ne la reverra
N'an sa terre ne ranterra.
Mes de tot ce ne panse il,
Et s'est ja mout pres de peril
Et de corroz Philomena,
730 Car sole menee l'an a
An une soe meison gaste
Cil, qui sa desverie haste.
La meïsons estoit an un bois,
--Ce conte Crestiens li Gois--
735 Loing de villes de totes parz
Et loing de chans et loing d'essanz,
Loing de chemins et de santiers;
Parlant, gabant andemantiers
740 Or d'un or d'el, par traïson
L'an a menee an sa maison,
Et quant il sont leanz andui,
Seul antre la pucele et lui,
Que nus ne les voit ne ne ot,
Cil, qui le mal an pansé ot,
745 L'atret a lui par la main destre.
Cele ne set que ce puet estre,
Ne ne se puet aparcevoir
Que cil la vueille decevoir
Qui doucemant l'acole et beise.
750 C'est voirs, quant terre voit son eise
De mal feire, puis ne li chaut
Liqueus des chies avant an aut.

At the departure Pandion wept and in good faith kissed the fraud who was contemplating treason and harm. His plan was betrayal; hurt whom it might, he will do just as he pleases, for now he had the power and possession to do so. In a little while the maiden he had with him would be ill-possessed.

The sails filled with a breeze and the ship coursed along quite rapidly. All the wind they wanted was theirs. Now they have moved off from the shore where Pandion was weeping aloud, as he watched his daughter disappear. Since he would never see her again, nor would she even return home, he indeed had a right to weep. But he did not picture all this to himself.

And now Philomena is already quite close to peril and grief. Driven mad, Tereus now brings her along to a deserted cottage in a wood--thus recounts Chrétien li Gois--far from any towns in all directions, far from fields, far from clearings, far from roads, and far from paths. Talking and joking meanwhile of this and that, he brings her by fraud to this house. And when they are both inside alone, the maiden and he alone together, where no one can see or hear them, he who plotted evil draws her to him by the right hand. As he kisses and embraces her sweetly, she does not know what is happening nor can she be aware that he wants to deceive her.

Is it not true that when a thief sees his way to do evil, he cares not which extremity he advances first: (710-752)

An mal feire a trop douce chose
 Au maufeitor qui feire l'ose,
 755 Et s'est mout amere et sauvage
 A franc home leal et sage.
 Mes cil n'est bons ne frans ne douz,
 Ainz est mauves, fel et estouz,
 Et quant sa mauvestié ne leisse
 760 Tot li covient que son cuer peisse
 Et face sa mauvestié tote,
 Des qu'a mal feire ne redote.
 Mes de tant fet viaus que cortois
 Que s'amor li requiert einçois
 765 Qu'il li forface nule rien.
 "Bele," fet il, "or sachiez bien
 Que je vos aim et si vos pri
 Que de moi fagoiz vostre ami,
 Et ceste chose soit celee,
 770 Se vos volez qu'ele et duree."
 "Celee, biaux sire? Por quoi?
 Je vos aim bien si con je doi
 Ne je ne m'an quier ja celer,
 Mes se me volez apeler
 775 D'amors qui soit contre droiture,
 Teisiez vos an; je n'an ai cure." --
 --"Teirai, mes vos vos an teisiez.
 Tant vos aim et tant me pleisiez
 Que vuel que vos me consantez
 780 Feire de vos mes volantez." --
 "Avoi, sire, or vilenez vos!
 Ja Deu ne place qu'antre nos
 Ceste desleauté avaingne!
 De ma seror vos ressovaingne
 785 Qui est vostre leal espouse!
 Ja ma suer n'iert de moi jalose
 Ne ja, se n'an sui porforciee,
 Ne ferai riens qui li dessiee!"
 "Ne feroiz?"--"Non!"--"Et je vos jur,
 790 Quant je vos taing ci a seür
 Et mes talanz feire me loist
 Ou buen vos soit ou tot vos poist,
 Ne vos i vaudra rien deffanse:
 Tot ferai quanque mes cuers panse.
 795 "Feroiz?"--"Oïl, sanz nul respit,
 Et qui que viaut si m'an espit,
 Car n'ai garde de nule espie!"

doing evil is sweeter to him who dares do evil,
 and, therefore, more ruthless and savage to the
 wise, loyal, and noble man. But this one, neither
 good nor noble nor sweet, is thoroughly evil,
 perfidious, and violent. And since he cannot aban-
 don his wickedness, he must needs appease his
 desire and work his wickedness until he fears do-
 ing evil no more. But at least he acts somewhat
 courteously and asks for Love before violating her
 in any way.

"Beauty," says he, "you should know now that
 I love you and ask that you make me your lover;
 and may it be kept secret if it is to last."

"Hidden, fair sire? Why? I love you just as
 I should and would never want to hide it. Unless
 you mean an unlawful love.... Be silent about
 that; I have no interest in it."

"I shall be silent, if you will be too. So
 much do I love you and find you pleasing that I'd
 like you to consent and let me do whatever I want
 with you."

"Nay, sir, how horrible! Please God, may
 this disloyalty not occur between us! Please
 remember my sister, your loyal spouse! Never on my
 account will she be jealous of me, nor will I, un-
 less forced into it, ever do anything to displease
 her."

"You won't do it?"

"No!"

"Then I swear to you, since I hold you here
 at my discretion, and since I can satisfy my
 desire, I don't care if you like it or not. You
 will have no defense here: I am going to do every-
 thing to sate my heart."

"You will do it?"

"Yes, right now, and let anyone come watch
 me now, for I have no fear of spies here what-
 soever!" (753-797)

Lors li fet force et cele crie,
 Si se debat et se detuert;
 800 A po que de peor ne muert;
 D'ire, d'angoisse et de dolor
 Change plus de çant foiz color,
 Tranble, palist et si tressue,
 Et dist qu'a male ore est issue
 805 De la terre ou ele fu nee,
 Quant a tel honte est demenee.
 "Ha," fet ele, "fel de put'eire,
 Fel enuieus, que viaus tu feire?
 Fel mauves, fel desmesurez,
 810 Fel traitres, fel parjurez,
 Fel cuiverz, fel de pute loi,
 Fel, don ne pleviz tu au roi
 Que tu enor me porteroies
 Et que a lui me ramanroies
 815 Sainne et heitiee an mon pais?
 Tu li juras et sel traïs!
 Traïtres, mes pere te crut,
 Qui ta traison n'aparçut,
 Por ce que devant lui ploroies
 820 Et por ce que tu li juroies
 Sor toz les deus an cui tu croiz.
 Ou sont li deu? Ou est la foiz?
 As les tu ja mis an obli?
 Ou sont les lermes que je vi
 825 Quant tu ploroies devant lui?
 Ha, lasse, por quoi ne conui
 Ta feintise et ta traison
 Fel, por quoi fes tel mesprison
 Qu'einsi forsanes et esrages?
 830 Repan toi, si feras que sages,
 Tant come il te loist repantir,
 Sanz parjurer, sanz foi mantir." --
 Einsi la lasse, la dolante,
 Prie celui qu'il se repante;
 835 Mes proilere rien ne li vaut,
 Car cil totes voies l'assaut,
 Si l'esforce tant et justise
 Que tot a force l'a conquise
 Et trestot son buen an a fet.
 840 Voir dist qui dist: "Toz jorz atret
 Li uns maus l'autre et sel norrist,"
 Et male norreture an ist,
 Si male come issir an doit.

Then he forces her; she cries out and
 struggles and twists away, almost giving out from
 fear. In anger, anguish, and pain her color
 changes dramatically; she trembles, turns pale,
 and shudders; she regrets leaving her native land,
 as she is now treated so shamefully.

