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THE ART OF COURTLY LOVE

By Andreas Capellanus

WITH INTRODUCTION,
TRANSLATION, AND NOTES BY
JOHN JAY PARRY

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PREFACE

THIS TRANSLATION was originally undertaken, some fifteen years ago, for the use of students in a course in medieval literature in translation. It is now published in the hope that it may prove useful to others who desire some acquaintance with one of the significant books of the Middle Ages, but who are unable to read the medieval Latin in which it is written. My primary aim has been to preserve the ideas of Andreas, and to keep close to what he says, even though it has been necessary, at times, to use somewhat awkward English in doing so. My secondary aim has been to reproduce something of his style. This is in general colloquial, but it is colored with Biblical expressions, and at times it becomes almost pompous when he tries to reproduce the speech of the upper classes. In one respect, however, it seemed best not to follow him. Andreas is very fond of loose, straggling sentences strung together with "and," "but," "for," "so," or some similar connective. Medieval rhetoric was much more tolerant of such sentences than modern readers are, but Andreas seems to go beyond the practice of his contemporaries. In my translation such sentences have been broken up into shorter, more manageable units.

The basis of the translation is Trojel's edition of the text; Pagès's reprint is convenient to use, but it has no independent authority. For the Biblical quotations I have followed the Douay-Rheims translation, since this represents most closely the version that was in use in the time of Andreas. Sometimes the Vulgate references differ materially from those of the King James version. In such cases I have added in parentheses references to the latter text. The translations from classical and medieval authors are mostly my own, although I have checked them by other translations when these were accessible. Such parallel passages are cited to throw light upon the text of Andreas, but without any attempt to assert that he made use of them.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I AM greatly impelled by the continual urging of my love for you, my revered friend Walter,[1] to make known by word of mouth and to teach you by my writings the way in which a state of love between two lovers may be kept unharmed and likewise how those who do not love may get rid of the darts of Venus that are fixed in their hearts. You tell me that you are a new recruit of Love, and, having recently been wounded by an arrow of his, you do not know how to manage your horse's reins properly and you cannot find any cure for yourself. How serious this is and how it troubles my soul no words of mine can make clear to you. For I know, having learned from experience, that it does not do the man who owes obedience to Venus's service any good to give careful thought to anything except how he may always be doing something that will entangle him more firmly in his chains; he thinks he has nothing good except what may wholly please his love. Therefore, although it does not seem expedient to devote oneself to things of this kind or fitting for any prudent man to engage in this kind of hunting, nevertheless, because of the affection I have for you I can by no means refuse your request; because I know clearer than day that after you have learned the art of love your progress in it will be more cautious, in so far as I can I shall comply with your desire.

[1] This Walter has never been satisfactorily identified. Andreas tells us that he is a young man of the highest nobility, but he may be only a lay figure created to give life to the book. Trojel, who believes that he was a real person, points out (*Middelalderens Elskovshoffer*, pp. 105 ff.) that the title "venerandus" was applied only to bishops and to members of the French royal family, and Walter can hardly have been a bishop. The colophon of one manuscript states that he was "nepos" (nephew?) of the king of France. The only Walter (Gautier) found in the royal family at this time was a grandson of Pierre de Courtenai and therefore grandnephew of King Louis VII (Trojel, *op. cit.*, genealogical tables), but he was apparently too young to have been addressed by Andreas. Trojel believed that the person addressed was Gaucher III of Châtillon, grandson of Count Robert I of Dreux (see p. 74), and therefore another grandnephew of King Louis. But Gaston Paris (*Journal des Savants*, 1888, p. 673) objected on the ground that Gautier and Gaucher were different names, and in his edition of Andreas, Trojel seems to have withdrawn his suggestion.

BOOK ONE

Introduction to the Treatise on Love

WE MUST first consider what love is, whence it gets its name, what the effect of love is, between what persons love may exist, how it may be acquired, retained, increased, decreased, and ended, what are the signs that one's love is returned, and what one of the lovers ought to do if the other is unfaithful.

CHAPTER I. WHAT LOVE IS

Love is a certain inborn suffering derived from the sight of and excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex, which causes each one to wish above all things the embraces of the other and by common desire to carry out all of love's precepts in the other's embrace.

