

NARCISUS ET DANÉ

Edited and translated by

Penny Eley

**Liverpool Online Series
Critical Editions of French Texts**

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Timothy Unwin
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Introduction

Manuscripts, Editions and Translations

Narcisus et Dané exists in four MSS, all dating from the thirteenth century and representing a long and a short redaction of the poem. Of the three complete MSS, A (Paris, BNF fr. 837) contains 930 lines, B (Paris, BNF fr. 19152) 921 lines and C (Paris, BNF fr. 2168) 1010 lines. D (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Hamilton 257) is incomplete as a result of the loss of twenty-seven folios towards the end of the codex. The text of *Narcisus* begins at our v. 515 and consists of 432 lines, whereas C has 492 lines between this point and the end of the poem; this indicates that D belongs to the short redaction. There is general agreement amongst scholars that C contains fewer obviously corrupt readings than the other complete MSS.

The relationship between the MSS has been studied in detail by Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens.¹ Their stemma has two principal branches, C and ABD, with AB deriving from a common ancestor *y*, which in turn derives, alongside D, from another lost ancestor *x*. While it is clear that C and ABD represent broadly differing traditions, this stemma may be too simplified to account for the complex pattern of agreement and non-agreement between the extant witnesses. There may well have been more intermediaries in both branches than Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens allow for. The situation is further complicated by the existence of thirteen extracts from our poem in the mid-thirteenth-century romance *Cristal et Clarie*. These extracts were copied from a fifth MS, now lost, which had a significant number of features in common with C.² Here again, the relationship between the MSS is probably more complex than suggested by Thiry-

¹ Full details of all works referred to by author's name or short title can be found in the Bibliography.

² *Cristal und Clarie, alfranzösischer Abenteuerroman des XIII. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Hermann Breuer, Gesellschaft für romanische Literatur Band 36 (Dresden, 1915). The extracts from *Narcisus et Dané* appear in the following passages: *Cristal* vv. 1247-64 (= *Narcisus* vv. 147-68); 1351-70 (= 463-82); 1567-85 (= 762-79); 1924-46 (= 183-86, 229-32 and 297-306); 2437-54 and 2467-69 (= 457-72 and 501-03); 3123-56 (= 599-604, 573-86, and 607-22); 7859-80 (= 793-814); 7985-8108 (= 179-274); in all cases there are omissions and alterations to the text of *Narcisus* (some quite radical), designed to adapt the extracts to a new story-line and context.

Stassin and Tyssens, who saw the *Cristal* poet's exemplar as either deriving directly from the original version of the poem, or being a very early representative of the same branch as C. Roques suggests that this lost MS showed signs of contamination between the main branches at some stage. This would be compatible with the results of Schøsler's computer-based analysis of the *Narcisus* MSS, which indicate that the *Cristal* exemplar was either a direct descendant of C or belonged to an early branch of the ABD family.

The modern editions of *Narcisus* by Hilka (1929), Pelan and Spence (1964), Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens (1976), Cormier (1986) and Baumgartner (2000) are all based on MS C, corrected to a greater or lesser degree by reference to ABD, and, in the case of Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens, to the *Cristal* excerpts.³ Pelan and Spence and Baumgartner take a very conservative approach to the text of C, while the other three editions are more interventionist. The present edition, also based on C, falls somewhere between the two groups. I have taken the opportunity to review in the notes the textual problems identified by previous editors, to discuss their emendations, and to propose one or two of my own. Particular attention has been given to lines that appear in C but not in ABD, in an attempt to establish whether the long redaction represents an expanded version of the original, or whether the *x* tradition represents an abridgement. In line with the reservations expressed above concerning the stemma established by Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens, I emend only where agreement of the other MSS (and *Cristal* in the relevant passages) against C is supported by plausible evidence of scribal error or intervention. The problem of establishing a satisfactory text for the passage beginning with line 150, and the varying solutions offered, mean that the line numbering in the most recent editions diverges from this point on (Pelan and Spence have a total of 1010 lines, Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens and Cormier 1002, and the present edition 1006). For ease of cross-referencing, the equivalent line numbers from Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens are given in italics in the right-hand margin.⁴ I have not emended a number of sporadic dialectal forms that may strike some readers as odd at first sight, but are well attested from other sources.⁵ The small number of obvious case errors in C

³ Holmes and Payen were both in favour of an edition based on MS A, partly because the language of the scribe was Francien, rather than Picard.

⁴ To cross-reference with Pelan and Spence, add four to every line number from our v. 155 onwards.

⁵ These include the reduction of diphthongs to their first element (e.g. 196 *prendra* for *prendrai*, 864 *sa* for *sai*, 922 *sat* for *sait*, 611 *su* for *sui* (also written *sou* in 915), 743 *lu* for *lui*, 957 *autru* for *autrui*; I

have not been corrected, but abbreviations have been expanded (including *x = us*), word division has been regularised and capital letters and accented characters have been introduced in line with normal editorial practice.

There have been three modern translations of *Narcissus*: into English by Cormier; into Italian by Mancini and into French by Baumgartner. Mancini offers a careful line-by-line rendering of the Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens text,⁶ while the other two translations are in rather freer continuous prose, and are based on the editors' own texts. Cormier's is frequently inaccurate (see vv. 13-15, 21-22, 45, 69-70, 90, 99-100, 141-42, 145-47 *et passim*); the provision of a reliable line-by-line English version of the poem for non-specialists is one of the justifications for the present edition.⁷ My translation attempts to be as accurate as possible without too great a sacrifice of readability. The tenses of the original have been maintained, except in one or two cases where this would have done violence to a standard English idiom, in order to convey a sense of the shifting temporal perspective of the Old French.

Outline of the Story

A prologue warns of the dangers of rushing into love, and of the potential perils of both women and men rejecting their suitors. A lady from Thebes consults a soothsayer, who tells her that her son Narcissus will die young if he ever sees himself. The prophecy is ignored, but will eventually come true. The boy grows up to become the most beautiful creature ever fashioned by Nature. At the age of fifteen, he is only interested in hunting and will have nothing to do with love. As he returns from the chase one day, he is observed by the king's daughter Dané, who is overcome by love for him. Torn between her desire for the young man and her duty to act responsibly, she passes a sleepless night, even forcing her nurse to remake her bed in an attempt to alleviate her

have, however, changed *esfro* to *esfroi* at the rhyme in v. 917), dissimilations such as *mabre* (641), *abre* (441 and 642) and *querai* (= *crerrai* 765), and verbal forms such as 331 *seu* (= simple past of *savoir*). See also notes to vv. 81, 181 and 530.

⁶ Pfister describes it as 'einwandfrei'. Unfortunately, the fact that the Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens text has been reproduced directly from their edition, while the translation is in a different typeface, with slightly different line spacing, means that the text and translation are not properly aligned: by the end of each page, the lines of translation appear, rather disconcertingly, three lines below the lines of text they refer to.

⁷ Baumgartner's translation is very fluent and readable, but not without some omissions: v. 340 (our v. 336) is not translated, for example. There are also a number of transcription and typographical errors in her text, particularly towards the beginning of the poem (see vv. 9, 36, 45, 50, 53, 74, 79, 80, 83, 97, 99, 122, 147, 162, etc.).

discomfort. Next day, she rises early and waits for Narcissus to ride past on his way to the woods. The sight of him intensifies her dilemma; she finally resolves to approach him the following morning. She slips out of the city at dawn and waits for the young man in a nearby wood. When she declares her passion, he scornfully rejects her, disclaiming any interest in love. Offended and distraught, Dané prays for Narcissus to experience unrequited love and the gods hear her prayer. The hunting party pursues a stag all morning in oppressive heat. Narcissus leaves his companions, to go in search of water. Finding a spring, he dismounts to drink; seeing his reflection in the water, he thinks it is a water fairy and falls in love with it. He passes the rest of the day, and the following night, wondering why the ‘fairy’ will not join him, and suffering the torments of love. Next day, the truth dawns on Narcissus, but he cannot change his feelings. Alone and desperate, he imagines that he would be able to love Dané instead, if she were to reappear. Suddenly he suffers a seizure which robs him of the power of speech. When Dané does come looking for him, it is too late: he dies in her arms and she commits suicide by holding him so tightly that she suffocates.

Date and Author

The poem is undated and does not contain any allusions to historical figures or events that would enable us to date it with certainty. It is generally accepted, however, that *Narcissus et Dané* belongs to the ‘classicising’ period of Old French literature (c. 1155-1170)⁸ that saw the composition of a number of poems based on Latin sources: the *romans d’antiquité* (the *Roman de Thèbes*, *Eneas*, and Benoît de Sainte-Maure’s *Roman de Troie*) and two other short narratives adapted from stories in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (*Piramus et Tisbé* and the *Philomena* attributed to Chrétien de Troyes). The relative chronology of these six works has been the subject of some debate. Most scholars agree that *Narcissus* was composed after *Thèbes* and *Piramus*, which would place it firmly in the 1160s, at around the same time that Marie de France was composing her *Lais*, and make it roughly contemporary with the *Roman de Troie*. In Benoît’s romance, the Greek hero Achilles compares himself at length with the figure of Narcissus,⁹ in a passage

⁸ Sandqvist’s argument in favour of a later dating, based on the use of the conjunction *que que* in our poem and the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, is not very convincing.

⁹ I use the form ‘Narcissus’ to refer to the mythical figure and the protagonist of the *Metamorphoses*, and ‘Narcisus’ for the hero of our poem.

which Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens believe was inspired by the recent success of our poem (pp. 52-53).¹⁰ If this is so, *Narcissus et Dané* was probably in existence by around 1165. Extended references to Narcissus in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés* (c. 1174-76) and in Alexandre de Paris's *Roman d'Alexandre* (c. 1180) may point to a continuing vogue for the story among the audience of vernacular courtly narrative.¹¹ Sauciuc and Genaust find clear evidence that our poem was influenced by *Eneas*, in particular by the Lavine episode, in which a king's daughter falls for a man who rides beneath her window, suffers the symptoms of love without realising what has happened to her, and debates with herself whether, and how, she should make her feelings known to him. Since *Eneas* is generally thought to have been composed between about 1155 and 1160, this would give a date of c. 1160-1165 for *Narcissus et Dané*.

The *Narcissus* poet does not name himself in the text, and the work has not been convincingly associated with any author from the period whose name is known to us. A case could be made for attributing our poem to the anonymous author of *Piramus et Tisbé*, based on the nature of the source material, the strong similarities in the way it is adapted for a new audience (particularly the development of the role of the heroine and the foregrounding of adolescent female sexuality), the moral preoccupations that inform the two works, and a whole series of verbal echoes noted by Genaust, Cormier and Mancini. The more developed literary technique of *Narcissus et Dané* (notably the use of the portrait, conspicuously absent from *Piramus*, and the higher proportion of *couplets brisés*) might then be seen as the mark of an author growing in confidence after having produced one successful work. However, the evidence for common authorship remains

¹⁰ See Benoît de Sainte-Maure, *Le Roman de Troie*, ed. by Léopold Constans, 6 vols, SATF (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1904-12), vv. 17691-714. The passage does not contain anything that could not also be interpreted as a reference to Ovid's version of the tale, which was certainly well known even to those who could not read Latin. However, Narcissus is hardly the most obvious choice of comparison for a character suffering from unrequited love for a real woman (Polyxena), so this part of Achilles's lament could well be a slightly contrived topical literary allusion.

¹¹ See Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligés*, ed. by Wendelin Foerster (Halle: Niemeyer, 1910), vv. 2766-75 and *The Medieval French Roman d'Alexandre. II: Version of Alexandre de Paris*, ed. by Edward C. Armstrong et al., Elliot Monographs 37 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, and Paris: PUF, 1937), Branch III, vv. 7449-62. The *chanson* sung by two attendants of the queen of the Amazons in *Alexandre* appears to be based directly on Ovid, since it ends with a reference to the (unnamed) hero's transformation into a flower, which does not feature in our poem (see Friede for a detailed discussion of the relationship between the three texts). Chrétien presents Narcissus as an example of someone who had more beauty than sense ('Mout ot biauté et po savoir', v. 2772), in contrast to his hero, who is as wise as he is handsome. Chrétien's description of Cligés amounts to little more than saying that he was more attractive than Narcissus, which strongly suggests that both he and his audience were familiar with the detailed portrait of the hero given in our poem.

circumstantial, and the undoubted similarities between the two works could simply be the result of close reading and conscious imitation on the part of a second poet.¹²

The place of composition of the poem can only be approximated from a study of its rhymes and versification. Although MS C shows very clear signs of being Picard in origin, it is unlikely that the poem itself came from this region. Hilka suggested a Norman provenance, while Pelan and Spence concluded more cautiously that the original text was probably composed in the variety of ‘franco-Norman’ used widely in vernacular literature across northern and western France in the later twelfth century. The author appears to have intended his poem for an audience familiar with this literary language, and with the deployment of rhetorical techniques derived from the study of classical literature, such as amplification, anaphora, anadiplosis, apostrophe and the use of maxims, all of which are found throughout the text.

Title and Genre

The titles which appear in modern editions of medieval narratives usually reflect their editors’ preferences rather than their authors’ intentions. Chrétien de Troyes is unusual amongst twelfth-century poets in providing titles embedded in the prologues to his *Chevalier de la Charrette* and *Le Conte du Graal*. There is nothing in our text to indicate how the author and his original audience would have referred to it. In this case modern editors have found it difficult to agree on what title to use, partly as a consequence of the different labels used by the scribes of the three complete MSS. MS A has the rubric ‘de narcisus’; in MS B the decorated initial at the beginning of the first line is preceded by the words ‘ Ci coumence de narciso le roumanz’, while MS C has a rubric in a different hand reading ‘de narciso li lais’. Hilka and Mancini, following C, entitled the work ‘Der altfranzösische *Narcisuslai*’ and ‘Il *lai* di Narciso’ respectively. Pelan and Spence used the Old French form of the hero’s name, ‘Narcisus’ (with the subtitle ‘poème du XII^e siècle’ in parentheses), while Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens opted for its modern equivalent ‘Narcisse’, followed by ‘Conte ovidien français du XII^e siècle’. Baumgartner followed suit, adopting the title ‘Narcisse’ for the poem, and titling her volume ‘trois contes du XII^e siècle français imités d’Ovide’. Burgess was the first to argue that it was inappropriate to call the poem by the name of its hero alone, when the

¹² It is interesting that in the passage referred to above, one MS of the *Roman de Troie* has ‘Piramus’ instead of ‘Narcisus’ in v. 17691.

heroine is ‘such an important personage in the text and a genuine creation by the poet’ (p. 595), and suggested calling it *Narcisus et Dané*, on the model of *Piramus et Tisbé*. Cormier took up this suggestion, and I have done likewise, partly in order to draw attention to the role of the heroine, and partly to underline the close associations between this poem and *Piramus*.

The titles and subtitles chosen by previous editors also highlight the problem of classifying *Narcisus et Dané* in terms of the recognised genres of twelfth-century narrative literature. Is it a *lai*, a *conte*, or neither (Pelan and Spence’s *poème*)?¹³ Its length and subject matter give it definite affinities with the *lais*, which rarely exceed a thousand lines and focus on one critical event (or brief sequence of events) in the lives of their protagonists, frequently a tragic or problematic love-affair. Unlike most *lais*, however, it is an adaptation of a classical source rather than a retelling of a Breton folk-tale, which led Hilka to add to his chosen title the descriptor ‘eine antikisierende Dichtung des 12. Jahrhunderts’. Frappier took the view that *Narcisus* was not a *lai*, as he defined the term, while Donovan saw our poem, along with *Piramus* and *Philomena*, as providing a narrative model for the *lais* of Marie de France, rather than as forming part of the same category of short fictions.¹⁴ Whether it is useful to identify a separate class of ‘contes ovidiens’ to cover three surviving poems may be open to question, particularly in view of the formal differences between them. *Piramus* uses a variety of metres and rhyme-schemes, while *Narcisus* and *Philomena* are straightforward sequences of octosyllabic rhyming couplets. It may be better to regard these poems as experimental short narratives that contributed to the development of the Old French *lai* as a literary genre, and resist the temptation to give them a common label.

Sources and their Treatment

Narcisus et Dané provides an excellent example of the technique of composition as re-writing that characterised much of twelfth-century literature. The most important source

¹³ Jones also refers to *Narcisus* as a ‘poem’ (p. 1); Holmes calls it a *conte antique* (p. 535); Payen uses the phrase ‘l’un des tout premiers romans antiques’ (p. 278); Sweetser refers to it as a romance (p. 121), while Llamas-Pombo describes it as one of ‘nos premiers petits romans en vers’ (p. 344).

¹⁴ See Thiry-Stassin and Tyssens, p. 72. It is interesting that there is no mention of the three Ovidian poems in Jean-Charles Payen’s essay, ‘Le Lai narratif’, in *Typologie des sources du Moyen Age occidental*, ed. by L. Genicot, Fasc. 13 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975), pp. 32-63.

for our poet is lines 339 to 510 of Book III of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,¹⁵ but this is by no means the only model on which he draws. The *Narcissus* poet is more ambitious than Chrétien de Troyes, whose *Philomena* is a fairly straightforward retelling of the story of Tereus, Procne and Philomela from Book VI, or the anonymous author of *Piramus et Thisbé*, who takes more liberties with his principal source (vv. 55-166 of Book IV), but still respects its fundamental structure and content. Our author combines at least three of Ovid's tales of transformation with each other and with elements taken from contemporary vernacular literature. His technique of re-writing involves the decomposition of the sources into their narrative and thematic constituents, a selection of which are then mixed together and re-assembled in a kaleidoscopic text that is both very similar to, and fundamentally different from, Ovid's story of the unfortunate Narcissus.¹⁶

The narrative framework of the French poem is taken directly from the fifth tale in a sequence associated with the city of Thebes. Having recounted the stories of Cadmus, Acteon, Semele and Tiresias, Ovid moves seamlessly on to tell of the river nymph Liriope, who consulted the blind seer about the future of her son Narcissus, and received the reply that he would live to a ripe old age provided that he did not come to know himself. At the age of sixteen, the boy was desired by many young men and women, including the nymph Echo, whom the goddess Juno had deprived of all powers of speech except that of repeating the last few words she had heard. He proudly spurned her love, as he had spurned all his other suitors, and she wasted away until only her voice was left behind. Narcissus eventually fell victim to the revenge of the goddess Nemesis, responding to a prayer from one of his suitors that he, too, should experience unrequited love. Seeing his reflection in a pool when out hunting, the young man fell in love with it; despite later realising the truth, he could not tear himself away and died at the water's edge, only for his body to be transformed into the flower that bears his name.

The Old French poet retains the role of the seer, the young man's exceptional beauty, his refusal of a young woman's love and his exemplary fate, but makes a variety of changes designed to 'rationalise and modernise' Ovid's story (Huber, p. 596). The

¹⁵ All references are to Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ed. and trans. by Frank Justus Miller, 2 vols, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann; New York: Putnam, 1916).

¹⁶ For a detailed discussion of our poet's direct borrowings from Ovid's text, see Sauciuc.

‘cast list’ is adapted to bring it into line with the expectations of a twelfth-century court audience. The nymphs Liriope and Echo become a noblewoman and a princess respectively, while Narcissus, the illegitimate offspring of a river-god in the *Metamorphoses*, is fully integrated into the medieval social hierarchy as the son of a royal vassal. In contrast to what we find in Ovid, there is considerable emphasis in *Narcisus et Dané* on the social aspects of love: social position ranks alongside youth and beauty as one of the principal criteria by which a prospective partner is judged (Jones, pp. 11-13). The physical setting is also adapted to provide a familiar background for the action. Ovid’s rather indeterminate woods and mountains are replaced by the more ordered landscape found in many contemporary vernacular narratives. The protagonists live in a walled city overlooking an open space crossed by well-defined roads; beyond that lies the forest where young noblemen go to hunt on a daily basis. Dané spends her days in a tower in her father’s palace, and her nights in a chamber where her attendants also sleep, as was the norm for a young woman of her status. Some aspects of the original are not modernised, however, perhaps in order to create a certain distance between audience and protagonists and allow the former to draw a moral lesson from the actions of the latter. So although nymphs and river-gods are written out, some classical divinities remain (notably the goddess Venus and her son Cupid), and both hero and heroine pray to the gods (in the plural) to help them at moments of crisis (e.g. vv. 612-20 and 885-86).¹⁷

Our author also achieves greater narrative economy than Ovid by eliminating the subplot of Juno’s punishment of Echo, and by attributing the prayer that leads to the hero’s downfall to the young woman herself rather than to an unnamed (male) third party. This second alteration forms part of a radical redevelopment of the role and characterisation of the female protagonist. One of the most important modifications the *Narcisus* poet makes to Ovid’s story is to turn the passive Echo into the dynamic Dané, an unforgettable figure who is the main focus of attention for half the poem.¹⁸ This is

¹⁷ The frequent use of stereotyped phrases such as ‘por / par Diu’ (e.g. vv. 374, 485, 546) and ‘Diu ne place’ (v. 502) or direct forms of address such as ‘E, Dius’ (e.g. vv. 278, 285, 420,) should not be seen as evidence of the poet consciously christianising the story: as Payen points out, ‘toute invocation à Dieu dans ce genre d’oeuvre est en fait une invocation soit au dieu de l’Amour, soit à la divinité en général, sans qu’il y entre la moindre allusion à la religion chrétienne’ (p. 281).

¹⁸ Mancini notes that Dané is a more rounded character from the outset, whereas the hero is initially more two-dimensional than the heroine (p. 14). Genaust and Lefay-Toury show how the amplification of the

achieved by fusing Echo with two other prominent Ovidian characters who are likewise victims of unrequited love, but play a more active part in the stories in which they feature. Laurie and Thiry-Stassin ('Une autre source', pp. 217-26) note the similarities between Dané and the god Apollo from the tale of Daphne in Book I of the *Metamorphoses* (vv. 452-567). In order to avenge an insult, Cupid caused Apollo to fall for the beautiful Daphne, daughter of the river-god Peneus, but at the same time made her totally uninterested in love. Apollo pursued Daphne through the countryside, begging her to love him, until she prayed to her father to save her and was transformed into a laurel tree.¹⁹ Pelan and Spence (pp. 75 and 82) and Mancini (pp. 105-06 and 108) point out that our heroine also has much in common with Byblis, whose story is told at some length in Book IX (vv. 454-665). Byblis fell in love with her twin brother Caunus; after debating at length whether and how to let him know how she felt, she finally declared her love, only to be rejected by her horrified sibling. He fled their homeland to escape from her; she followed, but failed to find him, and her floods of tears eventually led to her being changed into a spring.²⁰

Vernacular sources also influenced a number of aspects of the poem, including the portrayal of the heroine. We have already noted the parallels between Dané's situation and that of Lavine in *Eneas* (see above, p. 11). *Eneas* may well have provided the inspiration for our poet's decision to amplify his principal source with interior monologues designed to analyse the experience of love, particularly those in which a character's conflicting emotions are represented as two separate voices presenting

role of Dané helps to give our poem a better balanced and more symmetrical narrative structure than its source.