"Ah," she cries, "traitor of stinking birth,
 hateful scoundrel, what is your desire? Wicked
 scoundrel, scoundrel immoderate, treacherous
 scoundrel, perfidious scoundrel, wretched fraud of
 stinking morals, perjurer--did you not just
 promise the King that you would treat me honorably
 and that you would bring me home healthy and happy
 to him? This you swore and now you betray him!
 Traitor! My father trusted you and perceived not
 your betrayal, because you solemnly swore on all
 the gods you believe in. Where are the gods now?
 Where is your faith? Have you forgotten them
 already? Where are the tears I saw as you wept
 before the King? Alas, why didn't I detect your
 lying fraud? Fiend, why are you acting so wrong-
 fully? It will drive you to a raging madness!
 Repent now, that is the wisest course, as long as
 repentance still remains possible, without perjury
 or fraud."

Thus the unfortunate and wretched maiden begs
 him to repent. But pleas do not work at all, for
 he attacks her anyway, forces and dominates her
 to the point of brutally exhausting her, and he
 takes all his pleasure of her.

There is truth in the adage: 'One evil brings
 forth another, and is fed by it,'--and bad food
 issues from it, as bad as it ought to be. (798-
 843)

Tereüs ancor ne recroit
 845 Qu'après ce mal ne face pis,
 Un canivet tranchant a pris,
 Et por ce que cele ne puisse
 Conter a home qu'ele truisse
 850 Ceste honte ne cest reproche,
 Dist que la langue de la boche
 Li tranchera tot a un fes,
 Si n'an sera parlé ja mes.
 Cui avient une n'avient sole:
 855 La langue li tret de la gole,
 S'an trancha pres de la meitié.
 Or a il mout mal espleitié
 Et de ce et de l'autre chose.
 An la meison la let enclose,
 860 Ou cele plone et crie e bret.
 A ses compaignons s'an revet,
 Qui ceste chose bien savoient.
 Mes le traitor tant cremoient,
 Qui d'aus estoit et rois et sire,
 865 Qu'il n'an osoient un mot dire,
 Sel celerent plus por cremor
 Que il ne firent por amor.
 Mes Tereüs folie fist
 Qui avuec Philomena mist
 870 Por la garder une vilainne,
 Qui vivoit de sa propre painne,
 Car filer et tistre savoit
 Et une soe fille avoit
 Qu'ele aprenoit a son mestier.
 875 Mal s'i sot Tereüs gueitier
 Quant a garder li comanda,
 Et tot quanques li demanda
 Li fist Tereüs anseignier,
 Si li pria que d'esloingner
 880 La demoisele n'eüst soing
 Por afeire ne por besoing
 Que Ja eüst de rien qui soit.
 Cele li jure et il l'an croit.
 Atant s'an parti Tereüs;
 885 De demorer n'ot cure plus,
 Si vint an Trace sa cité.
 Progné cuidoit par verité
 Que avuec lui venist sa suer;

But Tereus could not admit that after this evil he might have done worse. Yet he took a sharp knife, and so that she might not relate how she suffered this disgrace and shame, he said that at a single stroke he would cut out her tongue from her mouth: never would any of this story be told. (One misfortune leads to another....)

He yanks her tongue from her mouth and cuts off nearly half. Now he has behaved very badly, both in this act and in the other. He leaves her locked up in the house, where she weeps and cries and shouts.

And he returned to his companions, who in fact knew about all this, but so feared this fraud--their king and lord--that they dared not utter a word about it. They concealed more out of fear than out of love. And yet, Tereus committed folly by placing a peasant-woman there to guard Philomena; for the woman was self-supporting, knew how to sew and weave, and a daughter of hers was there to whom she was teaching her craft. By ordering the woman to watch and guard Philomena, Tereus acted carelessly. And everything she asked about, Tereus explained and besought her to take the maiden away, for he had no further care, use, nor need for her. He already had everything he wanted from her. The woman gave her word and he believed her. Thereupon Tereus left, having no care to tarry further, and he returned to the Thracian fortress.

Procne truly thought that her sister would accompany him. (844-887)

Mout an ot grant joie an son cuer,
 Mes sa joie dura petit,
 890 Car tot maintenant qu'ele vit
 Son seignor et sa compaignie,
 Et de sa seror ne vit mie
 Qu'ele cuidoit mout conjoir,
 Ne li plot rien nule a oïr
 895 Ne de respondre ne li chaut
 Ne "Bien veingniez," ne "Deus vos saut,"
 Ainz demande come esfreee,
 "Quant il l'orent tuit saluee:
 --"Ou est ma suer? Por quoi ne vient?
 900 Que fet ele? Qui la detient?
 Et por quoi demore ele tant?
 Ou est ele remese? Et quant?
 Dites moi ou l'avez leissiee."
 Li fel tint la teste beissiee
 905 Et fist sanblant et contenance
 D'ome qui et duel et pesance,
 Et si fist par decevemant
 Un faus sospir apertemant
 Por sa mançonge feire acroire.
 910 "Dame;" dist il, "c'est chose voire
 Que consirrer par force estuet
 De ce que l'an avoir ne puet."
 "Voins est. Por moi l'avez voz dit;
 Ma suer ne vient mie, ce cuit."
 915 "Non, voir, dame, n'est pas venue." --
 "Quel essoine l'a don tenue?"
 "Quel? Dame, ja nel vos dirai."
 "Porquoi? Por ce et je irai
 920 La d'outre a li s'il ne vos poise."
 "Dame, ne faites mie noise,
 Car je vos an dirai le voir,
 Puis que vos le volez savoir;
 Mes ja mon vuel ne vos deïsse.
 Voir m'estuet que vos regehisse,
 925 Que que ce soit ou biens ou maus."
 Et lost refist un sospir faus,
 Et por son dit miauz afermer
 Comança des iauz a l'ermer
 Par barat et par renardie.
 930 "Dame," fet il, "ne sai que die,
 Car ja ne deïsse mon vuel
 Chose don vos eüssiez duel.

She rejoiced very heartily, but her joy was to
 last only briefly. She saw now her lord and his
 company, but no sign of her sister, whom she had
 hoped to welcome. No spoken word pleased her; she
 cared not at all to welcome or hail them. Rather,
 as they all greeted her, she asked, quite fright-
 ened:

"Where is my sister? Why has she not come?
 What is she doing that detains her? And why does
 she tarry so? Where has she stopped? And when?
 Tell me where you have left her?"

The scoundrel bows his head low, pretending
 an appearance of worry and grief. He even deceives
 by sighing aloud falsely to cause his lie to be
 believed.

"My lady," he says, "we must by necessity re-
 sign ourselves to what we cannot have."

"How true. But obviously you said this for me
 to hear. My sister will not come then, I suppose?"

"No, indeed, my lady, she has not come."

"What hindered her?"

"What? My lady, I'll not tell you."

"Why? ... Well then, with this delay I will
 cross over to see her myself, if you don't mind."

"My lady, don't start a quarrel, for I will
 tell you the truth you wish to know. But I would
 never tell you this willingly; and now, for my
 part, I must confess the truth to you, whether it
 be for good or ill."