That love is suffering is easy to see, for before the love becomes equally balanced on both sides there is no torment greater, since the lover is always in fear that his love may not gain its desire and that he is wasting his efforts. He fears, too, that rumors of it may get abroad, and he fears everything that might harm it in any way, for before things are perfected a slight disturbance often spoils them. If he is a poor man, he also fears that the woman may scorn his poverty; if he is ugly, he fears that she may despise his lack of beauty or may give her love to a more handsome man; if he is rich, he fears that his parsimony in the past may stand in his way. To tell the truth, no one can number the fears of one single lover.[2] This kind of love, then, is a suffering which is felt by only one of the persons and may be called "single love." But even after both are in love the fears that arise are

[2] Ovid *Art of Love* II. 517 ff.

just as great, for each of the lovers fears that what he has acquired with so much effort may be lost through the effort of someone else, which is certainly much worse for a man than if, having no hope, he sees that his efforts are accomplishing nothing, for it is worse to lose the things you are seeking than to be deprived of a gain you merely hope for. The lover fears, too, that he may offend his loved one in some way; indeed he fears so many things that it would be difficult to tell them.

That this suffering is inborn I shall show you clearly, because if you will look at the truth and distinguish carefully you will see that it does not arise out of any action; only from the reflection of the mind upon what it sees does this suffering come. For when a man sees some woman fit for love and shaped according to his taste, he begins at once to lust after her in his heart; [3] then the more he thinks about her the more he burns with love, until he comes to a fuller meditation. Presently he begins to think about the fashioning of the woman and to differentiate her limbs, to think about what she does, and to pry into the secrets of her body, and he desires to put each part of it to the fullest use.[4] Then after he has come to this complete meditation, love cannot hold the reins, but he proceeds at once to action; straightway he strives to get a helper and to find an intermediary. He begins to plan how he may find favor with her, and he begins to seek a place and a time opportune for talking; he looks upon a brief hour as a very long year, because he cannot do anything fast enough to suit his eager mind. It is well known that many things happen to him in this manner. This inborn suffering comes, therefore, from seeing and meditating. Not every kind of meditation can be the cause of love, an excessive one is required; for a restrained thought does not, as a rule, return to the mind, and so love cannot arise from it.

[3] Compare Paul the Deacon *Exhortation to Henry, Count of Forum Julii:* "Do not let the beauty of a body seduce you; do not let death enter into your soul through the windows of your eyes."

[4] Compare Ovid *Metamorphoses* VI. 490–93.

CHAPTER II. BETWEEN WHAT PERSONS LOVE MAY EXIST

Now, in love you should note first of all that love cannot exist except between persons of opposite sexes. Between two men or two women love can find no place, for we see that two persons of the same sex are not at all fitted for giving each other the exchanges of love or for practicing the acts natural to it. Whatever nature forbids, love is ashamed to accept.

Every attempt of a lover tends toward the enjoyment of the embraces of her whom he loves; he thinks about it continually, for he hopes that with her he may fulfill all the mandates of love—that is, those things which we find in treatises on the subject. Therefore in the sight of a lover nothing can be compared to the act of love, and a true lover would rather be deprived of all his money and of everything that the human mind can imagine as indispensable to life rather than be without love, either hoped for or attained. For what under heaven can a man possess or own for which he would undergo so many perils as we continually see lovers submit to of their own free will? We see them despise death and fear no threats, scatter their wealth abroad and come to great poverty. Yet a wise lover does not throw away wealth as a prodigal spender usually does, but he plans his expenditures from the beginning in accordance with the size of his patrimony; for when a man comes to poverty and want he begins to go along with his face downcast and to be tortured by many thoughts, and all joyousness leaves him. And when that goes, melancholy comes straightway to take its place, and wrath claims a place in him; so he begins to act in a changed manner toward his beloved and to appear frightful to her, and the things that cause love to increase begin to fail. Therefore love begins to grow less, for love is always either decreasing or increasing. I know from my own experience that when poverty comes in, the things that nourished love begin to leave, because "poverty has nothing with which to feed its love." [5]

[5] Ovid *The Cure for Love*, l. 749.

But I do not tell you this, my friend, with the idea of indicating by what I say that you should follow avarice, which, as all agree, cannot remain in the same dwelling with love, but to show you that you should by all means avoid prodigality and should embrace generosity with both arms. Note, too, that nothing which a lover gets from his beloved is pleasing unless she gives it of her own free will.