¹⁹ Our heroine's name may have been derived from this tale (Dané is one possible Old French form of Daphne); it could also be a translation of 'Danaë'. In Greek myth, Danaë was imprisoned by her father to ensure that she would never conceive, because an oracle had predicted that he would be killed by a son of hers. The god Zeus entered the prison in the form of a shower of gold falling through a crack in the ceiling and fathered Perseus, who later killed his grandfather. Laurie suggests (p. 111) that our poet may have been inspired by the allusion to Danaë in Book III of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*. There are also three references in the *Amores* to Danaë being confined in a 'brazen' or 'iron-barred' turret by her father (II.19, 27-28; III.4, 21-22, and III.8, 29-35), which might also have been known to him. Although our heroine is not locked away at any point, the fact that the *Narcisus* poet envisaged her residing in a tower and having her sexuality closely controlled by her father may help to explain the choice of name.

²⁰ There are a number of close verbal parallels between this story and *Narcisus*, including a sailing metaphor almost identical to those in our prologue, and a reference to Caunus's heart not being made of 'hard flint or solid iron or adamant' (vv. 614-15) which is echoed in our vv. 754-55, although with a characteristic twist. The final scene of our poem, in which Dané dies by the spring in the forest, may also owe something to Byblis. It is interesting to note that, unlike many other tales in the *Metamorphoses*, the story of Byblis is explicitly cautionary in nature: it begins with the words 'Byblis is a warning that girls should not love unlawfully' (v. 454).

opposing points of view.²¹ In Ovid, there is only one monologue, which dramatises Narcissus's unrequited passion and his realisation that he is in love with his own reflection. In *Narcissus et Dané* there are six: Dané's puzzled reaction to her insomnia (vv. 182-98); her attempt to understand her attraction to Narcissus (vv. 221-92); her debate over what course of action to follow (vv. 329-92); her reaction to being rejected by the hero (vv. 537-622); Narcissus's initial reaction to seeing the *onbre* and falling in love (vv. 679-792); his realisation that he loves his own reflection (vv. 845-964). Together with two other brief passages of solo speech (vv. 434-36 and 805-14), these monologues occupy some 486 lines, or 48.3% of the total length of the poem (the equivalent figures for Ovid are 35 lines and 20.3%). The first three monologues have a much closer affinity with *Eneas* than with Ovid, who gives a purely narrative account of Echo's falling in love which is far removed from the social realities of the later twelfth century. Like Lavine in *Eneas*, Dané does not have Echo's or Apollo's freedom to move about the countryside and follow the object of their passion. As in Lavine's case, the physical pursuit of love is transformed into a psychological journey and its accompanying verbalisation. As Jappé notes, Dané's monologues are not simply 'lyric pauses', but a form of action, in which the dynamic processes of analysis and understanding culminate in the taking of a crucial decision (p. 162).

The remaining monologues illustrate the *Narcissus* poet's skill in applying techniques of amplification and reconfiguration to a variety of elements found in the *Metamorphoses*. In the first part of Dané's last monologue, for instance, Ovid's brief references to Echo's 'shamed face' and the pain of being rejected give rise to a thirty-four line outburst expressing the humiliation, indignation and incomprehension the heroine experiences as a result of Narcissus's behaviour. The hero's two monologues are constructed out of parts of four different elements of Ovid's tale: the 'conversation' between Narcissus and Echo, the description of the hero at the water's edge, the narrator's apostrophe to the 'fondly foolish boy', and the long speech which forms the dramatic centre of the Latin story. As Goldin has shown, these elements are recombined and re-ordered in such a way as to create a sophisticated exploration of the psychology

²¹ The hero's attack on the gods in vv. 889-98 is also reminiscent of the lament of Pallas's mother in *Eneas*, who accuses the deities of either having been deaf to her prayers because they were asleep, or of being powerless to help mortals (see Mancini, pp. 109-10).

of an individual achieving self-awareness and recognising the impossibility of truly loving an image (pp. 22-52).²²

Eneas is by no means the only vernacular model on which our poet drew in the process of rewriting Ovid for a new audience. Dané's determination to leave her father's castle unchaperoned in order to speak to Narcissus is strongly reminiscent of the heroine of *Piramus et Tisbé*, who shows exactly the same disregard for social convention and personal safety under the influence of desire. As in *Piramus*, the focus of the story is shifted away from the notion of physical transformation towards a moral interpretation of events: *Narcissus* ends not with a yellow and white flower but with a brief prayer that its hearers may avoid the protagonists' fate. Like the earlier poem, it also ends with two deaths: Echo's transformation into a disembodied voice is replaced by the suicide of Dané, who embraces the dead Narcissus so tightly that she drives the life from her own body. The example of *Piramus* may have encouraged our poet to relocate the account of young woman's fate to the final scene of the narrative (in Ovid, Echo's transformation is recounted *before* Narcissus finds the pool in the forest and falls for his own reflection). Taken together, these modifications have the effect of putting the hero and heroine of the French poem on an equal footing (just like *Piramus* and *Tisbé*), whereas Ovid's version privileges the role of the young man, whose metamorphosis forms the closing tableau of the story.²³

However, Echo's fate is not wholly overwritten by the French poet. Ovid's Echo incurs Juno's wrath by distracting her with endless talk when she is about to catch Jupiter *in flagrante delicto* with other nymphs. As a result, she loses the ability to initiate conversations and so cannot approach Narcissus to ask for his love. The motif of importunate speech and its consequences is maintained in *Narcissus et Dané*, but is incorporated into the central encounter between hero and heroine, rather than being part of a separate interaction between nymph and goddess. Echo's foolish babbling to Juno becomes Dané's ill-advised speech to Narcissus, which closes off the possibility of other

²² Dwyer notes that Goldin's analysis of the poem focuses almost exclusively on Narcissus (p. 418). This gives a rather distorted view of our poet's technique of adaptation. For Gier, part of the *Narcissus* poet's originality lies in his realisation that the hero is too young at the outset to be self-aware ('L'Anneau et le miroir', pp. 451-52); the process by which he achieves self-recognition therefore merits careful exposition.

²³ Jappé sees this transformation of Echo and Narcissus into a 'couple amoureux' as one of the French poet's most original creations (pp. 164-65); Harrison notes that in the work of later authors 'the image of two equal but unhappy lovers, joined in death, did not gain widespread acceptance' (p. 339).

forms of approach (vv. 587-93) and reduces her to a purely reactive state. The motif of Echo partially losing the power of speech is likewise detached from its original context, then intensified, displaced to the very end of the tale and applied to the hero rather than the heroine.²⁴ On the final day of his torment, Narcissus suffers some kind of seizure that deprives him of speech altogether, with the result that he can only communicate with Dané by gesture and expression — enough to show her that he regrets his earlier hardheartedness, but not enough to ask for the love that might have saved him.

Gender Roles

The treatment of Echo's fate is part of a consistent pattern of disruption and reversal of the gender roles found in the poet's Latin sources. Just as Apollo becomes Dané and Daphne becomes Narcissus, so Echo's punishment is inflicted on the hero, and the gods take revenge on the hero in response to a plea from Dané rather than from one of his male admirers. It is possible that the same process may also be at work in the prologue, where the roles appear to be the wrong way round in relation to the tale that is about to unfold. The poet warns the would-be lover not to let himself be drawn into a *fole amor*, but then argues that, if he does, it is incumbent on the woman concerned to respond to his advances, in order to avoid tragic consequences. In the narrative proper, of course, the *fol amant* is Dané, and the proud spurner of her affections is the hero Narcissus, who falls victim in turn to a *fole amor* of which he himself is the object. To some extent, the distribution of gender roles in the prologue is determined by grammatical considerations. Having chosen to start his poem with a conventional generalising statement, the poet has few choices about how to express the notion 'anyone who', given the shortage of true indefinite pronouns in Old French. The initial *qui* (v. 1) is gender-neutral, but subsequent references to the indefinite subject almost inevitably involve the 'masculine' pronouns *cil* and *il* (vv. 5-8). This in turn leads to the identification of the would-be lover as male (vv. 12-15), and of the other party in the relationship as female (*cele*, v. 20). At the same time, it is surely no coincidence that these 'grammatical' roles coincide with the literary convention of the supplicant male and the haughty *dompna* found in troubadour lyric poetry. Having invoked a well-established framework for talking about love, the *Narcissus* poet then negotiates the

²⁴ The gender reversal is noted by Gier, 'L'Amour', p. 133.

contradiction between this model and his own story by going on to remark that these ‘rules’ should also work in reverse: if by any chance the supplicant is a woman, the man who rejects her advances should be severely punished (vv. 29-32).

This initial foregrounding and disruption of conventional gender roles prepares the audience for the way in which the classical text is going to be blended with yet another form of vernacular literature, in which ‘forward’ women have a central role to play. Among the surviving Old French reworkings of Breton *lais* there is a significant grouping, including Marie de France’s *Lanval* and the anonymous *Graelent* and *Desiré*, which feature an unattached knight who is approached by a supernatural female of extraordinary beauty (the ‘fairy mistress’) who offers him her love, often on condition that he respect some taboo, such as not revealing her existence to others. The first encounter between the two always involves an element of surprise, and takes place outside the ‘real world’ of towns and castles, in a meadow or forest, often in the vicinity of water (a stream in *Lanval*). There are a number of unmistakable echoes of this narrative model in *Narcisus*.²⁵ The hero first encounters Dané as he is riding out to hunt one morning; when she appears suddenly from a small wood, his first thought is that she must be a supernatural being, since no mortal woman would be out and about at that hour (vv. 449-50). True to literary form, this figure offers him her love (though without conditions) in a space beyond the emotional and sexual restrictions of normal society. Narcisus is again identified as the protagonist of a fairy-mistress narrative when he catches sight of his reflection in the water. Here, too, his first thought is that it must be a ‘fee de mer’ (v. 651), while Ovid’s hero makes no reference to water spirits and is in no doubt that the image he desires is that of a young man.²⁶ At the end of the French poem Dané appears unexpectedly once more, this time by the spring in the forest, but, unlike the fairy in *Lanval*, she returns too late to save the hero from the consequences of his actions. In keeping with the overall pattern of gender reversal, at least one attribute of the fairy-mistress appears to be associated with Narcisus himself: his extraordinary

²⁵ A similar blending of classical and folkloric models can be found in *Partonopeus de Blois*, which combines a rewriting of the story of Cupid and Psyche with a fairy-mistress narrative and elements taken either from Marie de France’s *Guigemar* or from something very similar to it. SunHee Kim Gertz notes a series of parallels between Ovid’s tale of Narcissus and *Guigemar*, but, surprisingly, makes no mention of our poem, which could have been known to Marie and have influenced her reading of Ovid; see ‘Echoes and Reflections of Enigmatic Beauty in Ovid and Marie de France’, *Speculum*, 73 (1998), 372-96.

²⁶ The unambiguous masculine pronoun *ipse* in v. 450 (‘Cupit ipse teneri’) is rapidly followed by a direct address to the ‘peerless boy’ (‘puer unice’) in v. 454.

beauty verges on the supernatural and is presented as casting a spell over anyone who sees him.

Other Versions of the Story

There is no clear evidence for the existence of alternative self-contained vernacular versions of the story of Narcissus in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as there is in the case of *Piramus et Tisbé*.²⁷ However, the popularity of the tale is attested not only by numerous references to it in romance and lyric poetry,²⁸ but also by two thirteenth-century retellings incorporated into narratives on other topics. The first of these appears in Guillaume de Lorris's *Roman de la Rose*, where the 'fountain of Narcissus' figures as a central element in the allegorical garden of love in which the action of the romance takes place. The first mention of the fountain is followed by a recapitulation of the myth, which critics have generally assumed is based on Ovid. The story ends with a moralising coda urging ladies to take pity on their lovers, which makes little sense in relation to what has gone before, but makes a great deal of sense when read against the prologue to our poem. It seems likely not only that Guillaume knew the vernacular *Narcissus* as well as Ovid, but also that he assumed his audience would be familiar with it, and would therefore be able to bridge the logical gap between a story of male arrogance and a plea for women to be more amenable in love.²⁹

The second reworking comes at the end of the short romance of *Floris et Lyriope* by Robert de Blois.³⁰ The main body of the text retells the story of Narcissus's mother Liriope, who is transformed from the river nymph of the *Metamorphoses* (who

²⁷ On the basis of an allusion in Pierre le Chantre to a 'song' of Narcissus, Duval suggested that an earlier narrative version had existed around the beginning of the twelfth century. The view that our poem was a later *remaniement* was still current in the mid 20th century (see for example Paul Zumthor, *Histoire littéraire de la France médiévale: VI^e-XIV^e siècles* (Paris: PUF, 1954), p. 192), but is no longer accepted.

²⁸ See Vinge, Goldin, Thiry-Stassin, 'Quelques allusions' and Crespo. Frappier's discussion of the image of the mirror in medieval and Renaissance literature also includes a substantial section on allusions to Narcissus.

²⁹ Baumgartner notes the correspondence between the two texts and asks: 'Le narrateur [...] aurait-il lu le prologue du «lai»?' (p. 87); Harley takes the view that Guillaume de Lorris was 'evidently familiar' with our poem (p. 331). It is worth noting that in Guillaume's version of the story it is Eco who asks the gods to take revenge on Narcissus, rather than 'one of the scorned youth' as in Ovid. This suggests that Guillaume had read (or heard) more than the prologue of *Narcissus et Dané*, in which the fateful prayer is also attributed to the heroine. For an alternative reading of the contradiction between story and moral, see Eric M. Steinle, 'Anti-Narcissus: Guillaume de Lorris as a Reader of Ovid', *Classical and Modern Literature*, 6 (1986), 251-59.

³⁰ Robert de Blois, *Floris et Lyriopé*, ed. by Paul Barrette (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), vv. 1504-758.

gives birth after being ravished by the river god Cephisus) into a courtly *demoisele* who is seduced by her companion's brother Floris. The romance ends with an account of the fate that befell Lyriope's son which is very much closer in structure and narrative detail to Ovid than to our poem. It does, however, contain some verbal echoes which suggest that Robert de Blois was also familiar with *Narcissus et Dané*.³¹ *Floris* clearly belongs to the twelfth- and thirteenth-century vogue for 'prequels' that produced the *enfances* of epic heroes such as Vivien. The fact that its final section is much more faithful to the *Metamorphoses* than is *Narcissus* may also indicate that Robert was part of the thirteenth-century revisionist tendency that produced more 'classical' versions of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe in response to the popularity of the rather free twelfth-century adaptation.³²

Narcissus also features as a protagonist in the early fourteenth-century *Ovide Moralisé*, a vernacular 'translation' of the *Metamorphoses*. His story is told in 691 octosyllables, accompanied by a moralisation that presents the hero as a representative of those who attach too much importance to worldly beauty and pleasure and are deceived by the 'faulz mireoirs de cest monde'.³³ It is worth noting that in the case of two other stories from the *Metamorphoses*, those of Pyramus and Thisbe and of Philomela, the poet did not go back to Ovid for his narrative, but simply incorporated the existing vernacular adaptations (the anonymous *Piramus et Tisbé* and Chrétien's *Philomena*) into his work. We might wonder why he did not do the same for Narcissus. One possibility is that he simply did not have access to *Narcissus et Dané*, although it seems to have been at least as widely available as *Piramus*,³⁴ and considerably more well known than Chrétien's poem, of which no autonomous version has survived. More likely, he was familiar with our poem, but found it too free an adaptation to suit his purposes (although *Piramus* takes considerable liberties with Ovid, it does stop short of changing the name and entire life story of one of the protagonists).

³¹ For example, there is nothing in Ovid equivalent to lines 1639-40 ('Qu'avoc lui vint, avoc lui maint / La chose qui se destroint'), which appear to be calqued on our vv. 907-08.

³² See *Piramus et Tisbé*, ed. and trans by Penny Eley, Liverpool Online Series, Critical Editions of French Texts 5 (University of Liverpool, 2001), pp. 17-18.

³³ See *Ovide moralisé, poème du commencement du quatorzième siècle*, ed. by C. de Boer, 5 vols, Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam, Afdeling Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks XXI (Amsterdam: Müller, 1915-38), I, pp. 327-41 (= Bk IV, vv. 1291-981).

³⁴ *Piramus* survives in three autonomous versions as well as the *Ovide Moralisé*, all three of which are in manuscripts that also contain *Narcissus*.

Love and Pride

Like *Piramus et Tisbé*, our poem is both an illustration of the power of love and a cautionary tale about its dangers. It is not obvious whether Ovid intended his story to be read in cautionary terms,³⁵ but it is clear, as Seaman notes, that ‘the *perception of a moral* guided and perhaps inspired medieval French readings and rewritings’ of the tale (p. 20).³⁶ The *Narcissus* poet identifies his principal themes explicitly in the prologue (vv. 1-40): while stressing the force of love and its potential perils, he also alerts his audience to the role that pride can play in bringing about amatory disaster. These lines bring into play a fundamental contradiction that lies at the heart of twelfth-century poetic treatments of love, in particular the lyrics of the troubadours and trouvères. On the one hand, the *Narcissus* poet advocates a careful approach to love that recalls the emphasis placed on moderation (*mesure*) as a key element of courtly behaviour. On the other, he suggests that involvement in love inevitably leads to loss of control over one’s actions and emotions: the would-be lover only becomes ‘*auques aquis*’ (v. 14, my emphasis) before he finds himself unable to escape. The lover is advised to ‘embark on love’ with due caution, but we then learn that as soon as he has embarked, he is lost: the repetition of the verb *s’entremetre* in vv. 9 and 13 establishes a logical connection between action and result, which in turn implies that all love is *fole amor* (foolish or excessive love). It seems impossible to sail safely on this ocean.³⁷

The overwhelming force of love is demonstrated throughout the text, in two complementary ways. It is highlighted in narratorial interventions, such as the

³⁵ For Galinsky, its purpose in Ovid is ‘to prove the accuracy of Tiresias’ prophetic gifts’ (G. Karl Galinsky, *Ovid’s Metamorphoses: An Introduction to the Basic Aspects* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975), p. 53); the same view is taken by Jappé (p. 158).

³⁶ A cautionary note was first introduced by Plotinus, who refers in the chapter ‘On Beauty’ in the *Enneads* (1.6.8) to an unnamed individual (generally taken to be Narcissus) who wanted to catch hold of his own reflection in a stream and drowned as a result. This story is used to reinforce a warning about the spiritual danger of clinging to the image of earthly beauty rather than moving beyond it to the true beauty of God. See Plotinus, *Enneads*, ed. and trans. by A. H. Armstrong, 7 vols, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press and London: Heinemann, 1966-87), I, 255-57. A version of the Narcissus story which ends with the hero drowning still seems to have been in circulation in the Middle Ages; see Lefay-Toury, p. 58. The Plotinian interpretation was taken up by Arnulf of Orleans in his commentary on the *Metamorphoses*; other twelfth-century Latin and vernacular philosophers, moralists and poets developed a variety of moral interpretations for the myth: see Nightingale, pp. 51-52. Llamas-Pombo takes the view that in our poem moralisation is considerably less important than ‘la peinture d’un amour malheureux’ and ‘la verbalisation et l’expression de ce sentiment à la première personne’ (p. 340).

³⁷ On the importance of paradox elsewhere in the poem, see Gier, ‘L’Amour’. Adams sees the figure of Narcissus in our poem and in Bernart de Ventadorn’s ‘Can vei la lauzeta mover’ as embodying the tension between physical desire (which may prove fatal if unfulfilled) and the neo-Platonist impulse that recognises earthly love as an illusion to be transcended.

apostrophe to Love that follows Dané's first sighting of Narcissus (vv. 155-68), the reflections that precede the first encounter between hero and heroine (vv. 401-19), or the comment on the hero's reaction to seeing his reflection in the spring (v. 653). The prologue itself ends with the narrator drawing attention to the exemplary nature of the story of Narcissus. More frequently, however, the poet brings the power of love home to his audience by dramatising its effects on his hero and heroine. The conventional image of Love the archer loosing an arrow at his victim takes on a peculiarly concrete form when we see Dané collapsing on the floor as if she has just been shot with a real, rather than a metaphorical dart (v. 150). She collapses again the following day, when she loses sight of Narcissus from her window (vv. 322-23). The equally conventional idea of insomnia as a primary symptom of love is developed into a humorous vignette of Dané blaming her mattress for her inability to sleep, and insisting that her nurse get up and remake the bed.³⁸ The heroine's loss of any sense of social responsibility under the influence of *Amor* is vividly brought out in the picture of her slipping out of the city at daybreak, barely dressed and unattended, to lie in wait for the hero in the morally ambiguous shade of a clump of trees.³⁹ We are also encouraged to marvel at a force that can transform the hero, in the space of half a day, from someone who scornfully swears that he will never have anything to do with love into a helpless victim of passion. That transformation is vividly expressed in the visual contrast between the dynamic horseman Dané sees riding through the landscape and the helpless, immobile figure by the spring, whose scope for action is limited to weeping, sighing and tearing his hair. The power of love is brought home to us with a particular irony in the picture of Narcissus lying on the grass, unable to eat or drink, when it was thirst that first drove him to leave his companions and make his way to the water's edge.

The cautionary nature of the tale is likewise signposted in the prologue and then developed as the narrative unfolds. The narrator invites the audience to approach his story from a moral perspective by establishing a critical distance between Narcissus, 'qui fu mors d'amer' (v. 35, my emphasis) and the inclusive *nous* of v. 36, who exist in the

³⁸ The mixing of humour and pathos in *Narcissus* may be modelled on Ovid, whose description of the 'conversation' between Echo and his hero is described by Galinsky as 'a perfect piece of tragicomedy' (p. 55).

³⁹ The connection between wooded places and illicit love is made explicit later in the poem, when Narcissus challenges the forest, which has played host to so many loves (v. 880), to say if it has ever witnessed one as desperate as his own.

present and must learn from his fate. This message is reinforced both by the repeated linking of love and death (e.g. vv. 35-40, 537-39, 779, 812-13) and by a series of demonstrations of the way in which love can progressively disrupt normal behaviour and threaten the social structures it embodies. After Love's initial onslaught, Dané no longer knows how to behave (vv. 170-71); then she finds herself engaged in uncharacteristic — and rather unseemly — speculation as to whether it matters if Narcissus is of good character, given that he is so spectacularly handsome (vv. 238-45). Moments later, she is entertaining the subversive idea of choosing her own sexual partner without reference to her father's wishes, and contemplating the pleasures to be enjoyed with someone as physically attractive as the hero. The pattern is repeated the following day, as the heroine moves rapidly from not knowing what course of action to adopt (v. 336) to taking the fatal decision to approach the young man herself. The undermining of all her social conditioning is neatly expressed in the single sarcastic line encapsulating her contempt for the voice of reason that tries in vain to remind her of her obligations as a princess: 'De ce prendrai je bien conroi!' (v. 382).