And he again makes a false sigh, and in order
 to sound more convincing, using deceit and
 cunning, he causes his eyes to begin weeping:

"My lady, I know not what to say, for never
 would I willingly utter anything to cause you grief.
 (888-932)

Ne cuidiez vos que mout soit granz
 Li diaus por quoi sui tant dolanz?
 935. Que por rien qui puisse avenir,
 De plorer ne me puis tenir.
 Je plor por ce que vos avrez
 Mout grant duel quant vos le savez.
 940. Mes li celers rien ne m'i vaut,
 Fors que parole et cuers me faut,
 Tant m'est greveuse chose a dire."
 A ce mot autre foiz sospire,
 Sanz ce que grant duel au cuer et,
 945. Et quant il ot ce sospir fet,
 Lors dist ce qu'il avoit an pans.
 "Dame," dist il, "trop vient a tans
 Qui mauveise novele aporte.
 Sachiez que vostre suer est morte." --
 "Morte est ma suer? Chetive, lasse!"
 950. "Voir, ne sai que plus le celasse,
 Mes atanprez vostre corage,
 Qu'an ne se doit de son damage
 Trop gueimenter ne trop doloir.
 955. Morz fet de chascun son voloir,
 Que nus buens ne maus n'an estort.
 Cest don devons tuit a la mort;
 Ce nos covandra toz paiier,
 Ja ne savrons tant delaiier;
 960. Et des que tel est l'avanture
 Que morz a prise sa droiture
 Que vostre suer li devoit randre,
 N'an vueilliez trop grant duel anprendre,
 Mes sofrez sanz trop grant corroz
 965. Ce que sofrir covandra toz."--
 Einsi cuidoit mesler le miel
 Li fel tiranz avec le fiel
 Don il li avoit au cuer mise
 L'amertume par sa feintise,
 970. Et de rassoagier se painne
 Lire et le duel que cele mainne,
 Mes tant ne la set exorter
 Qu'il la puisse reconforter,
 Car par un po n'esrage vive.
 975. Lors se claimme lasse, cheitive,
 Et s'a tel duel ne set que face.

Don't you think the grief is great that makes me
 so doleful? So great that nothing on this earth
 can keep me from weeping about it? I weep because
 ..when you know why, you too will be grief-
 stricken. But hiding it is of no avail, except
 ... speech and courage fail me now, so vexatious
 are my tidings."

With these words he sighs again, though with-
 out great pain within his heart, and, after this
 sigh, he speaks his mind.

"My lady," he says, "bad news travels fast:
 Know that your sister is dead."

"My sister is dead? Alas, o wretch!"

"Yes, indeed, and I cannot hide it any
 longer. But moderate your heart, for we ought not
 to lament or complain too much about a loss. Death
 does its will with all of us: neither good nor bad
 escape. To death we all owe and must pay this
 debt. We can never put it off for a moment. And
 such is the outcome when death arrives and seizes
 its debts; so your sister had to pay. Therefore,
 please don't grieve to excess, but suffer without
 too much bitterness what we all must suffer."

Thus the wicked tyrant thought he'd mix in
 honey with the gall; through his deception he has
 made her heart bitter, and he tried hard to
 assuage the grief and affliction she suffered.
 But this much he could not urge her nor even could
 he comfort her, for she has almost gone raging
 mad. Then she called herself forlorn, wretched,
 and was beside herself with grief. (933-975)

Or tret ses crins, or fiert sa face,
 Or plone, or crie et or se pasme,
 Les deus maudit et la mort blasme:
 "Morz," fet ele, "trop mespreis
 980 Quant tu ma seror oceis,
 Et mout t'an doit hair Nature
 Quant la plus bele creature
 Qu'ele onques feist as ocise.
 Morz, mout feroies grant franchise,
 985 Se tu avec li me metoies.
 Morz, qu'atanz tu que tu n'anvoies
 M'ame avec la soe deduire?
 Morz, mout me tarde que je muire,
 Car je ne quier ja mes plus vivre.
 990 Morz, car vien et si t'an delivre,
 Si me secor a cest besoing.
 Morz, por quoi es de moi si loing
 Que tu ne m'oz ne ne m'antanz?
 Morz, se Je vivoie gant anz,
 995 Ne finera ja mes mes diaus.
 Morz, s'a moi racorder te viaus,
 Don fai ce que je te comant.
 Toz jorz mes an remanbremant
 D'ire, d'angoisse et de dolor
 1000 Avrai dras de noire color,
 Et par reison avoir les doi,
 Qu'il est escrit an nostre loi
 Que noire vesteüre port
 Qui ire et angoisse a de mort."
 1005 Lors comande apoter les dras.--
 L'an li aporte eneslepas --
 Et el les vest et dit et jure
 Qu'ele n'avra ja mes vesteüre
 Que tel ne soit ou pire ancor.
 1010 Lors li amena l'an un tor
 Por feire sacrefise as des.
 Le sanc an a mis an un ves,
 Qu'onques gote n'an chei fors.
 Quant sacrefiez fu li tors
 1015 Un feu comanda feire au tanple
 Que tel costume et tel essanple
 Por lor ancessors maintenoient,
 Car a Pluto sacrefioient.
 (Pluto iert sire des deables,
 1020 De toz li plus espoantables,
 Li plus hideus et li plus lez.)

By turns she tore out her hair, struck her face,
 wept, shouted and swooned, cursed the gods, and
 accused death.

"Death," she said, "your error was great when
 you killed my sister, and indeed Nature ought to
 hate you since you have killed her most beautiful
 creature. Death, how great if you would deliver me
 and place me with her. Death, why do you wait to
 send my soul to disport with hers? Death, I am
 very impatient to die, for I desire to live no
 longer. Death, now come and hasten to succor me at
 this hour. Death, why are you so far from me that
 you neither hear nor understand me? Death, were I
 to live one hundred years, never would my afflic-
 tion end. Death, if you wish to pacify me, do what
 I command. Forever henceforth, in remembrance of
 the grief, anguish, and suffering, I shall wear
 clothes of black, and it is right for me to do so,
 since it is written in our law that black clothing
 befits those who suffer grief and anguish from
 death."

Then she ordered up the clothes, and they
 were brought immediately. She put them on, vowing
 and swearing always to wear such clothes, or even
 dingier ones. Then a bull was brought to her to
 make a sacrifice to the gods. She put its blood in
 a phial lest a single drop spill. When the bull
 was sacrificed, she ordered a fire lit in the
 temple of doom. (Thus did they maintain custom and
 example on behalf of their ancestors, for they
 made sacrifices to Pluto, the lord of the devils,
 above all the most terrifying, the most hideous,
 and the ugliest.) (976-1021)

Li feus fu alumez et fez,
 Si tost come ele l'ot comandé,
 1025 Devant l'autel a icest dé,
 Et pour feire greignor fumee,
 Si con chose iert acostumeé,
 Fu li tors aportez au feu.
 Lors fist au deu promesse et veu
 De feire sacrefise autel
 1030 Chascun an devant son autel,
 Por ce que l'ame sa seror
 Gardast an anfer a enor
 Et a delit et a repos.
 Quant tot fu ars, et chars et os,
 1035 Que nule riens n'i ot remese
 Que tot ne fu ou çandre ou brese,
 Puis espondi dessus le sanc;
 Apres mist tot an un pot blanc
 Au plus netemant qu'ele pot;
 1040 Puis a mis an terre le pot
 Soz un sarqueu de marbre bis.
 Quant li sarqueus fu dessus mis,
 A l'un des chies fist asseoir
 Une image leide a veoir
 1045 Qui feite fu a la sanblance
 De celui qui a la poissance
 Des ames qui an anfer ardent
 Et des deables qui les gardent.
 Puis fet escrire an son langage
 1050 Sor le sarqueu devant l'image,
 Si que mout bien le pot l'an lire:
 "Deus qui d'anfer es rois et sire,
 Pluto, de l'ame aies merci
 De cele por cui je faz ci
 1055 Ce sacrefise et ce servise,
 An quel que leu que li cors gise."
 Einsi o grant devocion
 Metoit tote s'antancion
 Progné au sacrefise feire,
 1060 Por l'ame sa seror fors treire
 De la ou ele n'estoit mie;
 Einçois vivoit et de sa vie
 Li pesoit mout et chascun jor
 Li renoveloit sa dolor
 1065 Li traître, li vils mauvez
 Qui de s'amor iert eschaufez,
 Et mervoilles li despleisoit
 Qu'a force toz ses buens feisoit
 De li cil qui l'avoit traie.