CHAPTER III. WHERE LOVE GETS ITS NAME

Love gets its name (*amor*) from the word for hook (*amus*), which means "to capture" or "to be captured," [6] for he who is in love is captured in the chains of desire and wishes to capture someone else with his hook. Just as a skillful fisherman tries to attract fishes by his bait and to capture them on his crooked hook, so the man who is a captive of love tries to attract another person by his allurements and exerts all his efforts to unite two different hearts with an intangible bond, or if they are already united he tries to keep them so forever.

CHAPTER IV. WHAT THE EFFECT OF LOVE IS

Now it is the effect of love that a true lover cannot be degraded with any avarice. Love causes a rough and uncouth man to be distinguished for his handsomeness; it can endow a man even of the humblest birth with nobility of character; it blesses the proud with humility; and the man in love becomes accustomed to performing many services gracefully for everyone. O what a wonderful thing is love, which makes a man shine with so many virtues and teaches everyone, no matter who he is, so many good traits of character! There is another thing about love that we should not praise in few words: it adorns a man, so to speak, with the virtue of chastity, because he who shines with the light of one love can hardly think of embracing another woman, even a

[6] Isidore of Seville says (*Etymologies* x. i. 5), "A friend (*amicus*) is so called from the word for hook (*hamus*), that is, a shackle of affection; therefore they are also called hooks because they hold."

beautiful one. For when he thinks deeply of his beloved the sight of any other woman seems to his mind rough and rude.

I wish you therefore to keep always in mind, Walter my friend, that if love were so fair as always to bring his sailors into the quiet port after they had been soaked by many tempests, I would bind myself to serve him forever. But because he is in the habit of carrying an unjust weight in his hand, I do not have full confidence in him any more than I do in a judge whom men suspect. And so for the present I refuse to submit to his judgment, because "he often leaves his sailors in the mighty waves." But why love, at times, does not use fair weights I shall show you more fully elsewhere in this treatise.[7]

CHAPTER V. WHAT PERSONS ARE FIT FOR LOVE

We must now see what persons are fit to bear the arms of love. You should know that everyone of sound mind who is capable of doing the work of Venus may be wounded by one of Love's arrows unless prevented by age, or blindness, or excess of passion. Age is a bar, because after the sixtieth year in a man and the fiftieth in a woman, although one may have intercourse his passion cannot develop into love; because at that age the natural heat begins to lose its force, and the natural moisture is greatly increased, which leads a man into various difficulties and troubles him with various ailments, and there are no consolations in the world for him except food and drink. Similarly, a girl under the age of twelve and a boy before the fourteenth year do not serve in love's army.[8] However, I say and insist that before his eighteenth year a man cannot be a true lover, because up to that age he is overcome with embarrassment over any little thing, which not only interferes with the perfecting of love, but even destroys it if it is well perfected. But we find another even more powerful reason, which is that before this age a man has no constancy, but is changeable in every way, for such a tender

[7] See pp. 47, 50.

[8] "Young men before they are fourteen years old, and girls before they are twelve, may not, according to the laws, enter into marriage." Hugo of St. Victor *Summa sententiarum* VII. XV.

age cannot think about the mysteries of love's realm. Why love should kindle in a woman at an earlier age than in a man I shall perhaps show you elsewhere.

Blindness is a bar to love, because a blind man cannot see anything upon which his mind can reflect immoderately, and so love cannot arise in him, as I have already fully shown. But I admit that this is true only of the acquiring of love, for I do not deny that a love which a man acquires before his blindness may last after he becomes blind.

An excess of passion is a bar to love, because there are men who are slaves to such passionate desire that they cannot be held in the bonds of love—men who, after they have thought long about some woman or even enjoyed her, when they see another woman straightway desire her embraces, and they forget about the services they have received from their first love and they feel no gratitude for them. Men of this kind lust after every woman they see; their love is like that of a shameless dog. They should rather, I believe, be compared to asses, for they are moved only by that low nature which shows that men are on the level of the other animals rather than by that true nature which sets us apart from all the other animals by the difference of reason. Of such lovers I shall speak elsewhere.