Narcissus also experiences disorientation and a reversal of the norms of aristocratic behaviour under the influence of *Amor*. He, too, is unable at first to say what he wants (v. 724) as he is drawn into the world of passion. His crossing of the boundary between the well-ordered society of his upbringing and the moral wilderness of love is represented by his sudden knowledge of the 'terre griffaigne' where the God of Love holds sway, knowledge acquired without the help of the *mestre*, or tutor, who would have guided his steps so far (vv. 769-74). This independent learning is just as dangerous as Dané's independent decision-making, since the uncontrolled experience of desire ultimately results in wilful self-neglect and death. It leads him to spend the night alone in the forest, rejecting his former existence as a social being (young noblemen spent most of their time in the company of other men, learning the social and military skills required for members of the land-owning class). Only when it is too late does he become aware of his isolation and call in vain for his hunting companions and his family to save him (vv. 925-34).

A note of caution is called for, however, when discussing the nature of the hero's transgression. In modern literature and criticism the figure of Narcissus has become inextricably associated with the psychological condition that bears his name,

but it is important to remember that our poet was writing long before narcissism was scientifically defined as either a phase of human sexual development or a psychopathology. While it is possible to read our poem from a psychoanalytic perspective and identify in it many of the classic signs of the narcissistic individual's inability to construct and engage with otherness, this may tend to obscure some of the ways in which it differs both from Ovid and from other retellings of the tale. *Narcissus et Dané* does not present itself as an exploration of self-love, whose primary purpose is to analyse the workings of a disordered psyche.⁴⁰ One of the key features of its hero is his belief that he does indeed love 'the other': a being that cannot be assimilated to himself because it is female. We have already noted that one explanation for our poet's decision to change the gender of the *onbre* may be found in the influence of fairy-mistress narratives. Another may be found in the cultural taboos specific to twelfth-century Christian society. In Ovid's poetic world Narcissus is free to fall in love with an image that he identifies as male, without alienating the audience; medieval views on homosexuality mean that the Old French hero can only be shown to desire an object that he construes as female.⁴¹ It is also possible that this aspect of our text reflects an alternative version of the myth, recorded by the second-century Greek writer Pausanias. According to this version, Narcissus fell in love with his identical twin sister; when she died, he consoled himself by looking at his own reflection in a pool and imagining that he could see her there.⁴²

Whatever the precise origin of the female reflection in our poem, its significance lies in the fact that Narcissus is shown to fall genuinely in love with an object outside himself: the reflection cannot simply be treated as a metaphor for the self. As Vinge rightly points out, the Old French hero's tragedy is not so much that he loves himself as

⁴⁰ Rosati's analysis makes it clear that Ovid was also more interested in other themes (notably illusion and reflection) than in the idea of love for the self (pp. 28-39).

⁴¹ His mistake is made more plausible by the fact that the conventional facial portraits of young heroes and heroines in twelfth-century texts are not strongly marked for gender: like many other such portraits, the description of Narcissus at the beginning of the poem is distinctly androgynous. In some texts the androgynous portrait forms the basis for humorous exploitation of gender confusion. In *Floire et Blancheflor* the hero passes himself off as a girl in order to join his *amie* in an emir's harem, where his beardless face and perfect features are assumed to be those of a young woman.

⁴² Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, ed. and trans. by W. H. S. Jones, 4 vols, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, and London: Heinemann, 1969-75), IX, xxxi. 7 (= vol. 4, p. 311). There may be another echo of this version in *Floris et Lyriopé*, where the hero has an identical twin sister whom he impersonates in order to infiltrate Lyriopé's father's court. Like Floire, he manages to deceive everyone, including the girl herself, as to his gender until he chooses to reveal his true identity.

that he loves something that is literally unattainable (p. 65). This provides us with an ironic variation on the figure of the lyric lover evoked in the prologue. Whereas the unattainable lady of the troubadours and trouvères takes the form of a flesh-and-blood creature who is inaccessible because of social or emotional barriers, our poet has created a scenario in which impossible love means exactly that (and not a love that appears to be impossible, but could become possible if the lady so chose). It is in this light that we should consider the statement in the prologue that love sanctioned by Nature and equally shared by two parties is an honourable thing to cultivate (vv. 25-28).⁴³ This is not so much a warning against self-love as a development of the idea that ladies should beware of spurning serious suitors. Women can profit, too, the poet implies, from not being stand-offish: an appropriate involvement, graciously entered into, can benefit both parties, not just the supplicant male.

Narcisus et Dané is not, therefore, primarily a warning about the dangers of self-love. It is designed first and foremost to serve as an exemplum of the potentially catastrophic consequences of pride in the arena of human relationships.⁴⁴ *Orgueil* was one of the cardinal sins of courtly society, and in the specific form of the haughty rejection of love attracted frequent criticism from lyric poets and *romanciers* alike.⁴⁵ Almost half of the prologue is devoted to the topic of pride, and it provides the narrative motor that drives the story towards its tragic denouement. Narcisus rejects Dané out of a sense of his own superiority; her wounded pride is a crucial factor in her demand for vengeance. Narcisus's rejection speech (vv. 485-506) is a nicely-observed illustration of the arrogance of youth: this young man is so sure of himself that he flouts all the conventions of polite conversation, accuses his overlord's daughter of *folie*, dismisses the whole notion of love out of hand, refuses to feel any sympathy for her, and then

⁴³ Although they may read like an interpolation, these lines are more like an 'aside' addressed directly to women. The hero's final lament includes an explicit reference to a 'love that is not between two' (v. 920) which echoes the prologue and underlines the point about the folly of refusing a possible, honourable love by contrasting it with an impossible passion.

⁴⁴ I disagree here with Toury, who claims that 'Le premier état médiéval du mythe [i.e. *Narcisus*] fait [...] peu de place à l'orgueil de Narcisse' (p. 435).

⁴⁵ Hue de Rotelande's romance *Ipomedon*, for instance, features a heroine known only as 'La Fiere' ('The Proud One'), who is the constant victim of the hero's manipulative disguises. Robert de Blois certainly read our story as a condemnation of pride (Sauciuc, p. 172). Not content with explaining that Narcissus died because of his overweening pride (v. 1504-06), Robert also constructs his entire prologue around the idea of *orgueil*, and attributes the same vice to Narcissus's mother, who ends up bearing an illegitimate child and disgracing her family as a result. For Robert, Narcissus is a 'second-generation defective lover' (Seaman, p. 28) whose behaviour derives from an inherited moral flaw.

rides off before she has even finished what she had to say to him. Dané's response is equally true-to-life: she feels humiliated by her failure, insulted by his lack of *courtoisie*, and disorientated by her inability to stop loving him. Pride dictates that if she has to be the victim of unrequited love, then he should suffer too, and so she prays to the gods for help *and* revenge, and Narcissus's fate is sealed — as is her own.

As we have seen, the double death scene at the end of the poem may well have been modelled on the double suicide of the young lovers in *Piramus et Tisbé*. It certainly serves the poet's moral purpose to have Dané die alongside Narcissus: the prologue, with its warning to both sexes about the dangers of love, calls for an equally inclusive conclusion. Had Dané lived on, the message of the final couplet (that *all* lovers should try to avoid a similar fate) would have been significantly diluted. One question that remains unanswered, however, is why the Old French heroine does not die a natural death like the hero. Given the vigorous condemnation of suicide by the medieval Church, there is a strong implication that fictional characters who kill themselves are to be viewed less sympathetically than those who die naturally, irrespective of what they may have done in life. To modern readers, Narcissus looks like the villain of the piece, and yet he is the one given the opportunity to repent (v. 979) and quietly expire.⁴⁶ In mitigating the hero's fate in this way, the French poet may have been responding to the fact that in this tale, as in so many others (though not the story of Pyramus and Thisbe), Ovid sublimates death by substituting metamorphosis into another natural entity for the physical annihilation of the protagonist. In the case of the heroine, perhaps *Piramus* simply provided a ready-made solution to the problem of how to provide closure for a character whose Ovidian counterpart lingers on eternally as a disembodied voice. Or perhaps, as Gier suggests ('L'Amour', p. 133), Dané *is* guilty of the greater fault, in that she acts *sans conseil* at the crucial juncture. By calling for the gods to take revenge, she commits the irrevocable, while the hero stops short of any irreversible action.

The Importance of *Conseil*

Conseil is highlighted in the opening lines of the poem: it is the key term in the moralising generalisation with which the poet introduces his story, and the word appears

⁴⁶ Lefay-Toury suggests that the hero should be seen as dying of remorse, since his fatal seizure occurs while he is reproaching himself for his past conduct (p. 72).

in the text thirteen times in total, giving an average frequency of one occurrence every seventy-seven lines. This is clearly a theme that the audience is not intended to overlook. Exactly what they are being invited to reflect on may not be immediately apparent to modern readers. *Conseil* in Old French is associated with a much wider semantic field than its modern French counterpart, covering concepts that in English would be denoted by the terms ‘counsel’, ‘advice’, ‘help’, ‘guidance’, ‘reflection’, ‘deliberation’, ‘decision / decision-making’, ‘plan / planning’, ‘course of action’ and ‘solution’. The common denominator in this broad spectrum of reference is the idea of consultation (with others or with one’s inner self) in relation to an action to be taken or avoided. *Narcisus et Dané* is not only a cautionary tale about love and pride, but also an exploration of the dangers of ill-considered action and isolation (willed or involuntary) from accepted sources of support.

Both aspects of the theme are illustrated in the figure of the heroine. Despite her awareness of the need for guidance (‘Mestier aroie de conseil’, v. 292; ‘Ne sai de moi conseil doner’, v. 336; ‘Or m’estuet querre autre conseil’, v. 586), Dané is unable to find an appropriate mentor. In contrast to the ingenious Thessala in Chrétien’s *Cligés*, Dané’s nurse does not play the role of confidante and counsellor to her young mistress; instead, the *Narcisus* poet chooses to show us a character turning in on herself and relying (disastrously) on the *conseil* of her emergent sexuality. This young noblewoman simply does not have the inner resources of *sagesse* required to make proper judgements, but does not think to consult other people who have (another instance of pride, perhaps?). Left to her own devices, she is unable to contain her desires, and is transformed from the princess in the safety of the castle to the *sauvage* (v. 604) alone in the wood.

If Dané provides us with an example of the dangers of the wrong type of *conseil*, then Narcisus demonstrates the risks inherent in the absence of any form of guidance or reflection.⁴⁷ His rejection of Dané’s advances is automatic and unthinking: he smiles a superior smile before replying to her speech, but there is no mention of him considering what he should say or how he should say it. Once in the forest, he makes the mistake of

⁴⁷ The theme of good and bad (and absent) counsel is foregrounded in several twelfth-century romances, including Bérout’s *Tristan* and *Partonopeus de Blois*. While the emphasis is often on rulers and their responsibility to take *conseil* from appropriate sources, the importance of proper counsel for individual conduct is not overlooked.

going off alone in search of water. There is no one at his side to put him right about the ‘water-fairy’ he sees in the pool fed by the spring: by the time he realises his error and calls out despairingly for his family, his companions and his mother, it is too late. This aspect of the Narcissus story is given particular emphasis by Robert de Blois, who follows his account of the young man’s death with these lines:

Bien ot pechiez sa mort bestie
De ce qu’il fu sanz compaignie.
Se cui que soit o lui eüst,
Sa mort tost destorner peüst. (1741-44)

Robert’s hero, like ours, deprives himself of the support and *conseil* of his peer-group, and dies as a result of his isolation.

Critical Edition and Translation

f. 58v col. a	Qui tout veut faire sans conseil, Se maus l'en vient, ne m'en mervel: En toute riens est bien droture C'on i esgart sens et mesure.	
	5 Bien doit cil qui en mer se met Veoir que li tans li pramet, Et quant il voit qu'il a bon vent, Si peut nagier seürement.	(5)
	10 Ausi, qui s'entremet d'amer, Et par savoir le veut mener, Bien doit garder au comencier Qu'il ne s'i laist trop enlacier, Car des que s'en est entremis, Et il en est auques aquis,	(10)
	15 Puis n'est il pas a son plaisir: Soit biens, soit maus, nen poeut partir. Mais neporquant, se il avient Ke cil qui fole amor maintient En est surpris et fort destroiz,	(15)
	20 Lors est il bien raisons et drois Que cele en oie sa proiere, Ne ne soit pas vers li trop fiere, Ke tost en poeut avoir damage Par son orguel, par son outrage.	(20)
	25 Amors ke Nature consent, Dequ'ele a anbedeus se prent Et de tout est a lor plaisir, Est bien loiaus a maintenir. Et s'il avient que femme prit,	(25)
	30 Qui que il soit qui l'escondit, Je voel et di sans entreprendre Que on le doit ardoir u pendre. De maintes gens avons veü Quil lor en est mesavenu;	(30)
f. 58v col. b	35 Narcisus, qui fu mors d'amer, Nous doit essanple demostrer. Amors blasmoit et sa poisçance, Ki puis en prist aspre venjance: A tel amor le fist acilin	(35)
	40 Dont il reçut mort en la fin. Uns devins ert, de Tebes nés, Qui de voir dire ert esprovés. On ne pooit apercevoir Ne par experiment savoir	(40)
	45 K'il deïst onques se voir non: Por c'ert a Tebes de grant non. Une dame de la cité Li a un sien enfant porté	(45)

If someone is inclined to act without taking counsel,
 It is no surprise if he comes to grief:
 In all things it is right and proper
 To observe good sense and moderation.
 5 Surely anyone who sets out to sea
 Should see what the weather has in store for him,
 And when he sees that he has a fair wind,
 Then he can set sail in safety.
 Likewise, anyone who embarks on love
 10 And wants to conduct it wisely
 Should take good care at the outset
 That he does not let himself get too deeply embroiled,
 For once he is involved in it,
 And is to some degree taken over by it,
 15 Then he is not his own master:
 Whether it be good or bad for him, he cannot extricate himself.
 But nonetheless, if it does happen
 That a man who cultivates a foolish love
 Is overwhelmed and oppressed by it,
 20 Then it is right and proper
 That the woman should listen to his pleas
 And should not be too haughty towards him
 For she might easily suffer
 As a result of her pride and her arrogance.
 25 Love that is sanctioned by Nature,
 Once it is mutual
 And entirely what both lovers want,
 Is an honourable thing to cultivate.
 And if it happens that a woman begs a man for his love,
 30 If he rejects her, whoever he may be,
 I insist and maintain without more ado
 That he should be burnt or hanged.
 We have seen many cases of people
 Who have suffered as a result of this;
 35 Narcissus, who died of love,
 Ought to provide us with an example.
 He criticised Love and his power,
 Who later took harsh revenge on him,
 Making him the victim of such love
 40 That he eventually died of it.
 There was a soothsayer, a native of Thebes,
 Who had proven powers of prediction.
 No one could observe
 Or learn from experience
 45 That he ever said anything that was not true:
 For this reason he was renowned in Thebes.
 A lady from the city
 Took a child of hers to him,

	50	Que li die ce qu'il en sent, Se porroit vivre longement. Et cil li dit tout sans envie, Gart bien qu'il ne se voie mie; Ne vivra gaires s'il se voit. Cele l'entent qui pas nel croit:	(50)
	55	Gabant s'en torne, si dist bien Que sa parole ne vaut rien. Lonc tans en furent en doutance, Et en la fin fu la provance. Narcisus crut et devint grans,	(55)
	60	Et ja pooit avoir .xv. ans. Gens fu de cors, grans par mesure; Onques si bele creature Ne fu mais nee ne si gente. Nature i mist toute s'entente	(60)
	65	Au deviser et au portraire, Et a grant painne le pot faire Tant com el en ot devisé, Car tant i mist de la biauté Q'onques ne pot rien porpenser	(65)
	70	K'iloques ne vausist mostrer. Primes a fait les eus rians, Simples et vairs, clers et luisans; Mais estre tot çou qu'el i fist, Li dius d'amors du sien i mist:	(70)
f. 59r col.a	75	Il li asist un doç regart Ki tot le mont esprent et art. Puis fist le nés, et puis le face, Clere plus que cristaus ne glace; Les dens fist blances coume nois,	(75)
	80	Puis les aorne trois et trois. Quant ot par li cascun' asise, Les levres joint en itel guise C'un poi i laisa d'ouvreture, Tout par raison et par droiture.	(80)
	85	Et quant ele ot fete la bouce, Amors une douçor i touce: Femme qui une fois la sent De s'amor alume et esprent. Après li forma le menton,	(85)
	90	Et de totes pars environ Li vait polissant a sa main, Tant qu'el l'a fait soëf et plain. Cler et gissant fait le sorcil, Le cuir del front tenre et soutil,	(90)
	95	Caviaus crespes, recercelés, Qui plus luisent c'ors esmerés.	(95)

For him to tell her what he could sense about the boy,
 50 Whether he might live to a good age.
 And the soothsayer tells her, without any ill intention,
 To make sure he never sees himself;
 He will not live long if he sees himself.
 The lady hears this and does not believe it:
 55 She goes home laughing at him, and says
 That his words are worthless.
 They doubted him for a long time,
 But in the end he was proved right.
 Narcisus grew up and became full-grown,
 60 And must already have been fifteen years old.
 He was physically attractive, just the right height;
 Never had so beautiful an individual
 Ever been born, nor one so lovely.
 Nature spared no effort
 65 In designing and fashioning him,
 And took great pains to make him
 Exactly as she had wished,
 For she endowed him with so much beauty
 That there was nothing she could think up
 70 That she did not mean to display in him.
 First of all she made his laughing eyes,
 Candid and sparkling, bright and shining;
 But in addition to what she did with them,
 The God of Love made his own contribution:
 75 He bestowed on Narcisus a tender glance
 That sets everyone on fire with love.
 Then Nature made his nose, and then his cheeks,
 Clearer than crystal or ice;
 She made his teeth as white as snow,
 80 Then arranges them three by three.
 When she had set each one in its place,
 She positions the lips in such a way
 That she left them slightly parted,
 Exactly as was right and proper.
 85 And when she had made the mouth
 Love endows it with a sweetness
 Such that a woman who experiences it once
 Is set on fire and burns with love for him.
 Afterwards Nature shaped his chin,
 90 And all the way around
 She polishes it with her own hand,
 Until she has made it soft and even.
 She makes the eyebrows well-defined and sleek,
 The skin of the forehead soft and fine
 95 The hair tightly curled,
 Gleaming brighter than pure gold.

Quant tot ot fait a son creant
Par le viaire li espant
Et par le face qu'il ot painte,
100 Une color qui pas n'est fainte, (100)
Ki ne cange ne ne se muet:
Tant ne fet bel ne tant ne pleut,
Ne se desfait en nule fin;
Tes est au soir com au matin,
105 Mesleement blanche et vermeille. (105)
Amors meïsmes s'en merueille
Coument ele l'a fait si bien:
Tout esgarde, n'i blasme rien;
De quanqu'il voit li est avis
110 Que ne puet estre mius assis. (110)
Par tel entente et par tel cure
Et par tel sens le fist Nature.
Li vallés avoit ja .xv. ans,
Si ert mout biaux et avenans,
115 Et amoit ja bos et riviere: (115)
C'est ses deduis et sa proiere
K'il puisse cerf u porc trover;
Ne n'en poeut pas son coeur torner.
D'amer n'a soing ne rien n'en set,
120 Dames en cambres fuit et het. (120)
Par aventure ert repairiés
De bois, tous las et traveilliés.
De corre estoit tous escaufés,
S'en iert creüe sa biautés,
125 Si ot plus fresce la color; (125)
Ensi pasoit les une tor.
La fille au roi de la cité
Des fenestres a jus gardé;
Dané ot non la damoisele,
130 En tote Tebles n'ot si bele. (130)
Ele coisist le damoisel,
Voit le si fier, si gent, si bel,
Graisle par flans, espés par pis,
Les bras bien fais, auques vautis;
135 Lons et grailes avoit les dois, (135)
Et les jambes et les piés drois;
Voit le ceval qui se desroie
Et fait fremir toute la voie:
De tout çou qu'ele li voit faire
140 Ne li pot onques rien mesplaire. (140)
Tant l'esgarde que ne se muet
Com onques aviser le puet.
Mout se merueille, et si a droit,
Por quoi si volentiers le voit.

When she had done everything to her satisfaction,
 She spread over his face
 And over his painted cheeks
 100 A colour that was far from muted,
 That does not change or alter:
 Come rain or shine,
 It is not impaired, whatever happens;
 It is the same morning and evening,
 105 White and scarlet intermingled.
 Love himself is astonished
 At how well she has made him:
 He looks at it all and finds nothing to criticise;
 Whatever he sees, it seems to him
 110 That it could not be better arranged.
 With such application and such care
 And such skill did Nature make him.
 The boy was already fifteen,
 And was very handsome and attractive,
 115 And he already loved hunting and hawking:
 It is his delight and his desire
 To be able to find a stag or a boar;
 He cannot set his heart on anything else.
 He has no interest in love and knows nothing about it,
 120 He hates ladies in their chambers and keeps away from them.
 It so happened that he had returned
 From hunting in the woods weary and exhausted.
 He was all hot from the chase,
 And it had enhanced his beauty,
 125 And his colour was the more vivid for it;
 In this state he was riding past a tower.
 The daughter of the king of the city
 Looked down from the windows;
 The young noblewoman was called Dané,
 130 There was none so lovely in the whole of Thebes.
 She noticed the young man,
 Sees him so proud, so attractive, so handsome,
 Slim-hipped, broad-chested,
 With well-shaped, gently curving arms;
 135 He had long slender fingers,
 And straight legs and feet;
 She sees the horse prancing
 And making the whole road shudder:
 In everything she sees him do,
 140 There is nothing she could ever dislike.
 She watches him so closely that she does not move
 For as long as she can see him.
 She is very puzzled, and rightly so,
 As to why she observes him so willingly.