As ordered, the fire was lit and made before the
 altar of that god, and to make more smoke, as was
 their custom, the bull was brought to the fire.
 Then Procne promised and vowed to the god to offer
 a similar sacrifice every year before his altar,
 so that he would keep her sister's soul in hell
 with honor, peace, and repose. When all the flesh
 and bones were burned and nothing at all remained,
 except ashes and embers, she spilled the blood on
 it. And afterward, she carefully put everything in
 a white pot and buried it under a sarcophagus of
 dark marble. When the stone was lowered, at one
 end she had fixed an image, visibly ugly, which
 was made in the likeness of the one who has power
 over the souls burning in hell and over the devils
 that guard them. Then she had an inscription in
 her language made on the sarcophagus. Before the
 image one could read quite easily: 'God who is
 King and lord of hell, Pluto, have mercy on the
 soul for whom I perform this sacrifice and this
 worship--wherever her body may lie.' Thus, with
 great devotion Procne placed all her attention in
 offering the sacrifice to rescue the soul of her
 sister from a place where it was not.

Philomena was quite alive and her life
 troubled her greatly; each day the fraud, that
 vile demon, who had been inflamed by his love,
 renewed her suffering and it displeased her
 terribly that by betrayal and by force he had
 taken so much pleasure from her. (1022-1069)

1070 Mout eüst grant mestier d'aie
 Et mout vosist, s'ele peüst,
 Que sa suer son estat seüst;
 Mes ne set angin porpanser
 Par quoi el li puisse mander,
 1075 Car n'a message que i aut
 Et la parole li deffaut,
 Car s'ele avoit bien le message,
 Ne porroit ele son corage
 Mostrer ne dire an nule guise.
 1080 D'autre part rest an tel justise
 Qu'el n'a ne congié ne leisir
 De fors de la meison issir.
 Comant? Por quoi? Qui la retarde?
 Qui? La vilainne qui la garde
 1085 Cui Tereüs l'ot comandee.
 Mil foiz se fust de li anblee
 S'ele poïst, mes ne li lut.
 Einsi mout longuemant estut,
 Tant qu'an la fin se porpansa,
 1090 Si con besoingns li anseigna,
 Qu'an la meison avoit filé,
 Que mout an avoient filé
 Antre la vieillete et sa fille,
 Ne ne li falloit une ostille
 1095 A feire une cortine ovree;
 Si s'est de tel chose apansee
 Par quoi el cuide estre seüre
 Que tote sa mesaventure
 Iért sa seror manifestee.
 1100 Au pansé n'est plus arestee.
 Isnelemant viaut feire s'uevre.
 A une huche vient, si l'uevre,
 Ou la vilainne avoit posees
 Ses escheviauz et ses fusees,
 1105 Si les prant et si les desvuide
 Et comance par grant estuide
 S'uevre tel come il li sist.
 La vieille ne li contredist,
 Mes mout volantiers li eida
 1110 Et trestot quanqu'ele cuida
 Qui a tel uevre covenist
 Porchacier et querre li fist.

She needed help and, if she could find a way, she would like her sister to know of her condition. But she knew not how to devise a trick by which to send for her, because she had no messenger to send. And even if she had one, speech was impossible, for she could not reveal or speak her mind in any way. On the other hand, she remained under such surveillance that she had neither permission nor occasion to leave the house.

How? Why? Who keeps her? Who? The peasant-woman who watched her, the one Tereus ordered there. A thousand times she would have escaped from her, if she could have, but it was not permitted. She stayed there for a long time, until, finally, she reflected and realized at this time of need that she had been sewing in this house, and that between the little old woman and her daughter they had sewed a great deal. No tool was lacking there, even to fashion a tapestry. She decided to make something by means of which she could be assured that her whole misfortune would be revealed to her sister.....

She reflects no further but immediately sets to work. She goes and opens the chest where the peasant-woman had placed her skeins and spools of yarn, and, taking them out and unwinding them, she begins aptly to work with great care. The old woman does not stop her, but quite willingly helps out by obtaining or seeking whatever she thinks necessary for such work. (1070-1112)

1115 Trestot li quist son aparoil,
 Tant que fil inde et fil vermoil
 Et jaune et vert a planté ot,
 Mes el ne conut ne ne sot
 Rien de quanque cele tissoit,
 Mes l'uevre li abelissoit,
 Qui mout estoit a feire gries,
 1120 Car tissu ot a l'un des chies
 Que Philomena l'avoit feite;
 Apres i fu la nes portreite
 Ou Tereüs la mer passa
 Quant querre a Athenes ala,
 1125 Et puis comant il se contint
 An Athenes quant il vint,
 Et comant il l'an amena,
 Et puis comant il l'esforça,
 Et comant il l'avoit leissiee
 1130 Quant la langue li ot tranchiee.
 Tot ot escrit an la cortine,
 Et la meison et la gaudine
 Ou ele estoit anprisonnee.
 Quant ele ot s'ovraingne finee
 1135 Tel come ele la sot ovrer,
 S'el poist home recovrer
 Qui a sa senor l'aportast,
 Duremant la reconfortast
 De son duel et de son enui;
 1140 Mes el ne set mie par cui,
 Se sa mestre n'anprant la voie
 Ou se sa fille n'i anvoie,
 Car leanz n'avoit qu'eles trois.
 Philomena i fu sis mois
 1145 Qu'ele onques ne s'an pot movoir,
 Tant que de tot son estovoir
 Fist noviaus signes et trova,
 Et certainnement esprova,
 Que sa mestre tot antandoit
 1150 Quanqu'ele onques li demandoit,
 Ne ja ne li fust contredite
 Nule choise granz ne petite,
 Fors l'issue de sa meison.
 De tant avoit ele reison,
 1155 Car li rois li ot deffandu.
 Tant a sofert et atandu
 Qu'or cuide bien de sa prison
 Trover secors et garison.

She immediately finds tools for her, so that she has a quantity of blue-black, scarlet, yellow, and green thread. But the woman does not understand or know anything about what the maiden was embroidering, though the work pleases her.

It was very hard to do, for Philomena embroidered at one end what had happened to her. There was portrayed the ship, the one in which Tereus crossed the sea and came for her to Athens, then how he behaved when he reached Athens, how he took her away, and then forced her, and how, after cutting out her tongue, he left her. She worked it all on the tapestry, including the house and the forest where she was imprisoned. When she finished the work as best she could, she wondered if she could find someone who would bring it to her sister. How greatly would this comfort her grief and vexation. But she knew not who would do it, unless her guardian were to go or else if she sent her daughter, for there were only three in the house. Philomena was there six months and could not ever leave, until, under these circumstances, she made new signs. And she discovered and was thoroughly convinced that her guardian would agree to whatever she asked and that she would never be denied anything, great or small--except leaving the house. But since Tereus had forbidden it, she was right in that regard. But so much has Philomena suffered and endured that now she believes to have found help and salvation from her prison. (1113-1158)

1160 Un jor estoit a la fenestre
 De la maison li et sa mestre,
 Ne a fenestre ne a huis
 N'avoit ele esté onques puis
 Que Tereüs l'ot leanz mise,
 1165 Qui a grant tort l'avoit maumise,
 La ou ele s'iert apoiiee
 A la fenestre un petit liee,
 Antre les bois et la riviere
 Vit la cité ou sa suer iere,
 Si comance a plorer mout fort
 1170 Si con cele qui reconfort
 Ne pooit de son duel avoir.
 Se sa mestre poïst savoir
 Chose qui la reconfortast,
 Mout volantiers l'an conseillast,
 1175 Car mout granz pitiez l'an prenoit
 Del grant duel qu'ele demenoit,
 Ne ja nule rien ne vosist,
 Ne mes que de leanz n'issist,
 Que maintenant ne li fust quise
 1180 A feire tote sa devise.
 Quant Philomena ot veü
 Maintes foiz et aparceü
 Que li feisoit tot son plaisir,
 Et voit son leu et son leisir,
 1185 La cortine qu'ele ot tissue
 Prist, puis est arriere venue
 La ou sa mestre l'atandoit,
 Qui toz ses signes antandoit,
 Que ja n'i mespreïst de rien,
 1190 Ainz l'antandoit pres aussi bien
 Con s'ele li deïst de boche.
 Philomena vient, si la toche,
 Si li fet signe qu'ele anvoit
 A cele cité que la voit
 1195 Par sa fille cele cortine,
 Si la presant a la reine.
 Cele antant sa volanté tote,
 Mes nule chose ne redote
 A feire ce qu'ele comande,
 1200 Ne ne set por quoi plus atande,
 Car el n'i antant se bien non,
 Ainz cuide que por guerredon
 Et por esperance d'avoir
 Qu'an doie de tel uevre avoir,
 1205 Vueille que li soit presantee,

One day she and her guardian were at the window. Now since Tereus, who had maltreated her so wrongfully, had placed her there, never did she stand near window or door. From where she was leaning by the half-opened window, between the woods and the river, she saw the city where her sister was, and she began to weep loudly, in a way that the one who was consoling her could not share her grief. If her guardian could have found a way to offer her comfort, willingly she would have done so, for she took very great pity on her because of the profound grief she displayed. But Philomena would have wanted nothing except to get out of there. Nothing else would she have sought after, except only to accomplish her desire.

Philomena saw and noticed many times that she could do almost anything she pleased; and when she saw the time and occasion she took the tapestry she had embroidered and returned to her waiting guardian, who understood all her signs, for she made no mistakes in comprehension--she understood her almost as if she spoke with words. Philomena came and touched her, thus making a sign that she wanted this tapestry brought to that city over there and presented to the queen. She understood her wish completely, and feared in no way at all doing what was ordered, nor did she hesitate in any way, for she viewed the act only as a good one. She thought it was simply a boon offered in hopes of wealth that should be given for such a work of art. (1159-1205)

S'est del bien feire antalantee
 Tot quanque Philomena viaüt,
 Qui or a mout mains que ne siaut
 D'ire, d'angoisse et de pesance,
 1210 Qu'ele a seviaus grant esperance,
 Que, quant sa suer saura l'afeire,
 Fors de leanz la voldra treire,
 Ne nel viaut plus an respit metre,
 Car folie est, ce dit la letre,
 1215 De son afeire respitier
 Puisqu'an an puet bien espleitier.
 Mes de ce s'est el bien garde
 Qu'el n'a pas la chose tardee
 Puisqu'ele an pot venir a chief.
 1220 Sa mestre ne fu mie grief,
 Car n'i cuide avoir nul damage.
 "Fille," fet ele, "or soies sage.
 Cest besoingne forniras:
 A la reïne porteras
 1225 La cortine et si li presante.
 De revenir ne soies lante.
 Va tost et vien sanz demorer."
 Lors primes leisse le plorer
 Philomena si se conforte,
 1230 Quant cele la cortine an porte,
 Car par tans cuide avoir secors.
 Cele s'an vet plus que le cors,
 Qu'onques ne cesse ne ne fine
 Jusqu'ele vint a la reïne,
 1235 Si li a la cortine oferte,
 Et la reïne l'a overte,
 Si la regarde et conut l'uevre,
 Mes son panser pas ne descuevre,
 Que ne viaut feire cri ne noise,
 1240 Ainz comande qu'ele s'an voise.
 Cele s'an va et ceste apres,
 Ne de trop loing ne de trop pres,
 Si qu'onques n'an pert la veüe.
 Cele ne s'est aparceüe
 1245 Jusqu'arriere fu retornee,
 Et Progné come forsenee
 Vint a l'uis sel trueve pelé.
 N'a mot dit ne n'a apelé,
 Ainz fiert del pié quanqu'ele puet,
 1250 Et la vilainne ne se muet,
 Einçois se test et fet le sort.
 Philomena s'escrîe et cort
 Por l'uis a sa seror ouvrir.

She was inclined to carry out promptly what was asked by Philomena, who now, from grief, from distress, or from worry suffered much less than one might expect. For she had at least the great hope that, once her sister learned of the affair, she would rescue her from there. And she had no wish whatsoever to put this off (for it is foolish, as the proverb says, to delay your affair when success is at hand.) So she was very careful lest she tarry in this matter, now that she might bring it all to a head. Her guardian was hardly irksome for she thought no harm would come of it.

"My daughter," she said, "now be good. You will perform this task: you will bring the tapestry to the queen and present it to her. Dally not in returning. Now go quickly and hurry back."

Then for the first time Philomena stops weeping and is encouraged as the attendant goes off with the tapestry, for she thinks to have help soon.

The attendant keeps going at a pace, never stops or pauses once, until she comes to the queen and offers her the tapestry; the queen opens it and looks and comprehends the work, but she does not reveal her thoughts, for she wishes not to cry out nor to make a commotion. Rather she orders the servant to leave. She does and the queen goes right after her, following at a safe distance, so that she never loses sight of her. The servant does not notice until she returns; and now Procne like a madwoman comes to the door that she finds bolted. She does not speak or call out, but just kicks at it as hard as she can, and the peasant woman sits perfectly still, speechless, and quiet. Philomena cries out and rushes to open the door for her sister. (1206-1253)

- 1255 La vilainne la cort tenir,
 Qui de peor tranble trestote,
 Et Progné fiert et hurte et bote
 Tant qu'è l'uis desconfist et brise.
 La vilainne se sant surprise
 Si s'an fuit, qu'atandre ne l'ose:
- 1260 An une chambre s'est anclose;
 Et Progné vint come desvee,
 Quant delivre trova l'antree,
 Si criè an haut a grant vertu:
 "Philomena, suer, ou es tu?"
- 1265 "Je sui ta suer. Ne dote pas."
 Philomena plus que le pas
 An vient ancontre li plorant,
 Et Progné la beise en corant,
 Qui par un po n'ist de son san.
- 1270 "Suer," dist ele, "venez vos an,
 Car trop avez ci sejourné.
 Tant m'ar veistes ajorné
 Le jor que li fel m'esposa
 Qui si afolee vos a
- 1275 Qu'or ne poez a moi parler.
 De ci vos an covient aler,
 Car trop i avez aresté."
 Atant s'an vont vers la cité,
 Lor duel feissant andemantiers.
- 1280 Ne tienent voies ne santiers,
 Et Progné coiemant l'an mainne
 Jusqu'an une chambre soutainne
 Por feire lor duel coiemant.
 N'i ot qu'eles deus solemant,
- 1285 Et Progné plore et se demante:
 "Suer," fet ele, "mout sui dolante
 Quant si afolee vos truis
 Ne vangier ne vos sai ne puis
 Del felon qui ce vos a fet.
- 1290 Deus doint que tel loier an et
 Come a sa felenie avient."
 Atant ses fiz devant li vint,
 Qui biaux estoit a desmesure,
 Si l'amena mesaventure
- 1295 Que li estoit a avenir.
 La mere voit son fil venir
 Et dit an bas une mervoille
 Si con Deables li consoille:
 "Ha," fet ele, "chose sanbable
- 1300 Au traïtor, ou vil deable!