	145	Que qu'ele doute en son corage, Si est en .i. pensé volage, Amors regarde cele part, Voi la douter, si lance un dart. La pucele se sent ferue,	(145)
f. 59v col. a	150	A la terre chiet estandue. Isnelement oevre son sain, Par tot son piz touche sa mein: Plaie cuide trover dehors, Mais el estoit dedenz le cors.	(150) (153) (154) (155) (156)
	155	Ahi! Amors, com es poisans! Com est ta segnourie grans! Tu ne doutes conte ne roi, Les plus cointes mes en esfroi. Amors est rage et derverie,	(157)
	160	Ki toute gent enserre et lie. Amors escaufe, Amors esprent, Amors deçoit, traïst et ment, Amors ocist, Amors destraint, Amors noircist viaire et taint,	(162)
	165	Amors atrait, Amors enlace, Amors met gent en fole trace, Amors les fait tant cevaucier Qu'il n'ont mes voie ne sentier. Amors a si la cose esprisse	(167)
	170	Qu'ele ne set mes en quel guise Ele se puise contenir: Pense et après fait .i. sospir, Or sent froidure, or i a caut, Toute fremist, tranble et tresaut.	(172)
	175	En mout peu d'ure est si atainte Qu'ele en a ja la face tainte. La nuis revient, le jors trespasse, La pucele est de penser lasse; Ses lis est fais, vait s'en gesir,	(177)
f. 59v col. b	180	Torne et retorne, veut dormir, Mais ne poeut estre, Amors ne lait. 'Lasse! fait ele, 'mal m'estait: Ne puis dormir ne reposer, Torner m'estuet et retourner;	(182)
	185	En paine sui et en travail. Qu'es ce que j'ai? Por quoi tresail? Or resent je trop dur mon lit: De Diu soïent tot cil maudit Ki le devoient anuit faire!	(187)
	190	Tant sont felon et deputaire. Han! han! Or me sui aperçue: Pas n'est la coute bien meüe.	(192)

145 While she hesitates in her own mind
 And her thoughts waver,
 Love looks in her direction,
 Sees her hesitate, and looses an arrow.
 The maiden realises that she has been hit,
 150 And falls to the ground.
 She swiftly undoes her bodice,
 And runs her hand all over her chest:
 She expects to find a wound on the outside,
 But it was within her body.
 155 Ah, Love, how powerful you are!
 How great is your sovereignty!
 You fear neither count nor king,
 You throw the ablest into turmoil.
 Love is fury and madness,
 160 That imprisons and binds everyone.
 Love inflames, Love sets on fire,
 Love deceives, betrays and lies,
 Love kills, Love oppresses,
 Love darkens and discolours the face,
 165 Love draws you in, love traps you in his net,
 Love sends people on a wild goose chase,
 Love makes them ride so far
 That they no longer have any idea where they are.
 Love has kindled such a fire in the girl
 170 That she no longer has any idea how
 She can conduct herself:
 She is lost in thought and then heaves a sigh,
 Now she feels cold, now she is hot,
 She shivers, trembles and shakes all over.
 175 In a very short time she is so afflicted
 That her face is already discoloured.
 Night returns, the day comes to an end,
 The maiden is weary of thinking;
 Her bed is made, she goes and lies down,
 180 She tosses and turns, she tries to sleep,
 But she cannot; Love will not let her.
 ‘Alas!’, she says, ‘I am in a sorry state:
 I cannot sleep or rest,
 I keep tossing and turning;
 185 I am in pain and torment.
 What is the matter with me? Why am I shaking?
 Now my bed feels too hard for me:
 God’s curse on all those
 Who were supposed to make it tonight!
 190 They are so heartless and ill-natured.
 Yes! Yes! Now I’ve realised
 That the feather mattress has not been properly shaken.

	Ne quit que onques fust tornee: La plume i est amoncelee.	
195	Queus merveille est ce que je veil? De ce prendra je boin conseil: Je ferai ces femmes lever, Ma coute estuet a retourner.’ Lors vest une grise pelice,	(197)
200	Si vait au lit a sa norice. Lever le fait, si li a dit Que li reface tout son lit. Cele si fait eneslepas: Oste le coute et tous les dras,	(202)
205	Si remue neïs l’estrain. Ele meïsmes i met la main, Torne et retorne, fiert et bat; Or le veut haut, or le veut plat, Or veut haut cieſ, or veut haus piés,	(207)
210	Or est li cavés trop bassiés, Or est estroit, or est trop grans, Or est a une part pendans. La norice vait maudisçant Por çou qu’il n’est a son talent.	(212)
215	Avis li fu que bien estoit. Savés por quoi? Que ele avoit Le jovencel entroublié, Mai quant ele ot un poi esté, Et il li est menbré de lui,	(217)
220	Dont recomence son anui. ‘Lasse! fait ele, ‘que puet estre? Je ne gis pas bien sor senestre; Or sui sor destre, que me caut? Ce ne me nuist ne ne me vaut.	(222)
225	Ne puis trover engien ni art Que j’aie bien de nule part. Ou c’est li lis dont je me dueuil, U plus sui tenre que ne suel, U j’ai el cors ne sai quel rage	(227)
230	Qui si m’escaufe mon corage. Quant voil dormir, si me fremis, Or me relief, or me regis, Or reveul a celui penser Que je vi ier par ci passer.	(232)
235	K’ai ge a faire de cel vassal? C’est la riens qui plus me fait mal, Quant me membre de sa biauté. Biaus est. Qui caut, s’il n’a bonté? Il est, espoir, fel u vilains,	(237)
240	U envieus u d’ire plains.	(242)

f. 60r col. a

I don't think it was ever turned:
 The feathers are all clumped together.
 195 Is it any wonder I can't sleep?
 I shall have this put right:
 I shall get my womenfolk up,
 My mattress will have to be turned.'
 Then she puts on a grey fur-lined cloak,
 200 And goes to her nurse's bed.
 She makes her get up, and told her
 To remake her bed completely.
 The nurse does so straightaway:
 Takes off the feather mattress and all the bedclothes,
 205 And even plumps up the straw base.
 Dané herself lends a hand,
 Turns it over and over, pummels and beats it;
 Now she wants it plumped up, now she wants it flattened,
 Now she wants it high at the top, now high at the bottom,
 210 Now it is too low at the head,
 Now it is narrow, now it is too wide,
 Now it is hanging down at one side.
 She curses the nurse
 Because it is not to her liking.
 215 It seemed to her that she was comfortable.
 Do you know why? Because she had
 Forgotten the young man for a moment,
 But when she had lain there for a little while,
 And remembered him,
 220 Then her suffering begins all over again.
 'Alas!' she says, 'What is going on?
 I'm not comfortable lying on my left side;
 Now I'm on my right side, what difference does it make?
 It is no better and no worse for me.
 225 I cannot find any ways or means
 Of being comfortable anywhere.
 Either it's the bed that's causing me discomfort,
 Or I'm more sensitive than I used to be,
 Or there's some fever in my body
 230 That's inflaming my mind like this.
 When I try to go to sleep, I tremble;
 Now I get up again, now I lie down again,
 Now I want to think again about the man
 I saw riding past here yesterday.
 235 What has that man got to do with me?
 The thing that causes me the most distress
 Is when I recall his good looks.
 He is handsome. Does it matter if he's not good as well?
 He may be heartless or base,
 240 Or envious or full of anger.

- Qu'es ce que di? K'a il vers moi
Mespris, de quoi blasmer le doi?
Por quoi loer? Je m'en doi taire.
Ja seul jou estre deboinaire;
245 Dont me vient ore felounie? (247)
Sos ciel n'a home qui ja die
Qu'il ne soit biaux, et sans mesure!
Nus hom de si bele faiture
Poroit dunques estre mauvais.
250 Tort ai, je nel blasmerai mais; (252)
Certes, il est et biaux et buens.
Et toi que caut? Ja nen iert tuens!
A que faire seroit il miens?
Ja n'est il pas raisons ne biens
255 Ne drois que je demant baron (257)
Se par le conseil del roi non.
Consel? Lasse, si lonc respit!
Ja n'aie joie ne delit!
Ja, certes, se je sens avoie,
260 Le sien conseil n'en atendroie. (262)
Dont te vient or ceste parole?
Orains fus sage, or es fole!
Veus tu par toi tel conseil prendre?
Dont ne te vient il mius atendre?
265 Fill' es de roïne et de roi: (267)
Segnor te donront endroit toi;
Auques t'estuet por çou souffrir.
Et se il n'est a mon plesir?
Qu'es ce, Dané? Dont n'as tu honte?
270 Ses tu donques ke plaisir monte? (272)
Plaist toi cil plus? Oil, par foi,
Mais je n'en sai prendre conroi:
Ne puis mie mout bien veoir
Coment je li face savoir.
275 Veus qu'il le sace? Oil, mout bien, (277)
Car il me plaist sor toute rien,
Et tot quanque je li voi faire.
E, Dius! cui ne porroit il plaire?
Que je le vi si bel si gent!
280 Ques piés vi es estriers d'argent! (282)
Quel vis, quel cors, ques bras, ques mains!
Ques ert sa sele et ses lorains!
Ques eus, quel bouce por baisier!
Com il seoit bien au destrier!
285 E, Dius! Porrai je vivre tant (287)
Ke j'en face auques mon talant? (288)
Que je soie de lui privee,
Ce m'est avis, boer fusce nee!

What am I saying? What wrong has he done me
 That I should be finding fault with him?
 Or praising him? I ought not to say anything about him.
 I used to be good-natured;
 245 Where is this spitefulness coming from?
 There is no man on earth who could ever say
 That he isn't handsome, and inordinately so!
 No man who is so well-formed
 Could ever be wicked.
 250 I am wrong, I will not criticise him any more;
 He is certainly handsome *and* good.
 And what difference does it make to you? He'll never be yours!
 Why should he be mine?
 It is not reasonable or proper
 255 Or right that I should ask for a husband
 Except when the king decides so.
 When he decides? Alas, such a long wait
 Before I can experience joy or pleasure!
 Certainly, if I had any sense,
 260 I wouldn't wait for his decision.
 Who is putting these words into your mouth?
 Before, you were sensible; now you're mad!
 Do you intend to take such a decision by yourself?
 Isn't it better for you to wait?
 265 You are the daughter of a king and queen:
 They will give you a husband fit for you;
 You must be patient and wait a little for this.
 And what if he's not to my liking?
 What is this, Dané? Aren't you ashamed?
 270 Do you know what 'liking' involves?
 Do you like this man more? Yes, by my faith,
 But I don't know how to go about it:
 I cannot see at all clearly
 How I can let him know.
 275 Do you want him to know? Yes, indeed,
 For I like him more than anything,
 And whatever I see him do.
 Ah, God, who wouldn't like him?
 How handsome, how attractive he was when I saw him!
 280 What feet I saw in the silver stirrups!
 What a face, what a body, what arms, what hands!
 What a saddle and harness he had!
 What eyes, what a mouth for kissing!
 How well he sat on the horse!
 285 Ah, God! Shall I live long enough
 To do what I desire with him at all?
 If I was close to him,
 It seems to me I would have been born under a lucky star!

		Avis? Ançois est voirs sans faille!	(289)
	290	Lasse, com sui en grant bataille!	(290)
f. 60v col. a		Ne sé que face, ains me merveil, Mestier aroie de conseil. Ensi se demente par soi, Tote nuit est en tel esfroï:	
	295	Or pluer, or pense, or gist, or siet, Or li replaist qu'ele se liet, Or se castie, or se conforte, Et puis se vauroit estre morte. En grant torment, en grant dolor	(295)
	300	Fu tant que vint desi qu'au jor. Grevee estoit et traveillie, Lors est un peu asouagie De tel angoisse et de tel mort; Li oeul li cloent, si s'endort.	(300)
	305	Eins que peüst le jor coisir, Se resveille, ne poeut dormir, Et vait ester a la fenestre. Garde sor destre et sor senestre, Savoir se verroit nule part	(305)
	310	Celui qui si l'escaufe et art, Car par ilueques doit passer Et a cele eure en bos aler. Et quant ele a tant attendu, Cline s'avant, si a veü	(310)
	315	De loing venir le jevencel, Mais onques mais ne vit si bel Ne si bien fait, si com li sanble; Donc se plaint, puis sospire et tranble. Ele l'esgarde et est en pes	(315)
	320	Tant con le pot veoir de pres, Mais quant el le vit eslongié, Faut li li cors, plaissent li pié, Pasmee ciet el pavement; Puis recomence son torment.	(320)
	325	Primes li plaist qu'ele li mant, Aprés repret autre talant Et dist qu'ele ne set mesage Cui ele ost dire son corage.	(325)
f. 60v col. b		'A Dius!' fait ele, 'en com grant paine	
	330	Me met cis maus qui si me mainne! Ainc mais ne seu je nient d'amer, Et or me fait color muer. Onques mais ne soi qu'Amors fu, Or a primes l'ai conneü:	(330)
	335	Or me fait il sans froit trambler; Ne sai de moi conseil doner.	(335)

It seems to me? No, it's true without a doubt!
 290 Alas, what a state of conflict I'm in!
 I don't know what to do; no, I'm at a loss;
 I need someone to advise me.'
 So she laments to herself,
 She is in such turmoil all night:
 295 Now she weeps, now thinks, now lies down, now sits up,
 Now she feels like getting up again,
 Now she chides herself, now she reassures herself,
 And then she wishes she were dead.
 She was in great torment, in great distress
 300 Until it came to daybreak.
 She was overwhelmed and exhausted,
 Then she experiences a little relief
 From such mortal anguish;
 Her eyes close and she falls asleep.
 305 Before she could make out the daylight
 She wakes up again; she cannot sleep,
 And goes to stand at the window.
 She looks to the right and to the left,
 To find out whether she could see anywhere
 310 The man who kindles such a fire in her,
 For he ought to pass that way
 And go hunting in the woods at that hour.
 And when she has waited long enough,
 She leans forward, and saw
 315 The young man coming in the distance,
 But she never saw anyone as handsome before,
 Nor as well formed, so it seems to her;
 Then she moans, then sighs and trembles.
 She watches him and does not move
 320 Until she could see him close up,
 But when she saw him ride away,
 Her body fails her, her feet give way,
 She falls in a faint on the paved floor.
 Then her torment begins again.
 325 To begin with, she wants to send him word,
 Afterwards she changes her mind
 And says that she does not know of a messenger
 To whom she would dare reveal her thoughts.
 'Ah, God!', she says, 'what agony
 330 I am suffering from this sickness that afflicts me so!
 Before, I knew nothing about love,
 And now it makes my colour come and go.
 I never knew what Love was,
 Now I have made his acquaintance for the first time:
 335 Now he makes me shiver when it isn't cold;
 I cannot decide what is best for me.

- Se cil que je tant ain m'amast,
U se estoit qui en parlast,
Et mes peres le consentoit,
340 Bien le porroie avoir par droit, (340)
Mais n'est pas drois que jel requiere.
Assés somes d'une maniere,
D'une biauté et d'un eage;
Se nous ne soumes d'un parage,
345 Il est assés de haute gent, (345)
Si ne soumes mie parent.
Dané, que vas tu devissant?
Ce ne te vaut ne tant ne quant:
Tes pere n'a de çou que faire;
350 Trop entent a son autre afaire. (350)
Ke porrai je donc devenir?
Je ne puis mais cest mal souffrir.
Mander le veil ce que je quier,
N'a mesage ne l'os cargier.
355 Assés est mius que je li die, (355)
Mais je criem qu'il ne m'escondie,
Et s'il del tout m'escondisoit,
Autres messages qu'i feroit?
Nus ne fera ja si la cose
360 Com cil cui ele est, quant il ose. (360)
Quel part le cuides tu trover?
Coment porras a lui parler?
De ce n'ai je nule pauor:
Le matin le verrai au jor.
f. 61r col. a 365 Bien m'en istray, ja nel savront (365)
Cil qui en la canbre gerront.
Ja l'atendrai en cel cemin
Par u il vait cascun matin.
Quant ert des autres eslongiés,
370 Iray, se li carai as piés, (370)
Conterai li toute ma vie,
Com Amors m'a en sa baillie;
Quant li arai tout regehi,
Prierai li por Diu merci.
375 Qu'es ce, Dané, que tu redis? (375)
Est tous tes sens si tost peris?
As tu tote bonté perdue?
Ques rage t'a si esmeüe?
Es tu si fole et si dervee
380 Ke tu iras tote esgaree? (380)
Ses tu que soies fille a roi?
De ce prendrai je bien conroi!
Amors n'a soig de seignorie:
Cil n'aimme pas, qui bien ne prie.

If the man I love so much loved me,
 Or if there was someone who could speak of it,
 And if my father gave his consent,
 340 He could indeed be rightfully mine,
 But it is not right for me to ask him for his love.
 We are very similar in background,
 In looks and in age;
 If we are not of the same rank,
 345 He is of a very noble family,
 And we are not related in any way.
 Dané, what are you saying?
 This is of no use to you at all:
 Your father has no interest in this,
 350 He is too involved with other business of his.
 So what will become of me?
 I cannot endure this pain any longer.
 I will let him know what I want,
 But I dare not entrust it to a messenger.
 355 It is much better for me to tell him myself,
 But I am afraid that he will reject me,
 And if he rejected me out of hand,
 What could any other messenger accomplish?
 No one will ever handle the task
 360 As well as the person concerned, if he dares.
 Where do you suppose you will find him?
 How will you be able to speak to him?
 I have no misgivings about this:
 I shall see him early in the morning.
 365 I shall leave without
 The people sleeping in the chamber knowing about it.
 I shall wait for him on the road
 That he rides along each morning.
 When he and the others are some way apart,
 370 I shall go and fall at his feet,
 I shall tell him all about the life I live,
 How Love has me in his power;
 When I have confessed everything to him,
 I shall beg him for mercy, for God's sake.
 375 Dané, what is this you're saying again?
 Is all your good sense undone so quickly?
 Have you completely lost your virtue?
 What madness has disturbed you so?
 Are you so crazy, so out of your mind,
 380 That you will go out completely alone?
 Do you know that you are a king's daughter?
 That's something I shall certainly keep in mind!
 Love is not concerned with rank:
 Anyone who is not prepared to beg for love is not in love.

	385	Lasse, tout ai perdu le sens! K'ai j'ore dit? Quant me porpens, Si me retieng del tout por fole; Ne me tieng point en ma parole. Ne sai que voil aler tracier,	(385)
	390	Car ne sai voie ne sentier. Cui caut? Ce ne me grieve rien: Amors m'avoiera mout bien.' Quant tout ot dit et devisé, Si a en son conseil trouvé	(390)
	395	Qu'ele i ira; a çou se tient. La nuis s'an va, li jors revient. La pucele fu en freor, Ne dormi onques duque au jor. Si tost com la clarté en vit,	(395)
f. 61r col. b	400	Tout souavet eisci du lit. Merveille est d'Amor qui tant fait, Qui tot embrace et tot atrait: Sage home fait estre sans honte, Savoirs qu'il ait riens ne li monte.	(400)
	405	Il l'ensege a aler par nuit, Seürement et sans conduit, Quant plus fait lait tans et oscur. Mout a le cuer felon et dur; Ja de nului n'ara pitié:	(405)
	410	Des que l'a pris et enlacié, Tout le cuer li tranble et esmuet, Tant le maine com il plus puet, Tes eure est, dusques a la mort; Amors n'i garde droit ne tort.	(410)
	415	Ceste Dané, fille le roi, A il ja si traite vers soi, Ne set dont est, de quel parage, Ne ne tient pas son fol corage: Cuide bien soit quanqu'ele fait.	(415)
	420	E, Dius, com a empris fol plait! Ele a la cambre desfremée, Par un guicet s'en est enblee Et vait si com cemin li dure; Dequ'a .i. bos ne s'aseüre,	(420)
	425	Qui pres estoit de la cité, Car ele avoit bien esgardé, Des fenestres u ele estoit, Que li vallés iloc venoit. Lors est en un buisson assise,	(425)
	430	Tote nue fors de chemisse, Et affublee d'un mantel; Aloec atent le jovencel.	(430)

385 Alas, I have completely lost my mind!
 What have I just said? When I stop to think,
 I consider myself to be quite mad again;
 I am not bound by my words.
 I do not know what quarry I intend to pursue,
 390 For I have no idea which way to go.
 What does it matter? It does not bother me:
 Love will surely show me the way.'
 When she had said everything and run through it all,
 She came to a decision
 395 That she would go herself; this is what she resolves.
 The night comes to an end, daylight returns.
 The maiden was in a state of agitation,
 She did not sleep a wink until daybreak.
 As soon as she saw the daylight,
 400 Very softly she got out of bed.
 Love is astonishingly powerful,
 Nothing can escape him, he draws everything in:
 He makes wise men shameless,
 Whatever knowledge they have is of no use to them.
 405 He teaches them to go out at night,
 With confidence, unescorted,
 In the worst and darkest weather.
 He is quite ruthless and hard-hearted;
 He will never take pity on anyone:
 410 Once he has captured and taken hold of him,
 The victim's whole heart shudders and starts,
 Love torments him as much as he can
 Sometimes even until he dies;
 Love observes neither right nor wrong.
 415 This Dané, the king's daughter,
 He has already drawn so far into his power
 That she does not know where she is from, of what family,
 And she cannot control her foolish heart:
 She imagines that everything she does is for the good.
 420 Ah, God, what a foolish undertaking she has embarked upon!
 She opened the door of the chamber,
 She slipped out through a wicket-gate
 And follows the road as far as she can;
 She does not feel safe until she reaches a wood
 425 That was near the city,
 For she had observed,
 From the windows where she used to stand,
 That the youth would come by there.
 Then she sat down in a thicket,
 430 Wearing only a shift,
 And with a cloak round her shoulders;
 There she waits for the youth.