The peasant woman, trembling all over in fear,
 runs over to hold her back, but Procné is striking
 and hitting and kicking, so that the door is un-
 hinged and smashed in. The peasant woman feels
 overcome and flees, daring not to wait, and locks
 herself up in a chamber.

And Procné, finding the entrance free, comes
 in as if deranged, and cries out loud with all her
 strength:

"Philomena, sister, where are you? I am your
 sister. Fear not."

Philomena comes rushing to her in tears; and
 Procné, almost out of her mind, runs and embraces
 her.

"Sister," she says, "come now, for you have
 stayed here too long. How terrible was the day
 when that fiend married me, for he wounded you so
 severely that now you cannot even speak to me. It
 is time to leave now, for you have been here too
 long."

Thereupon they go to the city, sharing their
 grief on the way. They do not keep to the paths or
 roads, and Procné stealthily leads her down to an
 underground chamber where they could be sorrowful
 in secret. There is no one but the two of them,
 and Procné weeps and laments bitterly:

"Sister," she says, "my grieving is great on
 finding you so mutilated. I know not how I can
 take revenge for what that scoundrel did to you.
 May God grant him recompense to befit his wicked-
 ness."

At this moment her son appeared. While
 exceedingly handsome, his arrival there was to
 turn out badly for him. His mother saw him come
 and, baited by the Devil, whispered terrifying
 words:

"Ha," she hisses, "image of the fraud, that
 vile demon!" (1254-1300)

Morir t'estuet de mort amere
 Por la felenie ton pere.
 Sa felenie conparras,
 Por son forfeit a tort morras,
 1305 Qui ne l'as mie desservi,
 Fors solemant qu'onques ne vi
 Ne Deus ne fist mien esciant
 Chose a autre miauz ressanblant,
 Et por ce te vuel descoler."
 1310 Li anfes la cort acoler,
 Qui de tot ce n'ot rien oï.
 Tant ia beisa et conjoï
 Que Progné deüst estre ostee
 Del panser ou ele iert antree,
 1315 Si con requiert droiz et nature
 De tote humaine creature
 Et si con pitiez le deffant,
 Que mere ne doit son enfant
 Ne ocire ne desmanbrer.
 1320 Mes quant li prist a remanbrer
 Del traïtor, del parjuré,
 N'a pas l'anfant asseüré,
 Ainz dist que, comant qu'il an chiee,
 Il avra la teste tranchiee,
 1325 S'an donra son pere a mangier:
 Einsi puet sa seror vangier
 Del felon qui l'a afolee.
 Li petiz anfez par chierté,
 1330 Par deablie et par fierté,
 Que Deables li amoneste,
 A l'anfant copee a la teste,
 Si l'a Philomena bailliee;
 Puis ont la char apareilliee
 1335 Antr'eles deus mout bien et tost.
 Partie an mirent cuire an rost
 Et en esseu l'autre partie.
 Quant la chars fu cuite et rostie,
 Si fu de mangier tans et ore;
 1340 Progné tarde mout et demore
 Que tote et sa volanté feite.
 Au roi, qui de rien ne se queite,
 Vient, si li prie et le semont
 Que de la rien an tot le mont
 1345 Qu'ele cuide que il plus aint
 Vaingne mangier et si n'amaint
 Ne conpaignon ne escuier,
 Mes que li ne doie enuier,
 Car ja n'i avra que aus deus:

You must die a bitter death for your father's
 treachery and will pay now for his wickedness. You
 shall die wrongly for his crime, even though you
 do not deserve it at all, except that, to my know-
 ledge, never has there been nor has God ever made
 a more perfect resemblance to another human being.
 ...And for this I want to behead you."

The child heard none of this and ran to
 embrace her. So warmly did he kiss and greet her
 that Procné might have forgotten all these
 thoughts. (Law and nature and pity, too, forbid
 all human creatures this, that a mother should
 kill or dismember her child.) And yet when she
 began to remember the traitor, to recall the
 fraud, she did not reassure the child, but assert-
 ed that, however it might fall, she would cut off
 his head, and his father would have it to eat.
 Thus she could avenge her sister on the scoundrel
 who had mutilated Philomena.

And now, just as the little child held to her
 lovingly, she, fiendish and ferocious, goaded by
 the Devil, cuts off the child's head, then hands
 it to her sister. Together they prepare the flesh
 quickly and carefully: one part they roast, the
 other they stew. When the flesh was heated and
 cooked it is ready to be eaten. Procné delays and
 carries now in order thoroughly to accomplish her
 will. She comes to the king, who suspects nothing,
 and begs and urges him to come eat the special
 dish she thinks he will love very much, and let
 him not bring companion or squire, lest the two of
 them all by themselves be disturbed.... (1301-
 1349)

- 1350 Ele iert sole et il iert seus
Et ele del tot servira.
Cil li respont que il ira,
Mes que ses fiz Itis i iert;
Ja plus conpaingnie n'i quient
1355 Fors que lui et li et son fil.
"Par foi, voiremant i iert il,"
Fet Progné, "je le vos otroi.
Solemant i serons tuit troi,
Que plus ne mains n'an i avra,
1360 Ne mon vuel ja nus ne savra
Quele part nos serons torné.
Venez an; tot est atorné
Et bien apareillié, ce cuit,
Que vos mangeroiz a deduit."
1365 Einsi l'an dist cele le voir,
Mes cil ne puet aparcevoir
De quel mangier ele li prie.
Ne cuidiez pas qu'ele li die
Que son fil a mangier li doingne!
1370 Del aler plus ne se proloingne,
Car ne culde que rien li griet.
Progné l'an mainne et si l'assiet
Mout pleisammant et a grant eise,
Por ce que li mangiers li pleise.
1375 Cil prant mout au gré son servise.
Cele li a la table mise,
Et la nape fu bele et blanche.
D'Itis li aporte une hanche,
Et cil taille et mange et boit
1380 Et demande ce que il voit.
"Dame," dit il, "ou est Itis?
Ja m'avliez an covant mis
Que il seroit ci avec nos!"
"Sire, toz an seroiz saos,"
1385 Fet Progné, "n'aviez tel besoing.
Itis n'est mie de ci loing.
S'il n'i est ore il i sera,
Que gueires ne demorera."
Lors s'an va apporter un haste,
1390 Et cil tote voie la haste,
Que qu'il mange et que qu'il taille,
Que son fil amener li aille.
"Dame," fet il, "mal me tenez
Covant quant Itis n'amenez,
1395 Et mout me poise qu'il ne vient.

she would be there all alone with him and would serve him in every way. He answers that he will come, but that his son Itis should come too; he would seek no other company but that of his son.

"In truth," says Procne, "he will indeed be there, that much I assure you. We three will be all alone, no more or less than we three. And I don't even want anyone to know where we'll be. Come now, all is ready and well prepared, and I think you will dine with relish."

Thus she spoke the truth, but Tereus could not imagine what kind of fare she was talking about. And of course she did not reveal she would give him his own son to devour! Tereus hastened to go, for he did not suspect any harm might come of it. Procne very amiably brought him in and seated him comfortably, so that the meal would please him. He enjoyed such service very much. She had set the table with a beautiful white cloth...

She carries in now a loin of Itis, and Tereus carves it and eats and drinks. And he asks to see his son.

"My lady," he says crudely, "where is Itis? You promised me before that he would be here with us!"

"Sire, you will soon have your fill of him," responded Procne. "Do not be concerned. Itis is not at all far from here. If he is not here now he will be soon, for he'll not dally much."

Then she goes to bring some grill, and, as he eats and carves, he presses her the whole time to go and bring his son there.

"My lady," he repeats, "you're breaking your promise by not bringing Itis here. I regret his absence now. (1350-1395)

Aler querre le me covient,
 Car n'ai autrui que j'i anvoi,
 Qu'il me poise que je nel voi.
 Car l'alez querre et apeler."
 1400 Cele ne li pot plus celer
 De quel mangier ele le sert,
 Einçois li dist tot an apert:
 "Dedanz toi as ce que tu quiers,
 Mes n'i est mie toz antiers.
 1405 Partie an as dedanz ton cors
 Et partie an a defors."
 Philomena, qui s'iert reposte
 An une chambre iluec decoste,
 S'an lssi fors atot la teste.
 1410 Jusque devant lui ne s'areste,
 Si li a tote ansanglantee
 La teste an mi le vis gitee.
 Tereüs voit qu'il est traiz,
 S'estut une piece esbaiz,
 1415 Qu'il ne se mut ne ne dist mot
 D'angoisse et de honte qu'il ot.
 Honte ot si come avoir dut,
 Quant la teste son fil conut,
 Et ce li fist son sanc trobler
 1420 Et s'ire et sa dolor dobler,
 Que il sot de voir que Progné
 Li avoit a mangier doné.
 Mout ot grant honte et grant dolor,
 Et de honte mua color,
 1425 Quant Philomena ot veüe,
 Mes tost ot la honte perdue,
 Car vangier viaut la mort son fil.
 Or sont de mort an grant peril
 Les deus serors, mes ne lor chaut.
 1430 Tereüs de la table saut
 Et fier del pié, s'espant tot jus
 Quanqu'a la table avoit dessus.
 Tot bote jus et tot espant,
 Et voit une espee qui pant
 1435 A la paroi, si la cort prandre.
 Celes n'i osent plus atandre,
 Ainz s'an fuient, et cil les chace,
 Qui del ocire les menace,
 Si con ses mautalanz l'aporte.
 1440 Jusqu'a l'issue d'une porte
 Les a chaciees et menees.

You should go look for him, for I have no other to
 send, and it troubles me not to see him. Now
 please go find and call him here."

Procne can no longer conceal what food she is
 serving him, so she tells him quite frankly,

"You have within you what you seek, but it
 is broken down. A part you have within you, and a
 part is still outside of you."

Philomena, who is standing in an adjoining
 chamber, comes out with Itis' head. She stands
 right in front of Tereus and throws the gory
 thing in his face. He sees he is betrayed, stands
 for a moment astonished, motionless, and speech-
 less from disgrace and distress. Shame is his due
 now that he recognizes his son's head; and the
 realization of what Procne had given him to gnaw
 inflames his blood and doubles his wrath and
 affliction. When he sees Philomena, he is greatly
 ashamed, afflicted, and flushed by his disgrace,
 though he quickly forgets the scandal because now
 he wants only to avenge his son's death. However
 unconcerned at that moment, the two sisters are
 in great peril of death. Tereus leaps down from
 the table and kicks over everything, knocking all
 the platters and the stew everywhere. He spies a
 sword hanging on the wall and runs to seize it.
 The women dare not wait another second, flee, and
 he pursues, threatening to kill them as his anger
 mounts and bristles. Up to the doorway he chases and
 threatens them. (1396-1441)

La, si con plot as destinees
 Avint une si granz mervoille
 Qu'onques n'oïstes sa paroille,
 1445 Car Tereüs devint oisiaus
 Orz et despiz, petiz et viauz.
 De son poing li chei l'espee
 Et il devint hupe copee,
 Si con la fable le raconte,
 1450 Por le pechié et por la honte
 Qu'il avoit fet de la pucele.
 Progné devint une arondele,
 Et Philomena rossignos.
 Ancöre, qui crenroit son los,
 1455 Seroit a honte trestuit --
 Et li felon et li parjure
 Et cil qui de joie n'ont cure
 Et tuit cil qui font mesprison
 1460 Et felenie et traïson
 Vers pucele sage et cortoise, --
 Car tant l'an grieve et tant l'an poise
 Que, quant il vient au prin d'esté,
 Que tot l'iver avons passé,
 1465 Por les mauves qu'ele tant het
 Chanté au plus doucemant qu'el set
 Par le boschäge: "Oci! Oci!"
 (1468) De PHILOMENA leirai ci.

There, as Fate would have it, so great a
 marvel occurred that is surely unparalleled, for
 Tereus was transformed into a bird, repugnant and
 odious, small and old. From his hand the sword
 fell, and he became, just as the fable recounts, a
 pierced hoopoe--because of his shameful sin with
 the maiden. Procné became a swallow, Philomena a
 nightingale.

Still, all who would believe the nightin-
 gale's reputation will be disgraced: the disloyal,
 the scoundrels, and the frauds, and those who have
 no care for joy; and all those who perform an
 outrage or act wickedly or with treachery toward
 a wise and courteous maiden will be killed and
 destroyed. For so much does it vex and trouble the
 bird that, when early summer comes and winter has
 passed, for the bad ones that she hates so much
 she sings through the wood as softly as she can:
 "Oci! Oci! Kill! Kill!"

I will leave off about PHILOMENA here. (1442-
 1468)

diables B; diable D, E -- 1332 A a l'enf. c.
 l. t A, B, E -- 1335 les II A -- 1336 mist D;
 en pot G -- 1340 targe A -- 1345 mieux G --
 13 48 ne lui doit G -- 1350 Il i ert s. et il
 ert s. A; Elle ert B; et il sera B -- 1351
 Ou elle du tout ferira B -- 1352 Celui resp.
 A, B; i ira A -- 1353 i missing mss. -- 1354
 La plus c. B, D; compaignon ne quiert G --
 1355 elle et li B; lui et elle G -- 1356 i
missing A, B, G; y est D -- 1371 cuident A
 -- 1381 dist D -- 1382 All the manuscripts
read: Ja m'aviez vous; convenant G -- 1383
 Qu'il - avecques B -- 1384 serois A; serez
 B, G; serons D; seroiz E; tost E, G -- 1387
 or D -- 1389 la haste B; vait A, B, D; fait
 G -- 1390 se haste mss. -- 1391 Que quel B;
 meine G -- 1393 dist G -- 1395 que ne D --
 1397 autre all mss. -- 1398 jè missing D,
 G -- 1402 dit G -- 1406 defors A; dehors all
other mss. -- 1409 fors A; hors all other
mss.; o tout A -- 1410 dedans l'uis G --
 1419 Et si li E; sens B, D, G -- 1420 double
 G -- 1422 l'en avoit A, B, D -- 1423 a A --
 1427 Quant B -- 1444 Que oncques D -- 14
 viaulx B; biaux all other mss. -- 1449 flabe
 B -- 1454 Encor A, B, G; Encor or B -- 1455
 destruit D; a glaive B -- 1456 despit D; Li
 desloyaux et mort trestuit G -- 1457 tuit li
 p. G -- 1458 Qui de nulle joie n'o. c. B --
 1464 a mue este G -- 1465 pour les mauvais
 temps qu'elle het G -- 1466 qu'elle G; que E
 --

PHILOMENA ET PROCNE
Critical Notes

16 Himeneüs; cf. Ovid, Met., VI.429;
 Statius, Thebaid, II. 249-305; Roman
de Thèbes, vv. 800 ss.

22 On the screech-owl as a bad omen, cf. supra,
Piramus et Tisbé; also Thomas, Tristan, the
 Cariado scene.

40 Tervagan(t) is the pagan god worshipped by
 the Saracens in the Chanson de Roland.

50 Cf. Ovid, VI.439.

69 ss. On the sailing terminology, cf. Ovid's
 Proem to the Ars Amatoria and Wace's Roman
de Brut.