		Et lors porpense que dira. 'Dius!' fait ele, 'quant il vendra,	
	435	Donés que j'aie hardement De tout dire seurement!	(435)
f. 61v col. a		A itant fine s'oraisons; Garde, si voit ses conpaignons, Et quant il sont venu si pres	
	440	Que veoir ne les ose mes, Endroit un abre se repont; Cil passent outre, si sen vont. Et Narcisus venoit ariere, Tos sous parmi une quariere:	(440)
	445	Ja estoient si conpaignon Bien loig, le trait a .i. bojon. Tot droit a lui vint la pucele; Cil l'esgarda, si la vit bele:	(445)
	450	Por ce qu'a tele eure est levee Cuide que ce soit diuesse u fee. Del ceval descent, si l'encline. Pres de lui se trait la mescine; Eins que li die autre parole, Les eus li baise, si l'acole.	(450)
	455	Il se merveille por quel fait, Demande li qui est, u vait. 'Sire', fait ele, 'or ne t'anuit Une lasse cui tos biens fuit, Qui mout petit prise sa vie,	(455)
	460	Se por çou non qu'en toi se fie. Biaus sire, ce te di jou bien: Je te desir sor tote rien, Mes cueurs est mout por toi destrois; Des ore mais est il bien drois	(460)
	465	Que tu aies de moi merci. Nel te mant pas, ains le te di; Je pri por moi, nient por autrui. Esgarde, saces qui je sui!	(465)
	470	Je qui ensi paroil a toi Sui fille ton seignor le roi. Por t'amor pens et jor et nuit; Amors m'a ça livré conduit, Amors me done hardement: N'i venisce pas autrement.	(470)
f. 61v col. b	475	Or ait merci, qui merci crie, Car en toi pent tote ma vie. Tu seus me peus santé doner: Mout nous poons bien entramer	(475) (476) (479) (480)
	480	—Biaus sire, otroie moi t'amor, Rent moi santé, tol moi dolor!—	(477) (478)

And then she thinks about what she will say.
 ‘God!’, she says ‘when he comes,
 435 Grant that I may be bold enough
 To say everything without faltering!’
 At that point her prayer comes to an end;
 She looks up and sees his hunting companions,
 And when they have come so close
 440 That she dare not watch them any more,
 She hides behind a tree;
 They pass by and ride off.
 And Narcissus was riding along behind
 All alone along a country road:
 445 His companions were already
 A good arrow-shot ahead.
 The maiden came straight up to him;
 He looked at her and saw how beautiful she was:
 Because she is up and about at that time of day
 450 He believes that she is a goddess or a fairy.
 He dismounts and bows to her.
 The young girl draws close to him;
 Before she says a word to him,
 She kisses his eyes and embraces him.
 455 Astonished, he wonders why she is doing it,
 Asks her who she is, where she is going.
 ‘My lord’, she says, ‘now do not be offended
 By a wretched girl from whom all happiness flees,
 Who sets very little value on her life,
 460 Except that she puts her trust in you.
 Fair lord, let me tell you this:
 I desire you more than anything,
 My heart is sorely oppressed because of you;
 From now on it is only right
 465 That you should have mercy on me.
 I am not sending you word of this, but telling you in person;
 I am begging on my own account, not for anyone else
 Look at me, know who I am!
 I who am speaking to you like this
 470 Am the daughter of your lord, the king.
 For love of you I am lost in thought day and night;
 Love has given me safe conduct here,
 Love is making me bold:
 I should not have come here otherwise.
 475 Now let the one who cries mercy receive mercy
 For my whole life depends on you.
 You alone can restore me to health:
 There are no obstacles to us loving one another
 —Fair lord, grant me your love,
 480 Give me back my health, take away my pain—

Car assés somes d'un aé
D'une maniere de biauté.
Narcisus l'entent, si sorríst;
Esgarda la et se li dist:
485 'Par Diu, pucele, mout es fole (485)
Quant onques en meüs parole,
Et male cose as mout enprise,
Qui ja t'es d'amer entremise:
Encor te venist mius dormir!
490 Com osas ça sole venir? (490)
Merveille as fait, trop es hardie;
Ce tien je mout a grant folie:
Doit ensi aler fille a roi?
N'apartient pas n'a moi n'a toi
495 K'amer saçons ne tant ne quant, (495)
Car trop somes encor enfant.
Tu dis qu'Amors te fait mal traire:
De ce ne te puis jou droit faire;
Je ne sai rien de tel ahan
500 Ne ne l'asaierai auan. (500)
Mais se c'est voirs que mal te face,
Garderai m'en: ja Diu ne place
Que je l'assai por mal avoir!
Je ne quier rien d'amer savoir.
505 Mais je te lo, va t'en ariere; (505)
Tu pers et gastes ta proiere.'
Quant ele l'ot, vers lui se trait,
Sospire, pleure,—rien ne fait—
Et gete ariere son mantel:
510 Tote est nue, le cors a bel. (510)
Tant l'a destrainte la froidure
Et la voie, qui trop est dure,
Li sans li saut parmi l'orteil,
Qui tot le pié li fait vermeill.
515 L'iaue li ciet aval la face, (515)
El goint les mains vers lui et lace. (516)
Cil l'esgarde, si la voit bien,
Et dist que ce ne li vaut rien;
Voit les eus plorer tenrement,
520 Qui l'esgardent mout doucement,
Les mains plus blances que n'est nois, (518)
Nues, sans gans et sans orfrois, (517)
La car blanche sor la cemise: (519)
Nule pités ne l'en est prise. (520)
525 Dius, si dur cuer et si felon! (521)
Sousiel n'a si rice baron,
Prince, conte ne roi si haut,
Enpereor ne amiraut,

f. 62r col. a

For we are very much alike in age,
 Very similar in beauty.'
 Narcissus hears her words and smiles;
 He looked at her and said to her:
 485 'By God, maiden, you are very foolish
 To have ever broached the subject,
 And you have embarked on a very bad business,
 By getting yourself involved in love already:
 You would have done better to stay asleep!
 490 How did you dare to come here alone?
 It was an extraordinary thing to do, you are too rash;
 I consider it to be an act of complete madness:
 Should a king's daughter behave like this?
 It is not appropriate for either me or you
 495 To know anything whatever about love,
 For we are still too young.
 You say that Love is ill-treating you:
 I cannot put that right for you;
 I know nothing about such suffering,
 500 And I shall not be trying it out in the near future.
 But if it is true that love is causing you pain,
 I shall avoid it; God forbid
 That I should try it out, just to suffer!
 I do not wish to know anything about love.
 505 But I advise you to go home;
 You are only wasting your entreaties.'
 When she hears his words, she moves towards him,
 She sighs, she weeps—he does nothing—
 And throws back her cloak:
 510 She is wearing very little; she has a beautiful body.
 The cold has afflicted her so much,
 And the road, which is very rough,
 That blood pours from her toes
 And makes her whole foot scarlet.
 515 Tears run down her face,
 She holds her hands out towards him, fingers laced.
 He looks at her, sees her clearly,
 And says that it is of no use to her;
 He sees her eyes weeping tenderly,
 520 Looking at him very sweetly,
 Her hands whiter than snow,
 Bare, gloveless and unadorned,
 Her white flesh above her shift:
 He feels no pity for her.
 525 God, what a hard and cruel heart he has!
 There is no nobleman on earth so splendid,
 No prince, count or king so lofty,
 No emperor or emir,

- 530 Ki longement se tenist mie
Qu'i ne plorast de compaignie. (526)
De quanqu'ele li dit n'a cure:
Tort a; de rien ne l'aseüre.
Encore avoit a dire assés
Quant Narcisus en est alés.
- 535 Cele remaind, de del se pasme, (531)
Et quant revient, sa vie blasme.
'Lasse!' fait ele, 'or sui je morte,
Que nule riens ne me conforte;
Or sui je morte et malbaillie,
- 540 Quant m'esperance est si faillie (536)
Que riens que je die n'avient:
Tos biens me fuit, tos maus m'avient.
Dané, je te disoie bien,
Onques croire ne vausis rien.
- 545 Que il m'osast ensi baillir? (541)
Par Dieu, toi a il fait faillir!
Bien le counois et si m'en plaing,
Et or me torne a grant desdaing.
Moi a il escondite, moi!
- f. 62r col. b 550 Donc ne sui jou file le roi, (546)
Et il est fius a un suen home?
A, Dius, con ci a pesant some!
Si greveus fais a soutenir!
Que porai je ore devenir?
- 555 Dius, com mar furent si bel oueil, (551)
Ki si sont plain de grant orgueil!
S'il fust lais, si m'en pesast viaus;
Ce poise moi qu'il est si biaux:
Vilainnement parla a moi.
- 560 Que li desplot? Ne sai, par foi! (556)
Que li pot il en moi desplaire?
Ce qu'il est fel et deputaire.
Sui gentius femme, sui pucele,
Sui assés gente et assés bele,
- 565 Et s'ai beaus piés et beles mains: (561)
Il n'i a el, il est vilains
Et fel et mout mal afaitiés.
Lasse! dont ne vit il mes piés,
Por lui sanglens et espinés,
- 570 Ne ne s'est pas amesurés? (566)
Ice que est que je di ore?
Ja l'ain jou trop, et plus encore,
Voire, par Diu, et voul amer:
Je ne le puis entroblier.
- 575 Or m'est s'amors tote novele, (571)
Car sa biatés, qui me rapele

Who could for very long prevent himself
 530 From weeping in sympathy with her.
 Narcissus does not care about anything she says to him:
 He is wrong not to reassure her in any way.
 She still had much to say
 When Narcissus rode away.
 535 She remains behind, she faints from grief
 And when she comes round she reproaches herself.
 ‘Alas!’, she says, ‘Now it is all over for me,
 Since nothing can bring me comfort;
 Now I am dead and done for,
 540 When my hopes have been dashed so far
 That nothing I can say has any effect:
 Good fortune shuns me, misfortune seeks me out.
 Dané, I told you so,
 You wouldn’t believe it.
 545 What, that he would dare treat me like this?
 By God, he has certainly made you miss your mark!
 I am well aware of it and I grieve over it,
 And now I take it as a great insult.
 It is me he has rejected, me!
 550 Am I not the king’s daughter,
 And he the son of one of the king’s men?
 Ah, God, what a heavy weight on my mind!
 What a shameful burden to bear!
 What will become of me now?
 555 God, I wish I had never seen his beautiful eyes,
 Which are so full of arrogance!
 If he were ugly, I would mind it less;
 It grieves me that he is so handsome:
 He spoke to me like a churl.
 560 What did he dislike? I don’t know, by my faith!
 What could he dislike about me?
 The fact is he is heartless and ill-natured.
 I am a noblewoman, I am a maiden,
 I am very attractive and very beautiful,
 565 And I have beautiful feet and hands:
 There is no other explanation, he is uncourtly
 And heartless and very ill-bred.
 Alas! didn’t he see my feet,
 Bleeding and full of thorns for his sake,
 570 And he didn’t moderate his words?
 What is this I am saying now?
 I still love him deeply, and more than that,
 Yes, by God, and with a willing heart:
 I cannot forget him for a moment.
 575 Now my love for him is as strong as ever,
 For his beauty, which calls me back

- Quant m'en voeil partir, me ratrahit.
Ne me caut de quanque il a fait,
Se il encor se repentoit
580 Et il por amender venoit, (576)
Mais il n'a soig d'offrir droture,
Car il est de male nature.
Nel puis laiscier, nel puis guerpier,
Ne me puis de s'amor partir.
585 Ne sai por qoi, si m'en merveil; (581)
Or m'estuet querre autre conseil.
Or i envoieurai mesage:
Il n'ara ja si dur corage,
Se je revienng sovent a lui,
590 Que je nel vainque par anui. (586)
Or me desplaist quanques je di,
Car jou meïsmes i failli;
Por qu'i envoieurai autrui?
Ne sai que faç, ne sai u sui.
595 Qui sui je donc? Qui est mes pere? (591)
Li rois est ore. Et qui ma mere?
Donc ne ses tu qui? La roïne.
Mençongne est, ains sui orfeline:
Je n'ai ami, je n'ai parent,
600 Je n'ai conseil de boine gent. (596)
Par Diu, si as: tu es Dané!
Ai je donques le sen dervé?
Ja soloie je estre plus sage.
Sui je devenue sauvage?
605 Que faz en bos? Que sui ci quisse? (601)
Je me contieng en male guise.
Ce fait Amors. Qu'est amors? Lasse,
Ne sai! Plus a droit le nomase
Se je desisce derverie.
610 Mener me fait molt male vie: (606)
Or sui en pes, or su en guerre.
Vous, diu du ciel et de la terre,
Et cil de l'air et de la mer,
Vos tuit qui rien savés d'amer
615 Et qui estes en sa baillie, (611)
Et tu, Venus, qui m'as traïe
Ensanble au Diu d'Amors, ton fil,
Giete me hors de cest peril
Et de celui prendés vengeance
620 Por cui je muir sans esperance! (616)
Faites qu'il sace qu'est amors,
Si qu'il ne puist avoir secors!
Li diu ne l'ont pas mesoïe:
f. 62v col. b Bien sera fet quanqu'ele prie.

When I try to stop loving him, draws me in again.
 Whatever he has done does not matter to me,
 If he were yet to repent
 580 And he came back to apologise,
 But he is not interested in making amends,
 Because he is evil-natured.
 I cannot let go of him, I cannot leave him,
 I cannot stop myself loving him.
 585 I don't know why; it astonishes me;
 Now I must find another plan.
 Now I shall send a messenger to him:
 He cannot be so hard-hearted,
 If I keep coming back to him,
 590 That I shall not overcome him by persistence.
 Now I am dissatisfied with everything I say,
 For I myself failed with him;
 Why should I send someone else?
 I don't know what I'm doing, I don't know where I am.
 595 Who am I then? Who is my father?
 Now as always, he is the king; and who is my mother?
 Don't you know who? The queen.
 It's a lie; no, I'm an orphan:
 I have no friends, I have no family,
 600 I have no good people to give me counsel.
 You have, by God: you are Dané!
 Have I taken leave of my senses, then?
 I always used to be more sensible.
 Have I become a wild woman?
 605 What am I doing in the woods? What did I come here for?
 I am behaving in a shameful way.
 This is Love's doing. What is love? Alas,
 I do not know. I should name it more accurately
 If I were to say madness.
 610 It makes me live a life of suffering:
 Now I am at peace, now I am at war.
 You gods of the sky and of the earth,
 And those of the air and of the sea,
 All of you who know anything about love
 615 And are in his power,
 And you, Venus, who have betrayed me
 Together with the God of Love, your son,
 Rescue me from this plight
 And take revenge on the man
 620 For whom I am dying in despair!
 Make him find out what love is,
 In such a way that nothing can save him!
 The gods did not turn a deaf ear:
 Everything she asks for will be done.

- 625 Ele vient droit a son guicet, (621)
Dedens sa canbre se remet.
Narcisus ot .i. cerf meü
Et toute jor l'orent seü.
Molt par faisoit angouseus caut,
- 630 Car li solaus estoit mout haut, (626)
Et quant mäedis fu passés,
Li vallés fu mout escaufés.
De ses conpaignons se desoivre,
Si va querant eve por boivre.
- 635 Lors a trové une fontainne (631)
Qui mout ert clere et douce et sainne;
Desus est l'erbe haute et drue,
Ki tout entor estoit creüe.
Il voit l'iaue parfonde et bele,
- 640 Cler le ruisel et la gravele, (636)
Descendus est desus le mabre,
Son ceval atace a un abre:
Iloques li plot a remaindre.
Et quant il vaut son soif estaindre,
- 645 D'un autre soif est escaufés, (641)
Ki graindre mal li fait assés.
Quant il se baise et il boit,
Dedens en la fontaine voit
L'onbre qui siet de l'autre part:
- 650 Avis li est que le regart, (646)
Cuide ce soit fee de mer,
Qui la fontaine ait a garder.
Mout exploite Amors en poi d'eure!
Quoi que cel siet et il demeure,
- 655 Et l'onbre en la fontaine voit, (651)
Mout se merveille que ce soit,
Sel comence si a amer
Que il n'en pot ses eus torner:
Quant plus l'esgarde, plus li plaist.
- f. 63r col. a 660 Ne sone mot, ançois se taist, (656)
Car il crient, s'ele l'ot parler,
Que n'i voille plus demorer,
Mes mout esgarde viseument
Le vis, le cors, que voit si gent;
- 665 Loe les eus, les mains, les dois: (661)
Mout est angouseus et destrois.
Ne set qu'il voit, l'iaue li ment:
Il se loe, si ne l'entent;
C'est sa biautés qu'iloques voit,
- 670 Et il meïsmes se deçoit. (666)
C'est cil qui or blasmoit Amor,
Or l'a ja mis en tel freor,

625 She comes straight to her wicket-gate,
 She goes back into her chamber again.
 Narcisus had raised a stag
 And they had followed it all day.
 It was oppressively hot,
 630 For the sun was very high in the sky,
 And when it was past midday
 The young man was very hot.
 He leaves his companions,
 And goes in search of water to drink.
 635 Then he has found a spring
 Which was very clear and sweet and good to drink;
 By the water the grass is lush and thick,
 That had grown all around it.
 He sees the deep, fine water,
 640 The bright stream and the stony bed,
 He dismounted by the marble block,
 He tethers his horse to a tree:
 It suited him to stay there.
 And when he tries to quench his thirst,
 645 He is inflamed by another thirst
 That causes him much greater suffering.
 When he bends down and drinks,
 He sees within the spring
 The reflection on the other side:
 650 It seems to him that it is looking at him,
 He imagines it is a water fairy,
 Who is the guardian of the spring.
 How much Love can accomplish in a short time!
 While the 'fairy' sits there and he remains still,
 655 Watching the reflection in the spring,
 He is astonished and wonders what it is,
 And begins to love it so much
 That he could not take his eyes off it:
 The more he looks, the more he likes it.
 660 He does not say a word; no, he keeps silent,
 For he fears, if she hears him speak,
 That she will not stay there any longer,
 But he looks very attentively
 At the face, at the body that seem so attractive to him;
 665 He praises the eyes, the hands, the fingers:
 He is full of anguish and distress.
 He does not know what it is he sees; the water plays him false:
 He is praising himself without realising it;
 It is his own beauty that he sees there,
 670 And he is deceiving his own self.
 This is the man who criticised Love a little while ago;
 Now Love has suddenly thrown him into such turmoil,

- Or li prie qu'il le seceure,
Plaint soi, et puis souspire et pleure,
675 Mes esgarés est d'une cose: (671)
Ne se poeut taire et parler n'ose.
Plaint soi, après fait un sospir,
De parler ne se puet tenir.
'Cose', fait il, 'que laiens voi,
680 Ne sai coument nomer te doi, (676)
Se dois estre ninphe apelee,
O se tu es duesse u fee.
Qui que tu soies, vien ça fors
Et si me mostre tot ton cors!
685 Tu ne dois pas estre trop fiere: (681)
Vien ça! Que trais tu ariere?
Por qu'es orgelleuse vers moi?
Ne sui gaires mains biaux de toi.
Maintes fois ai esté requis;
690 Or sui de male ardor espris, (686)
Or sen je bien com lor estoit,
Qu'eles se plaignoient a droit.
Que te vois tu or reponant?
Parole a moi, si vien avant!
695 Legierement i pués passer: (691)
Entre nos deus n'a nule mer,
Mais un peu d'iaue qui m'ocit.
Las! entent ele que j'ai dit?
Nenil, espoir, trop est parfont.
700 Par Diu, si fait et si respont: (696)
Je li voi les levres movoir,
Mais l'oïe n'en puis avoir;
L'iaue ne laist la vois venir
Et fait que ne la puis oïr.
705 E, las! por quoi ne l'oi parler? (701)
Que ne se vient ça fors montrer?
U ce li vient de grant orgueil,
U el ne vuet çou que je voeil,
Car quant je ri, je li voi rire,
710 Quant je sospir, ele souspire, (706)
Et quant je plor, ele autretel,
K'el ne fine ne ne fait el
Devant que j'autre cose face.
Je voi les larmes en la face,
715 Ne mes caviaus ne puis je traire (711)
Que ne li voie autretel faire.
Mais por quel fait? S'ele m'amast,
Ele iscist hors, si se moustrast;
U ensi me veut escarnir,
720 U ne poeut pas a moi venir. (716)

f. 63r col. b

Now he begs Love to help him,
 Now he laments, and then he sighs and weeps,
 675 But one thing drives him to distraction:
 He cannot keep quiet and dare not speak.
 He bemoans his lot, then heaves a sigh,
 He cannot keep himself from speaking.
 'Being', he says, 'that I can see in there,
 680 I do not know how I should address you,
 Whether you should be called a nymph,
 Or whether you are a goddess or a fairy.
 Whoever you are, come out here
 And show me your whole self!
 685 You should not be too proud:
 Come out. Why do you draw back?
 Why are you haughty towards me?
 I am hardly less beautiful than you.
 I have received many offers of love;
 690 Now I burn with a terrible fire,
 Now I feel exactly how it was for them,
 That they were right to bemoan their lot.
 Why are you hiding?
 Speak to me, come out here!
 695 You can easily pass through:
 There is not a sea between us,
 Only a little water that is the death of me.
 Alas! Can she hear what I have said?
 Perhaps not, the water is too deep.
 700 By God, she can, and she is answering:
 I can see her lips moving,
 But I cannot hear the sound;
 The water prevents her voice from coming through
 And makes it impossible for me to hear her.
 705 Alas! Why can't I hear her speak?
 Why doesn't she come out and show herself?
 Either it is the effect of arrogance,
 Or she does not want what I want,
 For when I laugh, I see her laugh,
 710 When I sigh, she sighs,
 And when I weep, she does the same,
 And she doesn't stop or do anything else
 Until I do something different.
 I see the tears on her cheeks,
 715 And I cannot tear my hair
 Without seeing her do the same.
 But why is she doing it? If she loved me,
 She would come out and show herself;
 Either she's trying to make fun of me by doing this,
 720 Or she is unable to come to me.

- Que ferai jou? Que porrai dire?
Or pens, or plor, et or veul rire,
Or resent mal et or me dueil,
Et or ne resai que je voeil;
725 Le cuers m'escaufe et puis ai froit. (721)
Quel froidure ai je? Que ce doit,
Desqu'il fait si grant caut ça fors,
Que jou ai froit dedens le cors?
Or me membre que j'oï dire
730 Que tel torment et tel martire (726)
Et tel vie seulent mener
Cil qui s'entremetent d'amer.
Est dont Amors qui si me mainne
Et me fait traire mal et painne?
f. 63v col. a 735 D'Amors ne doi je riens savoir. (731)
Si sai qu'il est de grant pooir
Et qu'il me destraint et travaille:
Tant sai je bien et croi sans faile,
Mais dont il est, ne qui il soit,
740 U il converse, u on le voit, (736)
Quel gent, quel terre il a sous soi,
Ce ne puis jou savoir par moi.
C'ai jou a faire de lu querre,
De son païs et de sa terre?
745 Se jel demant, assés est pres: (741)
Dedens moi le sent mout engrés;
Ne m'estuet pas que loig le quiere.
Or ai veüe sa maniere,
Or m'est avis que je sai bien
750 Dont est. Unques mais nen soi rien! (746)
Nes fu dedens une montangne,
Es roces de terre griffaigne,
U tos jors a et noif et glace;
Dur a le cors, dur' a la face,
755 Cuer d'aimant, vaines de fer, (751)
Ses repaires est en infer.
Ne fu pas sages, ains mesprist
Qui es nombres des dieus le mist:
N'avoit mie bien esgardé
760 Son felon cuer, sa cruauté. (756)
Diu ne font pas mal a la gent,
Mais Amors veut tos jors torment:
As haus homes est fel et durs,
Et buens as sers et as tafurs.
765 Ja ne querai, que que nus die, (761)
Qu'i ait el ciel nule baillie.
Or es tu ja d'Amor mout sages!
Qui t'an a tant dit? Tes corages?

What shall I do? What can I say?
 Now I muse, now I weep and now I feel like laughing,
 Now I am in pain once more and now I suffer,
 And now, again, I do not know what I want;
 725 My heart is on fire and then I feel cold.
 What sort of cold am I experiencing? What is going on,
 When it is so hot out here,
 And I feel cold inside?
 Now I remember that I heard people say
 730 That such torment and such agony
 And such a life are experienced
 By those who get involved in love.
 So is it Love who treats me this way
 And makes me endure pain and suffering?
 735 I ought not to know anything about Love.
 But I do know that he is very powerful
 And that he is oppressing and torturing me:
 This much I know for sure and believe without a doubt,
 But where he is from, or who he is,
 740 Where he lives, where he is to be seen,
 What people, what lands are under his sway,
 I cannot know this by myself.
 What is the point of me searching for him,
 What are his country and his lands to me?
 745 If I want to find him, he is very close at hand:
 I can feel him, relentless, within me;
 I have no need to seek him far away.
 Now I have seen the way he behaves,
 Now it seems to me that I know very well
 750 Where he is from; I never knew anything about him before!
 He was born on a mountain,
 Amongst the rocks of a savage land,
 Where there is always snow and ice;
 His body is hard, his face is hard,
 755 His heart of adamant, his veins of iron,
 His dwelling-place is in hell.
 It was not wise, but rather a mistake
 To place him amongst the gods:
 Whoever did so had not properly observed
 760 His ruthless heart, his cruelty.
 Gods do not harm people,
 But Love is always looking to torment them:
 He is ruthless and hard-hearted towards noble men,
 And kind to serfs and wretches.
 765 I shall never believe, whatever anyone may say,
 That he has any authority in heaven.
 Now you are suddenly very knowledgeable about Love!
 Who told you so much about him? Your heart?