85 ss. Vv. 112, 116, 523, 525, 536, 545, 571, 572,
 690, 694-695, 702, 1245, etc. These numerous ref-
 erences to "return" are mindful of Genesis (over
 25 occurrences of the word), Jeremiah (over 35),
 and 2 Sam. (over 20).

86 Cf. Ovid, VI.447.

91-92 Homonymous rimes suggest Chrétien's playful
 style: vv. 293-294, 371-372, 1091-1092,
 1203-1204, 1389-1390; stichomythia vv. 307 ss.

95 Parataxis opposes run-on lines here: vv.
 202 ss., 221 ss., 242-243, 266-269, 296-297, 332-
 333, 370 ss, 730 ss, 1080-1082, 1362-1363.

162 Philomena will be recalled by the Nicolette
 author in these details.

176 ss. On these games, cf. Jean Bodel, Le Jeu de St. Nicholas, ed. A. Jeanroy, CFMA (Paris, 1958), vv. 870-919.

192 Mesniee Hellequin- The king of "faery" led his troops in the endless night; cf. Romania, XXXII, 422; A. de la Halle, Jeu de la Feuillée, ed. E. Langlois, CFMA (Paris: Champion, 1923), vv. 578, 604, 614.

210 Cf. Ovid, VI.455.

220, 234, 235- Ambiguity of incest among the ancients may be analogous to principle of double truth in the Tristan. The author seems to find the immorality scandalous (vv. 225 ss.). The biens d'amor contrast ironically with evil passion, as in Chartrian cosmology (cf. Demats, pp. 136 ss.). An argument could be made to exculpate Tereus, absolved of his passionate folly because Love is to blame, an interesting interpretation that would make him much more complex a character whose destiny also becomes important.

276 ss. Yvain will take this advice and get help from Lunete. Note here also Philomena's male rationality in contrast to Tereus' "effeminate" (as with Dido) irrationality.

363 Enide's father, the vavassor, holds his daughter in as much affection; Philomena "sustains and supports" civilization!

409 ss. The "philosophy of Love" presented here will profoundly influence subsequent romancers, from Chrétien de Troyes to Guillaume de Lorris, and beyond.

439 A parallel may be noted in Chrétien's chanson in the troubadour style, "Amors m'a tolu a moi."

441. This recalls Narcissus.

443-444. These lines are mindful of the Eneas.

464 ss. Note the confidential tone of this section.

480 There is a pun on destroiz here.

486 I.e., the law of Love from antiquity should overrule the law of Man (an irrational savage).

503-504 Wace, Roman de Rou, III, vv. 6397-98 writes similar lines about the famed fountain of Barenton.

521 This suggests Pyrrhus' line to Andromaque, "Ah, Madame, que vous me gênez!" (Racine's Andromaque).

530 ss. Tereus is a felon; cf. 538-539, 717, 710 ss.: "see how pagans behave..., they flout the feudal code."

536 We note the pun here on liee (happy-bound up), and saine can mean castrated; sain is another word for bound up....

553 Literal sympathy is expressed by Pandion that reveals Chrétien's deep knowledge of the human heart. Cf. Cormier, "The Gift of Tears in Chrétien's Philomena."

580 Cf. Ovid, VI.486.

615 One wonders if the analogy between the food and Tereus' sexual appetite is intended?

630 ss. T.'s energy (and insomnia) doubtless arise from his passion; cf. v. 648 and Dané, supra. Such egotistical passion is found also in Marie de France's Eguitan.

639 The "curve of violence" is doubled in the Spanish epic The Poem of the Cid, because the hero's two daughters are raped and vilified by the Infantes de Carrion in the forest. The odious crime results in an innocent person being sacrificed.

640 Cf. Ovid, VI.489 ss.

659 On this figure, cf. Piramus et Tisbé.

664 The departure from Athens is as hasty as Aeneas' from Carthage.

727 Cf. Ovid, VI.520 ss.; note that VI.511-518 are omitted in the Old French.

736 T.'s actions could not be condoned in the city, only allowed in the "alien" woods.

741 A pun on mence ("led," "herded")

745 This hieratic gesture is also featured in the Eneas--Dido greets Eneas.

803 On trembling, cf. both Piramus and Narcisus.

822 Questioning of the gods is a topos in the Romances of Antiquity.

836 Ovid's rape episode is more vehement, with less mitigation and fewer speeches; on Tereus, cf. Ovid, Amores, II, vi.10; xiv.30, 33; III, xii.32. W. Pfeffer recalls the legend that the nightingale "lost its voice after copulation;" is this episode some garbled version of art imitating reality, or vice versa? Cf. also, A. Camus, "Le Rénégat," in which a sorcerer cuts out a missionary's tongue as a kind of ritual.

842 This may be an obscene pun on male.

860 This detail is missing in Ovid.

869 Cf. Ovid, VI.572.

909 Cf. Ganelon, the traitor in the Chanson de Roland.

949 ss. Ovid covers this whole scene in about five lines.

960 ss. Tereus is using poetic commonplaces for his deception.

979 "Death where is thy sting?" Cf. Paul, I Corinthians, 15:54-55.

1002 Do these remarks imply that some sense of cultural relativism existed in the 12th century?

1010 This sacrifice seems to be a simulation and may be from Ovid, VII.234-250; cf. Cliques, vv. 6238 ss., 5791 ss.

1062 A new episode is added here; cf. VI.571 ss.

1067 Does T. return to the wood for more? Cf. Ovid, VI.502.

1090 Cf. Ovid, VI.574-575.

1120 on the summarising procedure here, cf. Erec, 323 ss; Yvain, 6332 ss.

1144 One year in Ovid; VI. 571.

1157-1159 An allegorical interpretation here would suggest that the Devil has taken away the soul from God... Cf. Ovid, VIII.783 ss.

1159 The open window suggests freedom, as in the Eneas, Narcisus, and the opening in the wall in P&T. The detail is non-Ovidian. Cf. Eliot's Waste Land, II, 97 ss.

1212 Philomena is anxious to escape, a non-Ovidian detail.

1236 Cf. Ovid, VI.587-600; Ovid's pretext of the Bacchic rites is omitted.

1249 The violent gesture echoes Tereus' and announces the graphic violence to come; it is an important act for Sophocles' Oedipus.

1260 A detail missing in Ovid.

1282 The underground chamber recalls Tristan's "Statue Room" and the lovers' hideaway in Cliques.

1312 Procne goes against legal prohibitions and takes personal vengeance on Tereus for his acts against her sister; does this imply a hierarchy of blood relationships? On cannibalism, cf. Ovid, I.225 ss. ad VIII. 855 ss. Anthropological and biological studies of cannibalism seem to suggest we may have some sort of garbled version in this tale of two females "competing for the attention of a single male," especially noticed among birds, between sisters, in harems, and in polygynous breeding. See Mildred Dickemann in Infanticide, p. 428-430. Cf. Leviticus, 24:29, infanticide/cannibalism as punishment if the Jews fall again in the way of the Lord.

1317 Cf. Ovid, VI.625 ss.

1414 Note the psychological effect of the frozen moment from astonishment.

1452-1453 The drama of the metamorphoses had to be retained: Philomena's life and body were mutilated, Procne's honor has been completely vilified, and Tereus' sins--perjury, rape, and broken faith are too serious to be resolved by some simple solution; since his son is dead, he has no reason to live.... Evidence from Hyginus suggests that Chrétien's version owes to him (and not to Ovid) the idea that Procne becomes a swallow and Philomena a nightingale. See Benkov's study; Dante, Purgatorio, follows Greek tradition and switches them.