		Je ne cuit pas que ce puist estre, Que tu en saces tant sans mestre. (766)	
f. 63v col. b	770	Amors est mastre qui me duist, Qui dedens le cors m'art et cuist: Il m'aprent tote sa nature Et si m'angousce sans mesure.	
	775	A! douce riens qui si m'esprens, Se tu savoies queus tormens Et queus painnes jou ai por toi, Tu venroies parler a moi.	(771)
	780	Ge muir en fin, n'i a conseil: Ains que demain voie soleil, Me porra on ci trover mort, S'avoir ne puis autre confort.	(776)
	785	Mout est tes cuers u fel u fiers, Car mout m'egardes volentiers, Si com j'entent a ton sanblant, Et si ne veus venir avant,	(781) (782)
		Et je mout doucement te pri Que tu aies de moi merci.	(787) (788)
		Ce que je fas, je te voi faire;	(783)
	790	Onques riens ne me peut mes plaire: Tot le mont ai por toi laissié, Tu m'as del tout vers toi plaissié.'	(784) (785) (786)
		Ensi se plaint, n'en pueut partir, Iloeques veut vivre u morir:	(789) (790)
	795	Ne li puet plaire autres consaus. Ja ert abaissiés li solaus; Tote la nuit fu en dolor, Iloeques fu desi au jor,	(791)
	800	Onques ne menga ne ne but, Ne sa folie n'aperçut.	(796)
		Que que il pleure et grant dol maine, Les larmes troblent la fontainne, Et por l'iaue qui torble estoit Ne pot veoir ço qu'il soeloit.	
	805	'A, las!' fait il, 'qu'est devenue? U est alee? Or l'ai perdue, Et je sui ci remés tous sous, Caitis, dolans et angousçous.	(801)
f. 64r col. a	810	Nule arme o moi ci ne remaint, Fors seul Amors qui me destraint: Sa compaignie ne me faut. Morir m'estuet, et moi que caut? Mius veul morir isnelement Qu'en tel paine estre longement.'	(806)
	815	Lors se regarde, puis si voit L'unbre qui en l'iaue aparoit;	(811)

I do not believe that this can be so,
 770 That you can know so much without being taught.
 Love is my teacher, who instructs me,
 Who sets me on fire and burns within me:
 He teaches me everything about his nature
 And tortures me beyond measure.
 775 Ah, sweet creature who kindles this fire in me,
 If you only knew what torment
 And what pain I suffer for you,
 You would come out and speak to me.
 I am dying, that's all, there's no help for it:
 780 Before I see tomorrow's sun,
 They will find me here dead,
 If I cannot find some other remedy.
 You are either very hard- or proud-hearted,
 For you observe me very willingly,
 785 So I understand from your expression,
 And yet you are not willing to come out,
 And I am begging you very tenderly
 To have mercy on me.
 Whatever I do, I see you do;
 790 Nothing can ever give me pleasure again:
 I have abandoned the whole world for you,
 You have bent me completely to your will.'
 So he laments, he cannot leave,
 He intends to live or die there:
 795 No other course of action can find favour with him.
 The sun had already set;
 He spent the whole night in suffering,
 He was there until daybreak,
 Without eating or drinking anything,
 800 Or became aware of his folly.
 While he weeps and grieves,
 His tears form ripples in the spring,
 And because of the rippling water
 He could not see what he used to.
 805 'Alas!' he says, 'what has become of her?
 Where has she gone? Now I've lost her,
 And I'm left here all alone,
 Wretched, sorrowful and distraught.
 No living soul is here with me,
 810 Except for Love, my oppressor:
 His company does not fail me.
 I shall have to die, and why should I care?
 I would rather die swiftly
 Than suffer this pain for long.'
 815 At that, he looks and then sees
 The reflection appearing in the water;

- Sosrit et or li est avis
Que cele li a fait un ris.
Lors est encore plus destroys,
820 Baise l'eaue plus de cent fois. (816)
Avis li fu que mout ert pres,
Ne retenir ne se pot mes:
Gete les bras, cuide le prendre,
Mais ne set tant lacier ne tendre
825 Qu'il puise l'avoir ne trover. (821)
Lors se comence a porpenser,
Si voit que prendre ne la pueut,
Et mout est pres, si ne se muet,
Ensi li fuit, si le deçoit,
830 Et cuide que fantosmes soit. (826)
Un poi est en son sens venus;
Lors counoist qu'il est deceüs,
Et voit que c'est unbres qu'il aime.
Mout par se blasme et fol se claimme,
835 Et neporquant ne set que faire: (831)
Son corage n'en puet retraire.
Desvoiés est, ne set guencir
N'a droite voie revenir,
Car il estoit si escaufés
840 Qu'il n'en puet estre retornés, (836)
Et quant plus est desesperans
Tant est l'angoisce assés plus grans.
Dont se tormente, dont s'ocist,
Ne set que fait, ne set que dist.
845 'Bien sai que voir dist li devins: (841)
Ma mors est pres, c'en est la fins,
Car en fol liu ai mis m'entente.
Or n'i ai je mais nule atente,
Or sent et croi et sai de voir
850 Qu'esperance n'i puis avoir, (846)
Et d'itant sui plus angouseus,
Et plus m'art et esprent li feus,
Car ançois viaus me fu depors
Li esgarders, et grans confors,
855 Et quidai veoir quoi que soit (851)
De l'unbre qui me decevoit,
Si me feïst auques de bien;
Mais ore sai que n'en voi rien,
Por çou m'est li maus plus engrés.
860 Or ne puis estre une ore en pes, (856)
Or n'aim je nule rien vivant,
Or ne sai je que je demant.
Queus amors est ce dont me duel,
Quant j'aim, si ne sa que je veul?

f. 64r col. b

He smiles and then it seems to him
 That she has smiled at him.
 Then he is even more distraught,
 820 He kisses the water more than a hundred times.
 It seemed to him that she was very close,
 And he could not restrain himself any longer:
 He plunges his arms in, hoping to take hold of her,
 But no matter how much he grasps or reaches out,
 825 He is unable to hold her or find her.
 Then he begins to think about it,
 And sees that he cannot take hold of her,
 And she is very close, and does not move,
 Yet she slips away from him in this way and eludes him,
 830 And he imagines that it is a phantom.
 He has come to his senses a little;
 Then he realises that he has been deceived,
 And sees that he is in love with a reflection.
 He reproaches himself bitterly and calls himself a fool,
 835 And yet he does not know what to do:
 He cannot turn his heart away from it.
 He has lost his way, he cannot change tack
 Or come back to the right path,
 For he was so inflamed with love
 840 That he cannot be made to turn his back on it,
 And as he becomes more desperate
 So the anguish becomes much more intense.
 Then he torments himself, then he tortures himself,
 He does not know what he is doing or saying.
 845 'I know for sure that the soothsayer was right:
 I am close to death, this is the end for me,
 For I have set my heart on a foolish illusion,
 Now I can expect nothing from it any more,
 Now I am aware and believe and know for sure
 850 That there can be no hope for me there,
 And I am in even greater anguish,
 And the fire burns and inflames me even more,
 Because at least before I enjoyed
 The sight of it and it was a great comfort to me,
 855 And I imagined that I was seeing something
 In the reflection that deceived me,
 And it might have done me some good;
 But now I know that I am seeing nothing,
 This is why my suffering is more intense.
 860 Now I cannot find peace for a moment,
 Now I am not in love with a living soul,
 Now I do not know what I desire.
 What kind of love is this that afflicts me,
 When I am in love and do not know what I want?

- 865 Le cors, le vis que je la voi, (861)
Ce puis je tot trover en moi.
J'aim moi meïsme, c'est folie!
Fu onques mais tes rage oïe?
Las! je sent bien, cis maus m'engraine,
- 870 Si ne voi home qui me plagne. (866)
Vos camp, vous pré de ci entor,
Por Diu, esgardés ma dolor!
Plaigniés mon cors et ma biauté,
Et si dites "Mar se vit né
- 875 Cist enfes, qui tel mal endure (871)
Et muert par grant mesaventure!"
Et tu forés, qui ci t'espans,
Qui tant es ansiene et grans,
—Pieç'a que tu iés ci creüe
- 880 Et mainte amor as ja veüe— (876)
Car me di s'onques a nul jor
Veïs si angousceuse amor:
Porpense toi et sel me di.
Nenil, par foi, jel sai de fi!
- 885 Vous diu, qui tout le mont jugiés, (881)
Car vous prenge de moi pitiés!
Por quoi me faites tant languir?
Assés vaudroie mius morir.
Ainmi, las, com cil diu sont sort!
- 890 Nus d'eus por quoi ne me secort, (886)
Qui itel fin me voient faire?
Il ne sont pas si deboinaire,
Ce m'est avis, com on disoit.
Poeuent il riens? On dit a droit!
- 895 Desque jes apel tos et pri (891)
Ne de moi n'ont nule merci,
Donques doi je par droit quidier
Qu'il ne peuent nuire n'aidier.
Dont me vient ce que je di, las?
- 900 Ne doi croire, ne ne croi pas. (896)
Mais vos diu, le me pardonés,
Car je paroil comme dervés,
Com hom de tel folie espris
Que ne sai por quoi je languis,
- 905 Ne je ne sai que demander, (901)
Fors çou que on ne puet doner.
Et o moi vient et o moi vait
La cose qui tel mal me fait;
En moi est tot quanque je vueil,
- 910 Et si ne sai dont je me doeul: (906)
Je sui ce que je tant desir,
Jou meïsmes me fas languir.

f. 64v col. a

865 The body, the face that I see there,
 I can find all this in myself.
 I am in love with myself; this is folly!
 Was such madness ever heard of?
 Alas! I can tell, this illness of mine is getting worse,
 870 And I can see no one to weep for me.
 You fields, you meadows round about,
 For God's sake, witness my suffering!
 Weep for me and my beauty,
 And say: 'He was unlucky to be born,
 875 This child who is suffering such pain
 And dying as a result of great misfortune!'
 And you, forest, spreading all around here,
 You who are so ancient and so vast,
 —You have been growing here for a long time
 880 And you have already witnessed many loves—
 Tell me if you ever, at any time,
 Saw such an agonising love:
 Think about it and tell me.
 No, by my faith, truly I know you haven't!
 885 You gods, who judge the whole world,
 Take pity on me!
 Why are you making me languish so long?
 I would much rather die.
 Ah, alas, how deaf these gods are!
 890 Why does none of them help me,
 When they can see me dying like this?
 They are not as benevolent,
 It seems to me, as people used to say.
 People are right to ask if they have any power!
 895 Since I invoke them all and pray to them
 And they have no mercy on me,
 Then I should believe, and rightly so,
 That they can neither hinder nor help.
 Who is putting these words into my mouth? Alas!
 900 I should not believe it and I do not believe it.
 But you gods, forgive me,
 For I am speaking like a lunatic,
 Like a man overcome by such madness
 That I do not know why I languish,
 905 And I do not know what to ask for,
 Except what cannot be granted.
 And the being who does me such harm
 Comes and goes with me;
 Everything I want is in myself,
 910 And yet I do not know what grieves me:
 I am what I desire so much,
 I am making myself languish.

- Des que je ai çou que demant,
Por quoi n'en fa ge mon talent?
915 Ne sai, car j'aim et sou amés (911)
Et çou que j'ain me raimme assés,
Et n'est pas en menor esfroi,
Si n'en poons prendre conroi.
Poons? Mes 'puis', car je sui sous,
f. 64v col. b 920 Et ciste amors n'est pas de dous. (916)
Proier? Et que doi jou proier?
Çou que j'aim ne me sat aidier
Ne conseil doner ne me puet;
Or n'i a el, morir m'estuet.
925 Las! je me plaing mais nus ne m'ot: (921)
Parens que j'aie n'en set mot.
Que sont ore tuit devenu
Mi compaignon, qui m'ont perdu?
De tote gent sui eslongiés
930 Et en cel bos tous seus laissiés; (926)
Je quit que tote riens me het.
Las! ma mere por quoi ne set?
Si me venist plaindre et plorer,
Auques me peüst conforter.
935 Mais dont ne m'a nus esgardé, (931)
Qui plaingne moi et ma biauté?
Certes, oïl, viaus la pucele
Que je trovai l'autrier si bele,
Ki se clamoit cative et lasse
940 Et me prioit que je l'amaisse. (936)
Or me puis je caitis clamer
Por çou que ne la voil amer.
Ahi, las! tant par fui vilains
Et de grant felonie plains,
945 Et tant fui durs et de mal aire (941)
K'el onques ne me pooit plaire. (942)
Biaus sire Dius, car venist ore! (945)
Espoir, mestier m'aroit encore (946)
Plus que mere, pere ne suer, (947)
950 S'i pooie torner mon cuer (948)
Et si aploier mon corage
Que j'oubliaisce ceste rage;
Car Amors m'a si escaufé
C'amer m'estuet estre mon gré.
955 Mais une rien cuit bien entendre, (953)
Que se m'amors seüst u prendre
Et je veisse autru que moi,
Ne fuisce pas en tel effroi.
Dius! s'or venoit par aventure,
960 Ja porroit estre bien seüre (958)

Since I have what I am asking for,
 Why don't I do what I will with it?
 915 I don't know, for I love and am loved
 And the object of my love loves me deeply too,
 And is in no less turmoil,
 Yet we can do nothing about it.
 We can? No, 'I can', for I am alone,
 920 And this love is not shared by two.
 Beg? And whom should I beg?
 The object of my love is not able to help me
 And cannot give me counsel;
 There is nothing for it; I must die.
 925 Alas! I weep for myself, but no one hears me:
 None of my family knows anything about it.
 What has become of them all now,
 My hunting companions, who have lost me?
 I am far away from everyone
 930 And left all alone in this wood;
 I believe that everyone hates me.
 Alas! Why doesn't my mother know?
 She would come and weep and shed tears for me,
 She would be able to comfort me a little.
 935 But has no one has seen me, then,
 Who might weep for me and my beauty?
 Yes, indeed, there was that girl, at least,
 I came across yesterday, who was so beautiful,
 Who called herself wretched and forlorn
 940 And begged me to love her.
 Now I can call myself wretched
 Because I would not love her.
 Ah, alas! I was so base
 And so totally heartless,
 945 And I was so callous and ill-natured
 That she could never please me at all.
 Fair lord God, if only she would come here now!
 Perhaps she could still help me
 More than any mother, father or sister,
 950 If I could transfer my love to her
 And so subdue my heart
 That I could forget this madness;
 For Love has inflamed me so
 That I must love against my will.
 955 But I believe I understand one thing,
 That if my love could tell where to take hold
 And if I could see someone other than myself,
 I would not be in such turmoil.
 God! If by chance she were to come now,
 960 She could be very sure at once

	Que ele conqueroit m'amor	(959)	
	Et me geteroit de langor.	(960)	
	Bien me devoit maus avenir	(943)	
	Quant onques ne le voit oïr!	(944)	
965	Quoi qu'il parole et il se blasme, Li cuers li faut, .iii. fois se pasme, Et la parole a ja perdue.	(961)	
	Ovre les eus, si a veüe		
970	Dané, qui vient tote esgaree, Qu'Amors avoit si escaufee	(966)	
	Que toute nue en son mantel Aloit querre le jovencel.		
	Il le regarde, ne dist mot, Car parler veut, mais il ne pot;		
975	La fontaine li mostre au doit	(971)	
	Et l'onbre qui si le deçoit. Les bras li tent, les levres muet, Les eus ovre si com il puet:		
980	Sanblant li fait que se repent.	(976)	
	Ele l'esgarde, bien l'entent, Vers lui se trait et mot ne dit; Lors se tormente, lors s'ocit.		
	Ele le baise, ele le tient, Ele se pasme, puis revient,		
985	Ele l'acole, ele l'enbrace,	(981)	
	Baise les eus, baise la face. 'Ahi!' fait ele, 'dous amis, Come estes de la mort surpris!		
990	Biau sanlant me volés mostrer,	(986)	
	Mais ne poés a moi parler. Lasse! si mal asanblement, Si dolereus embracement, Si cort deport, si cort delit, Si grant angousce qui m'ocit!		
f. 65r col. b	995	Lasse! ma proiere l'a mort!	(991)
		Or n'i a mais autre confort: Morir m'estuet de compagnie, Car assés mius aim mort que vie.'	
	1000	Li vallés muert, la vie s'en vait;	(996)
		La pucele plus pres se trait, Vers soi le trait par tel air Du cors se fait l'ame partir.	
		Ç'a fait Amor, qui l'a surprise: Andui sont mort en itel guise.	
	1005	Or s'i gardent tuit autre amant	(1001)
		Qu'il ne muirent en tel sanblant!	

That she would win my love
 And cure me of my illness.
 I deserved to come to grief
 When I was never prepared to listen to her!’
 965 While he speaks and reproaches himself,
 His heart gives out, three times he falls unconscious,
 And he has already lost the power of speech.
 He opens his eyes, and has seen
 Dane approaching, completely alone,
 970 Whom Love had so inflamed
 That, wearing only a cloak over her shift,
 She was going in search of the youth.
 He looks at her, without saying a word,
 For he wants to speak, but cannot:
 975 He points out the spring to her
 And the reflection that so deceives him.
 He holds out his arms to her, he moves his lips,
 He opens his eyes as wide as he is able:
 His expression indicates to her that he repents.
 980 She looks at him, understands him clearly,
 Draws closer to him, without saying a word;
 Then she torments herself, then she tortures herself.
 She kisses him, she holds him in her arms,
 She faints, then she comes round,
 985 She hugs him, she embraces him,
 She kisses his eyes, kisses his cheeks.
 ‘Ah!’, she says, ‘sweet love,
 How death has taken possession of you!
 You are trying to show me that you care for me,
 990 But you cannot speak to me.
 Alas! What a tragic union,
 What a heart-breaking embrace,
 Such brief enjoyment, such brief delight,
 Such great anguish that is killing me!
 995 Alas! my prayer has been the cause of his death!
 Now there is no other form of comfort for me:
 I must die alongside him,
 For I much prefer death to life.’
 The young man dies, his life ebbs away;
 1000 The maiden moves closer to him,
 She holds him so tightly to her
 That she forces the soul out of her body.
 This is the work of Love who has taken possession of her:
 The two of them have died in this way.
 1005 Now let all other lovers take care
 That they do not die in the same fashion!

REJECTED READINGS

(Sigla in brackets indicate the earliest source of each emendation: ABD = other MSS; H = Hilka; P-S = Pelan-Spence; TS-T = Thiry-Stassin & Tyssens. Where no source is indicated, the emendations are either routine corrections adopted by all editors, or my own; the latter are explained in the notes.)

13 quelen (TS-T) 16 Soit soit maus (A; B bien) 17 quant il vaent (AB) 19 il bien raisons et drois (B; A bien destroiz) 20 Et en (AB) 28 maitenir 50 longenent 51 cil dit (AB) 73 quil 74 di sien (AB) 76 Kit 92 quil 116 Cert (A) 117 trovar 122 traveillis 150-54 Tot maintenant sest esperdue / Ele cai tote pasmee / A painne sen est relevee / Sa main touce partot son cors / Savoir se plaie i pert defors (B) 171 le p. (AB) 173 O s. 204 O. l. cou 206 mesme 209 bas p. 210 est *omitted* (AB) 220 D. li r. (B Lors r.) 230 si *omitted* (AB) 253 sera il tiens (AB) 271 Pais 274 li *omitted* 284 destreir 287 Q. j. jesoie. 295 pluiere 312 tele (H) 321 quele v. (A) 333 amers 339 le *omitted* (AB) 359 lo c. (AB) 368 cascum 371-74 *lines in order* 374-73-71-72 394 en *omitted* (AB) 437 saraisons 440 oso 466 l. t. pri (AB) 479 otroiel 502 Garde remain (TS-T) 519-22 *couplets inverted* 531 D. quele (AB; D quant quele) 540 failli 551 est *omitted* (ABD) 556 oueul 565 Ai b. p. (AB) 580 il *omitted* (ABD) 583 n. pu g. 601 si es (H) 613 c. del ciel (ABD) 650 qui (ABD) 654 Q. q. cil s. 673 O. l. p. souspire et pleure 674 Or li prie quil le seceure (BD; A s. et puis p.) 713 lautre c. (P-S) 765 que venus die (BD; A qoi que) 781 cit 783 fier (ABD) 790 Onquee 816 e l. 823 prende 825 savoir (P-S) 831 son ses 834 clamme 856 lubre 868 megraine 917 esfro 920 U c. (AB) 927 tot (ABD) 945 dors (ABD dur) 956 seut 968 sa ja (ABD) 995 est sa m. (ABD) 1001 se trait (TS-T)

NOTES

1 The importance of *conseil* in the poem has been noted by Burgess (p. 595). This key term poses problems for the translation, as it covers the concepts of decision-making, planning and interior deliberation (taking counsel with oneself) as well as consulting other people for advice. Generally, I have used whichever individual English term seems most appropriate for the context, but here the choice is particularly difficult, as the poet appears to be targeting those who act without due reflection *and* without consultation. I have opted for the expression ‘to take counsel’ on the grounds that it can imply both internal consideration of a course of action and external guidance.

6 Hilka and TS-T adopt AB ‘garder’, the latter partly to avoid what they see as the ‘awkward’ repetition of the verb *veoir* in vv. 6 and 7. The repetition does have a certain force, however, linking the two halves of the sentence and reinforcing the impact of the alliteration in v.

13 AB have ‘puis quil sen est entremis’, but C clearly has *ql* with a titulus over the *q*. Hilka substituted ‘qu’il s’en’ for the C reading, while P-S have ‘desqu’il en’. I follow TS-T, on the grounds that *l* for *s* is such a common scribal error, and that the word

division in the sequence *quelenest* is not very clearly indicated. The reflexive form of *entremetre* is called for here, as in v. 9.

17 Hilka and P-S retain ‘quant’ and emend to ‘avient’ (P-S transcribe the final word as *vient* rather than *vaent*). I follow TS-T in seeing ‘quant’ as a dittography from ‘neporquant’, and adopt the AB reading for the whole of the second hemistich.

19-20 In v. 19 the scribe has copied the initial two words of the first line of the couplet, followed by the last five words of the second line; in v. 20 his eye seems to have strayed to the start of the previous line. Despite their conclusion that ‘*A* [...] *semble plus altéré que B dans les détails*’ (p. 28), TS-T emend on the basis of A here (and elsewhere). I follow B, which avoids the repetition of *bien* (which may represent a slip of the eye from v. 19 to v. 20 in A).

22 Both C and B have ‘li’; TS-T point out that neither confuses feminine *li* and masculine *lui* elsewhere in the text, and argue that *li* must therefore be the correct reading, which they interpret as an implied reflexive: ‘on peut comprendre: «... et ne soit pas trop cruelle *envers elle-même*»’ (p. 120). They do not note that *li* is also found in v. 81 where AB both have ‘soi’, a fact that may lend some weight to the idea that the C scribe sometimes uses *li* with reflexive sense. However, this interpretation sits uneasily with the situation being evoked: the poet is urging ladies who are the object of an intense love not to play the role of the haughty lyric *dompna* (i.e. not to treat *their suitors* too cruelly) because such behaviour could have tragic consequences. Moreover, if the poet had intended to introduce the kind of variation on the *dompna* topos suggested by TS-T, it is difficult to see why he did not use *soi* rather than *li*, in order to make his point unambiguously. Hilka adopted A ‘lui’; P-S and Baumgartner maintain ‘li’, the former without comment, the latter interpreting it as a reduced form of *lui*; I follow Baumgartner. It is not immediately obvious whether the subject of vv. 23-24 is the man or (as TS-T suggest) the woman, and this ambiguity may well be intentional: the story of Narcisus and Dané demonstrates that spurning a would-be lover can bring disaster to both the spurner and the spurned.

26 *Deque(s)* is a well attested variant of *desque*.

30 C and AB present slightly different perspectives on courtly behaviour here. C foregrounds the man’s situation, implying that no man is above the law in matters of love: any man who rejects a woman’s suit should be punished, *whoever he may be*. A ‘*Qui quele soit que escondit*’ and B ‘*Quel quele soit sil lescondit*’ apply the notion of love’s universal laws to women: any man who rejects a woman’s suit, *whoever she may be*, deserves to be punished. The AB reading appears to make a more appropriate moral for the story of Narcisus and Dané: the tale of a king’s daughter being rejected by the son of one of her father’s vassals lends itself more readily to this type of extrapolation than to one that focuses on male status.

31-32 The combination ‘*Je voel*’ and ‘*on [...] doit*’ is unusual, but not sufficiently peculiar to justify substituting AB ‘*Je (B Ge) di por voir*’ for the first hemistich of v. 31. The AB reading may represent a scribal reworking of an original similar to C; alternatively, C may represent a corruption of something like ‘*Je vous le di*’, which was

also ‘improved’ in the AB tradition. On the meaning of *entreprendre* in this context, see TS-T p. 121.

33-34 Not in AB. Without these lines the transition between ideas is rather abrupt, with Narcisus appearing initially to be an example of a man who suffered the rigours of human justice (‘ardoir u pendre’) rather than retribution by the God of Love.

50 AB have ‘Se (B Sil) vivra pou (B poi) ou longuement’, which may appear more satisfactory, and was adopted by Hilka. However, as TS-T point out, C is closer to the Latin source here: Ovid’s Liriope asks Tiresias whether her son will live ‘to a ripe old age’ (*Metamorphoses* III, 346-47), not whether he will have a short or a long life. Although the French poet has cut out the story of how Tiresias lost his sight and was given the gift of prophecy in compensation, and never names the *devin*, he still alludes to the myth of the blind seer as it appeared in Ovid by referring in v. 49 to the soothsayer ‘sensing’ the child’s future, rather than deducing it from looking at him.

51 A has ‘sanz voisdie’ and B ‘sanz boisdie’; Hilka followed A in preference to C ‘sans envie’, the sense of which is less obvious. TS-T interpret this phrase as meaning the same as Modern French *sans en avoir envie*, giving the translation ‘sans empressement, à contre-coeur’ (p. 122). It seems more likely that the poet was influenced by the connotations of the Latin cognate *invidia* (‘hatred, hostility’), and that P-S’s translation ‘sans malice’ is closer to the mark.

58 Following Hilka, TS-T adopt AB ‘vint la provance’, on the grounds that C ‘fu’ may be a scribal error resulting from the presence of the forms *furent* and *fin* in vv. 57 and 58. It is equally possible that AB ‘vint’ is a similar error, derived from *devint* in v. 59.

67 Hilka and TS-T both emend here (to ‘Tout si com el l’ot devisé), on the grounds that *deviser* requires a direct object complement, and that the sense of *tant com* is not clear; they prefer to see ‘tant’ as a miscopying of *tout* (found in A). Burgess argues that the C reading makes good sense if we interpret *deviser* as ‘to wish’ rather than ‘to plan’, and *tant com* as ‘exactly as’ (although *en* is still somewhat problematic: is it possible that the scribe miscopied the sequence *elelot* as *el en ot?*). In the absence of a compelling case for emendation, I retain the C reading and adopt Burgess’s translation.

73 C ‘quil i fist’ is a scribal error: the subject of the verb *faire* is clearly Nature (as confirmed by A ‘que ele’ and B ‘que el’). Once Nature has made Narcisus’s eyes, the God of Love adds a final touch to her handiwork. This image of collaborative endeavour is an interesting variant on the descriptive topos of Nature the artisan, and reinforces the idea of fate introduced via the figure of the soothsayer. Narcisus is doomed to succumb to desire at the sight of his own *doç regart*, since the God of Love has ensured that no one is immune to it. It is also worth noting that the *Narcisus* poet begins his portrait with the eyes, rather than the hair and forehead, as prescribed in 12th- and 13th-century ‘Arts of Poetry’, thereby foregrounding them still further. Dané curses the hero’s ‘bel oueil’ (v. 555) after he has rejected her.

80 Hilka and P-S transcribe ‘aorne’ as ‘acene’, which Hilka then emends to ‘assena’. This unusually literal image of Nature the craftswoman, first fashioning the teeth and

then fixing them in the mouth, is further developed in the description of Narcissus's chin being polished (vv. 89-91) and his cheeks being painted (vv. 98-101). The picture of Nature creating a 'living statue' may have been influenced by the story of Pygmalion in Book X of the *Metamorphoses*.

81 I follow Baumgartner in seeing the forms *cascun* here, *fill* in v. 265, and *dur* in v. 754 as forms indicating elision of final *-e* before a vowel, rather than as scribal errors requiring emendation.

91 AB have 'Le vait (B va)', which may represent a *lectio faciliior*. *Li* is not infrequently used for *le li* in texts of this period (there is another example in v. 274).

92 The scribe of C has written 'quil la fait', apparently assuming that the subject of the verb is still *Amors*, and not realising that vv. 86-88 represent an 'aside' within the description of Nature's handiwork. AB have 'Tant que il est souef (B soef) et plain'.

93 AB 'Cler et luisant', adopted by Hilka and P-S, is a *lectio faciliior*. I follow TS-T in retaining *gissant* and interpreting it as meaning 'smooth' (i.e. with the hairs 'lying down'), rather than 'elongated' as suggested by Payen (p. 280). In this context *cler* has the sense of 'clear in outline', bristly, ill-defined eyebrows being considered unattractive at this period. Cormier retains *gissant* in his text, but the translation has 'gleaming', which is clearly based on the AB reading.

99-100 Previous editors have found these lines problematic. P-S suggest inverting the rhyme words, and interpreting *fainte* as 'fashioned' and *peinte* as 'artificial'. TS-T emend C 'peinte' to *tainte*, despite the fact that AB both have 'peinte' in v. 100 (the couplet is inverted in AB, with some minor modifications). They argue that v. 99 is illogical as it stands: Narcissus's face cannot be described as 'painted' before Nature adds the colouring to it: 'le visage de Narcisse est parfait, mais il lui manque encore les couleurs de la vie: il semble encore une belle statue' (p. 125). This line of argument holds good if the statue in question were made of stone or ivory, where the face would be naturally pale before being painted. However, if the image is of Nature carving and painting a wooden statue, similar to those found in many twelfth-century churches, then a pale ground such as gesso would have to be applied to the face before colour was added to the cheeks; it then would be entirely appropriate to describe Nature adding a second colour to a surface that had already been painted. Given the agreement of all three MSS here, this interpretation seems preferable to emendation, particularly as it fits so well with the picture of Nature as artisan, performing the detailed sequence of operations involved in creating a lifelike image. George Zarnecki notes that the few remaining fragments of wooden sculpture from English Romanesque churches indicate workmanship of very high quality (*English Romanesque Art 1066-1200, Catalogue of the Hayward Gallery Exhibition 5 April – 8 July 1984* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain / Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984), p. 146). This provides evidence of a well-developed art form, which is also known to have existed across continental Europe. I adopt Burgess's suggestion that 'fainte' in v. 100 should be seen as cognate with English *faint*, since this suits the context better than the more conventional translations 'feigned' or 'artificial'.

106 AB have ‘*Ele meisme se merueille*’, adopted by Hilka. Vv. 111-12 make better sense if the preceding lines have the God of Love as their subject, rather than Nature. The idea of Love standing back and admiring Nature’s handiwork also fits better with the overall thematics of the poem: the hero is presented as the object of multiple gazes (Love’s, his rejected suitors’, Dané’s, his own).

112 AB have an extra couplet after v. 112, included by Hilka: ‘*Con ne puet en nul lieu trover / Si biau damoiseil ne son per*’. TS-T describe these lines as ‘*d’une banalité parfaite*’ (p. 125), and suggest that they may have been added by a scribe who failed to grasp that *tel* in vv. 111-12 was intended to refer back to the whole of the preceding description. That failure would be more readily comprehensible if the scribe in question was working from an original in which *Ele* had already been substituted for *Amors* in v. 106. It is worth noting that the initial description of the protagonists in MSS R and B of *Piramus et Tisbé* ends with an almost identical couplet: ‘*Par grant conseil et par grant cure / Et par grant sens les fist Nature*’ (vv. 67-68).

116-20 TS-T adopt AB ‘*peust*’ in v. 117 and B ‘*pooit*’ in v. 118 in order to preserve the sequence of tenses after a main clause containing a verb in the imperfect (Hilka has the forms *peüst* and *pueent* respectively). I emend the main verb to ‘*C’est*’, creating a sequence of seven verbs in the present tense, which expresses the immediate reality of both Narcisus’s love of hunting and his disdain for amorous pursuits. This seems preferable to maintaining the awkward shift of tense in AB between the hero’s attitude towards hunting (past) and love (present). These lines recall the opening sequence of Marie de France’s *Guigemar*, which feature a young man with no interest in love, who is destined to find passion as the result of his fondness for hunting.

134 TS-T adopt A ‘*fornis* (B *forniz*)’, citing the examples of *vautis* in Godefroy, which suggest that the term is inappropriate for arms. However, Greimas gives ‘*courbé*’ as one definition for *volti*, and it is possible that the poet had in mind here the gentle inward curve of the arms characteristic of a skilled rider holding the reins low over his horse’s neck (we should remember that Dané is observing Narcisus on horseback, not on foot). *Fornis* (‘*muscular*’) is slightly odd in combination with the adverb *auques*: would a broad-chested youth such as Narcisus (v. 133) really be described as having ‘*somewhat*’ powerful arms? It seems entirely possible that *fornis* is a *lectio facillior*, introduced by a scribe who failed to visualise the rider properly and so found *vautis* disconcerting.

146 The first five words of this line are written in the right-hand margin opposite v. 145, with ‘*volage*’ in the bottom margin directly underneath ‘*si est en*’. The final letter of the fifth word is difficult to make out. I follow TS-T’s transcription, which is the most satisfactory resolution of the problem (Hilka transcribed as ‘*Si est en après [bien] volage*’). Vv. 145-46 are not in AB, but do not read like scribal ‘padding’, which is often characterised by banal rhymes (if this couplet was an interpolation, we might have expected the pairing *corage-rage*, rather than the more unusual *volage*). The more plausible explanation is that this couplet was omitted at an earlier stage in the development of the AB branch of the MS tradition.

150-54 It is extremely difficult to establish a satisfactory text at this point. All three MSS have five couplets between v. 148 and the beginning of the apostrophe to Love,

but there is considerable variation between C and AB, particularly in the last two couplets, where C has ‘Ele aperçoit que cest amors / Qui li mosterra de ses tors / Lores si dit en souspirant / Au diu damors que doute tant’, while AB have ‘Lors sent que ou (B el) cors est ferue / Si en est auques esperdue / Molt durement sest demantee / Et si a la (B sa) color (B coulor) muee’. In both cases these two couplets appear to be the work of scribes who failed, independently of one another, to realise that the apostrophe to Love was a narratorial intervention similar to that in vv. 23-40 of *Piramus et Tisbé*. They attributed the lines to the heroine, apparently oblivious to the fact that endowing her with an awareness of love at this stage made a mockery of the ‘sleepless night’ scene that follows, which relies for its comic effect on the contrast between Dané’s ignorance of her condition and the audience’s prior knowledge of what the problem really is. These four lines clearly represent bridging passages invented by scribes to introduce what they perceived as direct speech, and should therefore be omitted. In the case of C, the bridging passage is particularly inept, since it creates a sequence of four lines on the same rhyme, followed by two couplets rhyming in *-ant* and *-ans*. It would also appear that five of the remaining six lines in C have suffered from scribal interference at some stage. Not only do they present the incongruous picture of Dané searching her whole body for signs of a wound, when the God of Love’s arrow could only have struck her in the region of the heart, but the AB readings of vv. 150 and 153-54 are also supported by *Cristal et Clarie* vv. 1249-52: ‘Dedens son cuer se sent ferus, / Fors de son lit chiet estendus; / Plaie cuida trover defors / Mais ele estoit dedens le cors’ (the differences between this passage and our text are due to the fact that the *Cristal* poet has adapted this passage to apply to his hero, who is lying in bed, rather than to a maiden standing at a window). I therefore follow TS-T in substituting B 150-54 for the text of C. However, their decision to insert the final couplet of the bridging passage from AB before v. 151 is based on less solid arguments, and I have chosen not to follow suit.

161-62 This couplet is not in AB, which also have ‘Amors (B Amor) angoisse amors estraint’ in v. 163. Although it is impossible to be sure whether these lines were left out by the *x* scribe or added by the C scribe, the increased risk of omitting a couplet in a sequence where all the lines begin with the same word makes the former more likely.

169 TS-T emend C ‘cose’ to *tose*, despite the fact that the reading *cose* is confirmed by *Cristal* v. 7985; Baumgartner follows suit. The argument that OF *chose* is never used to designate a figure who is already individualised is not entirely convincing, so I retain the C reading.

181 Here and in vv. 900 and 932 I follow Baumgartner in seeing C ‘ne’ as a shortened form of enclitic *nel* before a word beginning with a consonant rather than a scribal error.

191 Following Hilka, TS-T transcribe the first two words as ‘hau’ (though in each case the final letter is clearly *n*), and emend to ‘Hau! or me sui aperceüe’ on the grounds that the mute *e* is maintained in hiatus elsewhere in the text; Baumgartner follows suit. However, the repeated exclamation suits the dramatic context (‘Yes, yes! Now I see what the problem is’), and the assumption that a poet never varied his morphology to suit the scansion may be open to question. AB have the rather banal ‘Je (B Ge) men sui bien aperceue’. The absence of the reflexive pronoun *me* in *Cristal* 8007 ‘Haï, or sui

aperchëue' is suspect, and suggests a certain degree of rewriting. (*H*)*ai* is normally used only for a cry of pain or distress, which seems out of place here: Dané's exclamation expresses her satisfaction at finding an explanation for her discomfort, not the discomfort itself.

199-200 AB have 'Lors vest une pelice hermine / Et va (B *vait*) au lit a sa (B *la*) meschine', which is supported by *Cristal* vv. 8015-16 'Dont vest un pelichon d'ermine / Et vint al lit de sa meschine'. TS-T conclude that this represents the original reading, and that we must assume that two different female attendants are evoked in this scene: a *meschine* who is told to remake the bed, and the *norice* whom Dané curses in vv. 213-14 for not having done the job properly the previous evening. However, there is only one attendant in *Cristal*: it is the *meschine* who is cursed in v. 8032. TS-T take the view that the *Cristal* poet was working from a MS similar to AB at this point and replaced *norice* by *meschine* in v. 8032. It seems equally likely that two variant versions (one featuring only the *norice* and the other only a *meschine*) existed at an early stage in the MS tradition, and that the AB reading is the result of contamination between the two. Under the circumstances, it seems wiser to follow P-S and Baumgartner in retaining the text of C. It is worth noting that there are significant differences between *Cristal* and all three MS of *Narcisus* in vv. 206-12, which suggests that the relationship between them may be more complex than TS-T imply.

202-04 TS-T emend C 'tout' to *tost* in v. 202, on the basis of AB, and 'tous' to *tout* (< *toldre*) in v. 204, although A has 'toz' and both B and *Cristal* have 'puis'. The idea of Dané ordering a complete remake of her bed, involving the removal of *all* the bedclothes, is supported by the description of the attendant plumping up even the straw base in v. 205.

209 As it stands in C ('Or veut haut cief or veut bas pies'), this line is a tautology that runs counter to the logic of the *or...or* construction, which is designed to convey an impression of Dané constantly changing her mind about how the bed should be made up. We would expect to find 'now she wants her head higher, now she wants her feet higher' rather than two expressions that amount to the same thing. I have therefore emended in line with *Cristal* 8025 'Or velt haus pies et or(e) halt cief'. The *or* in v. 210 then introduces yet another mood swing: having gone from 'high head' to 'high feet', Dané then decides that the head is too low after all. AB 'Or le veut (B velt) abaissier aus (B as) piez' does away with one of these changes of heart, so reducing the comedy of the scene, and may represent a scribal correction of a corrupt version similar to C. It is worth noting that B 210 'Or est li Chavez trop baissiez', although identical to C, is illogical as a follow-up to the AB version of v. 209, while A 210 'Or est li chevez trop hauciez' suggests that the scribe is aware that 'low feet' implies 'high head', and has amended the second line to fit in with the previous correction.

214 There may be a lacuna after v. 214 in all three MSS. In v. 214 Dané is still dissatisfied with the bed-making; in v. 215 the process is complete, and Dané is lying down again, apparently happy with the results. The transition is uncharacteristically abrupt, and suggests that some lines describing how Dané was finally pacified may have been omitted. The evidence of *Cristal* is suggestive here. In the romance the *or...or* sequence occupies eight lines (vv. 8024-31), as against five in the *Narcisus* MSS; as a

result, the equivalent of v. 214 becomes the first line of a couplet, the second line of which reads ‘Cele [i.e. the attendant] li fait mout bien seant’ (v. 8034), which forms a smooth transition to the equivalent of our v. 215. This indicates either that the original version of *Narcisus* was similar to the text of *Cristal*, and the text became corrupted after the *Cristal* original was copied but before CAB were produced, or that the *Cristal* original was also defective and the poet reworked this passage in order to produce a more coherent narrative.

229 TS-T emend to *Or ai*, found in A and *Cristal* 8049 (B has ‘Si ai’). However, their argument that the graphical similarity between *Orai* and *Uiai* led to the C scribe miscopying the first two letters of the sequence could equally well be applied to the A scribe and the *Cristal* poet (or the scribe of his original). Their conclusion that Dané envisages only two alternative explanations for her agitated state is based on a misinterpretation of AB 227-28. AB 227 ‘Se nest li lis (B liz) dont je (B ge) me dueil’ is a conditional clause (not a statement introduced by *Ce*, written *Se*); v. 228 represents an alternative hypothesis expressed as parenthesis within the conditional clause (not a relative clause introduced by *ou* = ‘where’); v. 229 represents the third possibility (‘If it’s not the bed – , or that I’m more sensitive than usual – then I am suffering from some fever’). C’s unambiguous presentation of the three possibilities makes the best reading.

240 P-S and Baumgartner transcribe the second word as ‘enuieus’ (Hilka has ‘enieus’), which Baumgartner translates as ‘insupportable, pénible’. However, given the importance attached to *envie* in other texts as one of the principal anti-courtly qualities, *envieus* seems more appropriate in a context that evokes the other cardinal sins of *felonie*, *vilainie* and *ire*.

247 The AB reading ‘a desmesure’, adopted by Hilka and TS-T, is supported by *Cristal* v. 8071. However, the expression *sans mesure* also occurs in v. 774, which may suggest that *a desmesure* is a *lectio facillior*.

253 I follow TS-T in adopting the AB reading ‘seroit il miens’ here (vv. 253-54 are not in *Cristal*). V. 253 most plausibly represents Dané initially agreeing with her ‘other self’s’ remark that Narcisus can never be hers, before coming up with the idea of circumventing the normal process of finding her a husband. Hilka emended *tiens* to *miens*, but maintained the future *sera*.

269-70 AB have ‘Et quest ce donc na il bonte / Qui ma ore (B donques) cel (B cest) plet mande’, which reads like an attempt to tone down the sexual implications of the internal dialogue in C. The form *plaisir* can be read as either a noun (echoing v. 268) or a verb (anticipating v. 271). The sexual subtext of this exchange is difficult to render effectively in English.

287-88 Not in AB. TS-T omit this couplet, which they see as an interpolation; I take the view that it was omitted from the AB tradition for the same reason that vv. 269-70 were modified. C 287 reads ‘Que je jesoie de lui privee’, which P-S emend to ‘Que je soie de lui privee’. Baumgartner transcribes as ‘Que je je soie de lui privee’ (although the scribe has clearly left more space between the first and second *je* than between *je* and *soie*), which she emends to ‘Que je ja soie de lui privee?’, despite the fact that this produces a

hypermetrical line. I follow P-S here. If their version of the original text is correct, the scribe's error could be seen as a Freudian slip: since the intimacy Dané contemplates is clearly physical, a form of the verb *gesir* ('to sleep with') might spring naturally to mind.

289 I follow Hilka and P-S in interpreting *vo* + three minims + *s* as a carelessly written *voirs*. TS-T find the reprise of *avis* and the opposition *avis-voirs* in C 'également boîteuses' (p. 134). The opposition strikes me as an effective way of marking Dané's growing (albeit misplaced) confidence in her own judgement on amatory matters.

291-92 Not in AB. Although the poet favours exclamations at the beginning of monologues (see vv. 182, 221, 329, 537, 805), none of the other speeches of this type ends with one, which may suggest that this couplet was omitted from AB rather than added to C.

311-12 Not in AB. This couplet clarifies Dané's motivation: having seen the young man returning from the hunt the previous day, she assumes that he hunts on a regular basis and will therefore set out early the next day on his usual route to the forest. Whether it formed part of the original text or was added by a scribe who felt that further explanation of Dané's behaviour was called for is not obvious. I follow previous editors in emending C 'tele' to *cele* in v. 312, on the grounds that *t* for *c* is a common copying error, and that the distinctive feminine form *tele* is very rare at this period.

319-330 Not in B.

333-34 Not in AB. I follow Hilka and TS-T in emending v. 333: although C 'amers' makes good sense, the object pronoun *le* in v. 334, used in conjunction with *conoistre*, and the subject pronoun *il* in v. 335 seem to require the personification *Amors* as their antecedent. The presence of *il* in v. 335 also suggests that vv. 333-34 were inadvertently omitted from *x*, perhaps because the scribe was misled by the sequence of three lines beginning in *O*.

345-48 Not in B.

364 TS-T adopt B 'Demain quant ge verrai le jor' on the grounds that a temporal clause is more satisfactory here. The C reading is equally satisfactory, however, in that it shows us Dané formulating her plan step by step ('How will you be able to speak to him?' – 'I'll see him tomorrow at daybreak – I'll leave without anyone seeing me'), while the B reading implies that the plan is already fully formed in her mind.

371-74 I follow TS-T and Baumgartner in re-ordering the lines to produce a logical sequence of actions. This sequence is found in AB, which feature a couplet introduced by *Conterai* (the second line of this couplet is missing in B) followed by vv. 373 and 374 in that order.

380 Here and in v. 969 it is difficult to find an English equivalent for *esgaree* that does not involve some degree of translation loss. *Esgaré* can mean 'lost' (in a physical, psychological or moral sense) and 'forsaken, alone'. I have chosen 'alone', hoping that

readers will understand that for a young woman of Dané's class, the act of leaving the city without an attendant or chaperone would have been seen as both foolish and wanton.

387-88 Not in AB. Dané's train of thought is more clearly developed in C, but it is difficult to say whether this was a feature of the original, or whether it represents an addition by a careful *remanieur*.

409-12 Vv. 409-10 are not in AB. The subject of 'tranble et esmeut' in v. 411 is the noun *le cuer*, even though it appears to be in the oblique case. The C scribe may either have made a copying or grammatical error, or he may have assumed that these verbs had the same subject as the verbs in v. 410 (as do P-S, who interpret 'tranble' as *fait trembler*). AB show signs of scribal misunderstanding, in that they have *la* (i.e. Dané) rather than *le* (i.e. any victim of Amors) in v. 412 (and in v. 411 'Tote la changie (B change) amor et muet'), although it is clear that the poet does not shift his focus from the general to the particular until v. 415. In these circumstances, it is more likely that vv. 409-10 were omitted from AB than that they represent an interpolation in C.

429 AB have 'lez .i. (B le) buisson', adopted by Hilka. I follow P-S and TS-T in retaining the C reading and interpreting *buisson* as 'small wood, thicket'.

437 Hilka and TS-T adopt AB 'Atant fine ses oroisons', which makes Dané the subject of the verb. P-S and Baumgartner transcribe as 'sa raisons', although the scribe has left large spaces between *itant*, *fine* and the sequence *saraisons*, but not within the final sequence. Given the evidence of AB, I prefer to read *saraisons* as one word, and emend *a* to *o* (a very common scribal error), making *s'oroisons* the subject of *fine* ('At that point her prayer comes to an end'). *A itant* is a common alternative to *atant*.

445-46, 453-54 Not in AB. In both cases illogicalities in the text of AB indicate a scribal omission. AB 447 'Et sen (B si) vint droit a la pucele' is curious, given that Dané is hiding behind a tree so that she cannot be seen. Likewise, v. 455 makes little sense without the missing couplet: there is nothing remarkable about Dané moving closer to Narcisus in order to speak to him, but her kissing and embracing a total stranger is cause for puzzlement.

462 A 'Que je vous aim seur toute rien' and B 'En vos me fi sor toute rien' may both be the result of a scribe 'writing out' the explicit expression of desire found in C (see above, notes to vv. 269-70 and 287-88). The verb *desir* also occurs in *Cristal* v. 2443, but the line has been reformulated so that its object is not the hero.

466 I follow TS-T in emending 'pri' to 'di'. *Pri* probably resulted from the scribe looking ahead to the beginning of the following line; *di* is supported by *Cristal* v. 2448.

473 Hilka and TS-T emend C 'done' to 'a doné' on the basis of AB. However, this passage is sufficiently different in AB to suggest some degree of scribal intervention (vv. 469-70 and 473-74 are inverted, with a variant v. 469 in A; in both cases the order of the lines in C is more satisfactory from the rhetorical point of view). The shift from

perfect to present in C in vv. 472-73 is logical and effective: Love *has given* Dané safe conduct out of the city, but *is still giving* her the courage to speak her mind.

476 TS-T emend C ‘pent’ to ‘est’ on the basis of AB, a reading supported by *Cristal* v. 1364. Burgess points out that, contrary to what TS-T suggest, the construction *pandre en* is attested (interestingly enough, with *tote nostre vie* as its subject), which raises the possibility that the AB and *Cristal* reading is a *lectio faciliior*.

477-80 TS-T follow AB in inverting these two couplets, arguing that the sequence of ideas in C is illogical; Baumgartner follows suit. *Cristal* presents the lines in the same order as C (vv. 1365-69). While this might indicate that AB represents the original reading, and that both C and *Cristal* derive from a corrupt exemplar, it is equally possible that the line order in AB represents a scribal correction of an original in which the sequence of ideas was deliberately disrupted in order to convey Dané’s agitation. The fact that A replaces v. 477 with ‘Je ne pens aillors nuit ne jor’ lends weight to the case for scribal intervention in AB.

483 TS-T adopt A ‘si s’en rist’ which is supported by *Cristal* v. 1393 (B has ‘si en rit’). However, given the similarity of the graphies, it is not impossible that two scribes could have mistranscribed *sorrist* as *senrist* independently of one another, so the evidence of *Cristal* does not make a *prima facie* case for emendation here.

502 I adopt TS-T’s emendation, which posits a simple scribal error and is supported by *Cristal* v. 2468 ‘Garderaï m’ent’. AB ‘Va tan que ja a dieu ne place’ and the re-ordering of the lines in this passage (vv. 499-500 come in reverse order after v. 504 in these MSS) look like a response to an exemplar in which v. 502 was corrupt. That exemplar may even, like C, have had ‘Garde remain’: this might explain why the original of AB replaced the first hemistich with a formulation containing an imperative when the logic of the speech seems to call for a first-person singular verb.

516-22 Following Hilka, TS-T reduce these seven lines to three, modelled on ABD 516-18 ‘Il voit ses mains qu’el joint et lace, / Nues sanz ganz et sanz orfrois / Qui plus sunt blanches que nest nois’ (= D; minor variants in AB). Baumgartner retains the text of C *tel quel*, punctuating so that vv. 517-18 become ‘une sorte d’incise’ (p. 119), but the result is still very awkward, and seems to me to be less satisfactory than inverting two couplets (vv. 519-20 and 521-22) to produce a coherent text; the argument for retaining a certain incoherence in vv. 477-80 does not apply to passages of third-person narration. TS-T and P-S suggest that C may represent a scribal reworking of the original, as a result either of an initial copying error (*El goint* for *Il voit* in v. 516), or of a desire to increase the emotivity of the scene. However, there is little evidence of the latter elsewhere in C. Given the number of other instances in which AB clearly omit lines that must have featured in the original version of the poem, it seems more prudent to retain the text of C here, with a simple emendation. The agreement of D with AB does not provide compelling evidence for TS-T’s abridgement, according to their stemma. In their view all three MSS derive from a common exemplar, *x*; features common to ABD but not found in C could therefore result from the intervention of the *x* scribe. It is worth noting that TS-T retain the C reading despite the agreement of ABD in v. 538, 555-56, 570 etc.

522 I follow TS-T's interpretation of *orfrois* as '(gold) embroidery', but the use of the term here probably refers to richly decorated gloves, not sleeves (see Holmes, p. 536). The construction is rather elliptical: the sense of the line appears to be 'bare, without the gloves and the gold embroidery on them that would normally be associated with a princess'.

530 Here and in v. 766 I follow Baumgartner in seeing *Qui* as a contracted form of *Qu'il*.

541-42 Homonymic rhymes are also found in vv. 45-46, 713-14 and 925-26. Although such rhymes often attract criticism from modern editors (e.g. P-S, p. 18), they may not have been regarded as inelegant by twelfth-century poets, and may even have been used as a deliberate foregrounding device (see Gautier d'Arras, *Ille et Galeron*, ed. and trans. Penny Eley (London: King's College London Centre for Late Antique & Medieval Studies, 1996), pp. xxviii-xxix).

543-47 I follow the division of the elements in this internal dialogue proposed by Hilka and adopted by TS-T, but not their punctuation: I prefer to see v. 546 as an exclamation rather than a question. The same construction (stressed pronoun + inversion) is used in v. 549, which is clearly an exclamation, and appears to be a deliberate echo of v. 546.

555-56 Not in ABD. Without a reference to Narcisus's beauty, the transition between v. 554 ('What will become of me?') and v. 557 ('If only he were ugly') is rather abrupt, and suggests that this couplet was omitted from *x* rather than added to C.

586 TS-T adopt the ABD reading 'Querre m'estuet autre conseil', which is supported by *Cristal* v. 3137 'Prendre m'estuet altre conseil' (the *Cristal* poet appears to have substituted *prendre* for *querre* to avoid repetition: he replaces the next twenty lines of Dané's speech with four lines referring back to Cristal's motivation for his quest, which make the use of *querre* in v. 3140 unavoidable). The C reading may be the result of the scribe initially copying *Or* from the following line by mistake, and then changing the word order to avoid a hypermetric line. However, given the poet's obvious fondness for anaphorical sequences based on *Or*, the case for emendation is not compelling.

587-94 AB omit v. 587 and complete the couplet with 'Que il ne maine (B maime) comme sage (B saige)'; in addition, A omits vv. 589-93 and inserts 'Mout ai entrepris grant anui' after v. 594, while B omits vv. 590-93 and D omits v. 590. There has clearly been a series of omissions and rewritings in ABD, which Hilka and TS-T explain in terms of scribes being put off their stride by the unusual succession of three couplets on the rhymes *-ui*, *-i* and *-ui*.

601-04 I follow previous editors in emending C 'si es' to 'si as' in v. 601. AB have 'si ai', which suggests that a form of *avoir* appeared in the original. ABD attribute v. 602 to Dané's 'other self' (all three have 'As tu donques'), and omit vv. 603-04. ABD appear to derive from a version in which the distribution of speeches within the internal dialogue has not been properly understood; having reassigned v. 602, the scribe probably then omitted the following couplet. The transition to v. 605 is much more

satisfactory in C, where the oppositions *dervé* – *sage* and *sage* – *sauvage* lead naturally in to the question ‘What am I, a king’s daughter, doing here in the woods?’.

606 Following Hilka, TS-T adopt the ABD reading ‘fole guise’, arguing that C ‘male guise’ is an error anticipating ‘male vie’ in v. 610. It is also possible that C represents the original reading, with the alliteration in *m* in both lines designed to foreground the moral aspect of Dané’s behaviour. In v. 610 ABD have ‘Vairs est ce est forsenerie (D cest grant f.)’, which makes for a sequence of five lines working variations on the idea of madness (*fole guise* – *derverie* – *forsenerie*). If TS-T believed that *fole* was the original reading in v. 606, then it is hard to see why they did not adopt the ABD reading for v. 610 as well.

628 ABD have ‘lavoit seu’, which is probably a *lectio facillior*. The plural verb in C places Narcissus in his normal social context, as one member of a hunting party, so enhancing the impact of his disastrous decision to leave his companions to go in search of water (vv. 633-34).

639-42 Not in ABD. These lines are an amplification of the description of the spring in Ovid, but are not necessarily an interpolation by the scribe of C. It is worth noting that earlier the poet was careful to describe Narcissus dismounting before speaking to Dané (v. 451), a description found in all the MSS. Here the transition is very abrupt in ABD: one moment the hero sees the spring for the first time while still on horseback; the next he is drinking from it. TS-T suggest that the *x* scribe may have jumped from *Iluoit* (v. 639) to *Ilueques* (v. 643). Vv. 637-68 are also missing from D.

646 ABD have the oblique *greignor*, adopted by Hilka and TS-T, but I follow Baumgartner in retaining the form found in C, in line with the other ‘case errors’ in this MS (e.g. vv. 411 and 725).

654 P-S note that ‘la répétition du pronom-sujet se trouve assez souvent en anc. français’, but, like the example in v. 965 to which they refer, this normally involves repetition of the same pronoun, not a shift from demonstrative to personal pronoun. Baumgartner, Mancini and Cormier all reproduce the text of C as it stands, and assume in their translations that the referent of both *cil* and *il* is Narcissus. However, *cil* in combination with a personal pronoun is usually contrastive, indicating the more distant of two people or objects. The verb *siet* is explicitly associated with *l’ombre* in v. 649, which might suggest that *cil* here refers back to the reflection. However, *ombre* is normally feminine, and vv. 651 and 661 unambiguously designate the ‘creature’ in the spring as female, while *cil* can only refer to a masculine antecedent. I therefore emend *cil* to *cel*, well attested as an alternative form of the feminine singular demonstrative pronoun. D has the same reading as C, which implies that the error occurred at an early stage in the MS tradition. A ‘Qoi que il soit et que demeure’ and B ‘Que que ce soit et il demore’ suggest that one or more later scribes found the line problematic and attempted to normalise the use of pronouns.

667-70 Not in ABD. A possible explanation is that having copied one sequence of two couplets rhyming *–ment* and *–ois* / *–oiz* the *x* scribe jumped the following two couplets, which have almost identical rhymes (*–ment* and *–oit*). TS-T note that these lines echo

Metamorphoses 417-18 and 424-25, but this does not necessarily confirm their authenticity: a *remanieur* familiar with Ovid might have decided to expand the description of Narcissus's distress by incorporating reminiscences of the source ignored by the original poet. However, since there are plausible grounds for assuming that lines were omitted in the ancestor of ABD, I follow TS-T in retaining the C reading here.

673-74 The C scribe has apparently copied the first hemistich of the first line of the couplet, then the second hemistich of the second line; there being no simple way to remedy the error, he has then copied the first line again to complete the couplet. An alternative scenario is that the order of the lines in the original was 674-673; the C scribe then copied the first half of the second line of the couplet first, realised his error, and transcribed the remainder of the couplet correctly. This hypothesis would then require the scribe of *x* to have inverted the lines of the couplet. Scribal interference in *x* is by no means impossible, given that ABD present variant readings for v. 672 (A 'Qui tant la mis en male error'; B 'Qui or la mis en tel error'; D 'Et ore en est en tele error'). I follow TS-T in adopting the first hypothesis (they do not consider the second); this has the advantage of positing an error on the part of only one scribe, and of producing a characteristic anaphora in vv. 672-73.

685-88 Vv. 687-88 are not in ABD, which also invert vv. 685-86. Without 687-88 there is a rather abrupt transition between Narcissus's plea and his statement that he has been the object of many amorous advances. The reference to his beauty in v. 688 provides a clear motivation for the latter; this suggests that we are dealing with an omission by the *x* scribe rather than an interpolation by the C scribe.

715-16 Not in ABD. As in the previous case, the transition is very abrupt without these lines; moreover, 'fait' in v. 717 is clearly intended to echo 'faire' in v. 716 (see TS-T p. 32).

723-24 Not in ABD. The repetition of *or* is one of the poet's favourite rhetorical devices, with sequences of up to eight elements introduced by *or* found throughout the poem in all MSS. This may be an argument in favour of the authenticity of this couplet (which adds another three elements to the three already present in v. 722).

745-46 Not in ABD. TS-T explain the absence of this couplet in terms of the *x* scribe's blurring the distinction between *Amor* (masculine noun denoting the personification) and *amor* (feminine noun denoting the emotion), and treating the word as feminine in most contexts. Having referred to Amor as *el(e)* throughout this passage (except in v. 741), the scribe was unable to adapt v. 746 to accommodate the feminine form *engresse*, and simply omitted the couplet.

757-64 Not in ABD. Vv. 762-64 appear in slightly modified form as *Cristal* vv. 1567 and 1569-70, which suggests that this whole passage was probably present in the original. TS-T note that treating *Amor* as feminine (see previous note) would make these lines problematic, as they refer to *dieus* rather than *diuesses*, and lead up to a masculine form at the rhyme in v. 763.

787-92 Hilka and TS-T prefer the order of lines found in ABD, where our vv. 787-88 come after v. 792. Although this provides a rhetorically more satisfying conclusion to the monologue, there is no clear evidence that it represents the order of the lines in the original text, rather than an astute emendation by the *x* scribe. The final three or four letters of vv. 790-92, and the *e* of *peut* in v. 790 are barely legible.

803-04 Not in D.

813-16 Not in B; A adds ‘Jai perdue joie et solas’ after v. 812, modifies the rhyme in v. 813 to ‘isnel le pas’, and adds ‘De moi nule pitie ne prent’ after v. 814 to make up the couplet. The CD reading is supported by *Cristal* vv. 7877-80.

819-23 Not in B.

825 Following Hilka, TS-T adopt ABD ‘Qu’il la (A le) puist sentir ne trover’ on the grounds that elsewhere the third person singular of the present subjunctive is always *puist*. This is not the case, however: we find *puisse* in v. 117 and *puise* in v. 171. The *Cristal* poet uses the combination *sentir* and *trover* in v. 7182 when evoking a similar situation, which may be a reminiscence of our poem, but does not necessarily indicate that the *x* reading represents the original.

827-32 Not in ABD. C presents a more elaborate sequence of ideas (Narcisus stops to think – considers the fact that he has been unable to touch the ‘fairy’ and that it never moves away – imagines that it is some kind of apparition – his mind clears – he recognises his mistake – he realises that he loves his own reflection), while in ABD the hero realises the truth immediately he stops to think. This may indicate that C represents the original version, or, alternatively, that the C text has passed through the hands of a skilful *remanieur*. I follow TS-T in opting for the former: as they point out, the *x* scribe could easily have jumped from v. 826 to v. 832, both of which have *Lors* in initial position, and are followed by a line beginning *Si / Et voit*.

841-65 In ABD vv. 841-42 replace our vv. 859-60, while vv. 843-44 are omitted. This appears to be part of a deliberate rewriting of this whole passage in *x* (see TS-T pp. 151-52). The omission of vv. 843-44 is a logical consequence of the displacement of vv. 841-42, as is the inversion and reformulation of vv. 861-62 and inversion of 863-64 in order to avoid a sequence of four successive lines in *–ant*.

845 ABD have ‘Las fet (B fait) il voir dist (D dit) le devin’, adopted by TS-T (following Hilka) on the grounds that all other passages of direct speech in our poem are either preceded by a line containing *dit / dist* or begin with a line containing *fait il / ele*. It should be noted, however, that v. 844 already contains both *fait* and *dist*, while v. 845 also contains *dist*, which would make either of these techniques extremely clumsy here. As ABD omit vv. 843-44, the *x* scribe could use a more conventionally emotive introductory formula without risk of repetition.

848 ABD have ‘Que (D Dont) jen (B gen) pert joie et ma jovente (D jonesce)’, adopted by Hilka.

851 I follow Hilka and P-S in transcribing ‘ditant’ rather than ‘detant’ (TS-T and Baumgartner).

864 TS-T adopt AB ‘et sai (= s’ai) ce que je (B ge) vueil’). I follow P-S and Baumgartner in seeing C ‘sa’ as another example of characteristic Picard reduction of a diphthong (= *sai*) and read this line as a *reprise* of v. 862 rather than an anticipation of v. 866. The AB reading can be explained in terms of the re-ordering of lines in *x* (see note to 841), which results in v. 864 appearing immediately before v. 862: without some modification, the sequence *or / si ne sai je que* + verb of wanting would have featured in two successive lines. D ‘et faiz ce que je veil’ is an alternative modification that supports the hypothesis of scribal intervention in the *x* MSS.

891-92 Not in ABD, which also have a different version of vv. 893-94: ‘Il mest avis quil nont poeir / Pueent il rien nenil por voir’ (D). TS-T’s explanation is entirely plausible: the *x* scribe miscopied ‘Nus deus’ as *uns d(i)eus* in v. 890, and was then forced to omit the following couplet with its plural verbs, and to modify v. 893, which is syntactically linked to v. 892 in C; this modification in turn required a change of rhyme word in v. 894.

911 From here to v. 985 there is considerable variation between C and ABD, which effectively present two different versions of the remainder of Narcisus’s speech and Dané’s return. The fact that B also includes three passages (of six, four and two lines respectively) which do not feature in any of the other MSS suggests that this final section of the poem may have been a prime target for scribes seeking to ‘improve’ the original in different ways. The majority of the differences between ABD and C involve lines that appear in the latter but not in the former. Given the general tendency of *x*, noted above, to omit lines where the balance of probability is in favour of C representing the original reading, I follow previous editors in presenting the text of C with minor emendations. A summary of the differences between the MSS is as follows:

911-12	Not in ABD.
921-22	AB ‘Et (B Qui) si me maine a (B <i>om.</i>) grant dangier / Et si (B ge) ne fine de proier’. D ‘Qui si me meine sanz dangier / Ne ele ne me veut aidier’.
923-24	Not in AB; D has ‘Et sachiez sautrement ne puet’ in v. 923.
929-30	Not in D.
946	In ABD vv. 963-64 appear after v. 946; B then adds ‘Bien doi estre maleureus / Quant ge onques vi ses .ii. elz / Honi soit lore que la vi / Quar en la fin en sui trahi / Se ne leusse onques veue / Ma beaute nen fust esmeue’.
955-58	Not in AD; B ‘Cele tres bele criature / Que si forment i met ma cure / Se la veoie orendroit / Jamais mon cuer douloir navroit’.
969-70	AB ‘La pucele par (B tres) devant lui / Qui mout ot souffert grant anui’; D ‘La pucele quil desiroit / Qui par la forest le queroit’.
971-74	Not in ABD.
977-78	Not in ABD.
984	B adds ‘Iluec sesta et ne dit mot / Tel doulor a parler ne pot’ after v. 984.

920-21 There is evidence of a lacuna after v. 920 in C. The initial ‘Proier’ in v. 921 looks as though it should be a *reprise* of a form of the same verb in the previous line or

couplet (cf. vv. 256-57, 288-89, 918-19). It would be possible to emend by incorporating vv. 921-22 from AB (see above); however, this would produce an uncharacteristic sequence of four lines on the same *-ier* rhyme, which suggests that the couplet omitted by the scribe of C was probably not identical to that found in AB. TS-T put forward an argument for seeing C as complete, but the evidence of D supports their final hypothesis that vv. 921-22 in ABD represent a reworking of an original couplet containing the verb *proier* which some scribes found obscure. In order to account for D according to their stemma, however, we have to assume that lines similar to both AB 921-22 and C 921-24 featured in *x*. This is not entirely implausible, as the original of D appears to have featured four lines on the same rhyme after v. 968. The scribe of D would then have omitted AB 922 and C 921, either to remove the sequence of four lines in *-ier* or because he was working from a damaged exemplar (D 919-20 ‘Je ne men puis mie sevrer / Ne de ceste amour conseurter’ have clearly been rewritten). The *y* scribe would have resolved the problem of the repeated rhyme by omitting C 921-24.

963-64 Following ABD and Hilka, TS-T place these lines after our v. 946, claiming that ‘ils n’ont rien à faire à la fin du discours de Narcisse’ (p. 156). It could be argued, however, that they form a very fitting conclusion to the lament: having realised that Dané represents his only hope, Narcisus naturally reflects once again on the way he treated her earlier. If the C scribe had omitted this couplet earlier by copying the initial ‘Biaus’ of v. 947 instead of the ‘Bien’ of v. 963, and had subsequently become aware of his error, it is not obvious why he should have felt compelled to re-insert the lines later rather than omit them altogether.

968 C ‘sa ja veue’ makes little sense here, whereas ABD ‘si a veue’ is entirely consistent with the context. The C scribe appears to have written the *s* of *si* and then copied the sequence *aia* from the preceding line.

995 I follow Hilka and TS-T in adopting the ABD reading here. TS-T conclude that C ‘est sa mort’ derives from scribal confusion over the grammatical status of *mort*. It is equally possible that it is the result of a very common copying error: the scribe may have read *la* as *sa*, and assumed that the word *est* had been omitted from his exemplar.

1001 P-S adopt the AB reading ‘Vers lui se trait’, but this produces a slightly awkward repetition of *se trait* at the end of two successive hemistiches. If AB are representative of *x* at this point, then D ‘Ele lestraint par tel air’ may represent an attempt to correct that awkwardness. I follow TS-T in emending *se* to *le*, given that confusion of initial *s* and *l* is so common amongst scribes. The AB reading could well be the result of scribal emendation of an exemplar that already contained the error found in C.

1005-06 ABC all apply the moral of the story exclusively to lovers, although AB present it in a slightly different form: ‘Or se gart bien chascun amant / Quil ne muire par tel samblant’. D ‘Or si gardent tuit autre gent’ is a curious attempt to widen its applicability. These lines may be a deliberate echo of the *senblant – amant* rhyme at the end of *Piramus et Tisbé* (vv. 907-08).

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