CHAPTER VI. IN WHAT MANNER LOVE MAY BE ACQUIRED, AND IN HOW MANY WAYS

It remains next to be seen in what ways love may be acquired. The teaching of some people is said to be that there are five means by which it may be acquired: a beautiful figure, excellence of character, extreme readiness of speech, great wealth, and the readiness with which one grants that which is sought. But we hold that love may be acquired only by the first three, and we think that the last two ought to be banished completely from Love's court,[9] as I shall show you when I come to the proper place in my system.

[9] "There are also other less creditable [reasons for marriage] such as the good looks of the man or the woman which often drive those whose minds are inflamed by love to enter into marriage so that they may carry out their desires. The love of property or of

A beautiful figure wins love with very little effort, especially when the lover who is sought is simple, for a simple lover thinks that there is nothing to look for in one's beloved besides a beautiful figure and face and a body well cared for. I do not particularly blame the love of such people, but neither do I have much approval for it, because love between uncautious and unskilled lovers cannot long be concealed, and so from the first it fails to increase. For when love is revealed, it does not help the lover's worth, but brands his reputation with evil rumors and often causes him grief. Love between such lovers seldom lasts; but if sometimes it should endure it cannot indulge in its former solaces, because when the girl's chaperone hears the rumors, she becomes suspicious and watches her more carefully and gives her no opportunities to talk, and it makes the man's relatives more careful and watchful, and so serious unfriendliness arises. In such cases, when love cannot have its solaces, it increases beyond all measure and drives the lovers to lamenting their terrible torments, because "we strive for what is forbidden and always want what is denied us." [10]

A wise woman will therefore seek as a lover a man of praiseworthy character—not one who anoints himself all over like a woman or makes a rite of the care of the body, for it does not go with a masculine figure to adorn oneself in womanly fashion or to be devoted to the care of the body. It was people like this the admirable Ovid meant when he said,

> Let young men who are decked out like women stay far away from me,
> A manly form wants to be cared for within moderate limits.[11]

Likewise, if you see a woman too heavily rouged you will not be taken in by her beauty unless you have already discovered that she is good company besides, since a woman who puts all her reliance on her rouge usually doesn't have any particular gifts of character. As I said about men, so with women—I believe you should not seek for beauty so much as for excellence of character. Be careful therefore, Walter, not

riches is a frequent cause, and so are certain other things which any one who will look carefully can notice for himself." Hugo of St. Victor, *op. cit.*, VII. i.

[10] Ovid *Amours* III. iv. 17.

[11] Ovid *Heroides* IV. 75–76.

to be taken in by the empty beauty of women, because a woman is apt to be so clever and such a ready talker that after you have begun to enjoy the gifts you get from her you will not find it easy to escape loving her. A person of good character draws the love of another person of the same kind, for a well-instructed lover, man or woman, does not reject an ugly lover if the character within is good. A man who proves to be honorable and prudent cannot easily go astray in love's path or cause distress to his beloved. If a wise woman selects as her lover a wise man, she can very easily keep her love hidden forever; she can teach a wise lover to be even wiser, and if he isn't so wise she can restrain him and make him careful. A woman, like a man, should not seek for beauty or care of the person or high birth, for "beauty never pleases if it lacks goodness," and it is excellence of character alone which blesses a man with true nobility and makes him flourish in ruddy beauty. For since all of us human beings are derived originally from the same stock and all naturally claim the same ancestor, it was not beauty or care of the body or even abundance of possessions, but excellence of character alone which first made a distinction of nobility among men and led to the difference of class.[12] Many there are, however, who trace their descent from these same first nobles, but have degenerated and gone in the other direction. The converse of this proposition is likewise true.

Character alone, then, is worthy of the crown of love. Many times fluency of speech will incline to love the hearts of those who do not love, for an elaborate line of talk on the part of the lover usually sets love's arrows a-flying and creates a presumption in favor of the excellent character of the speaker. How this may be I shall try to show you as briefly as I can.

To this end I shall first explain to you that one woman belongs to the middle class, a second to the simple nobility, and a third to the higher nobility.[13] So it is with men: one is of the middle class, another of the

[12] "All men descend from the same original stock; no one is better born than another, except in so far as his disposition is nobler and better suited for the performance of good actions." Seneca *Benefits* III. xxviii.

[13] The ranks designated by *plebeia*, *nobilis*, and *nobilior* apparently correspond to

know that her feeling for the first lover is dead and cannot be revived, she may keep the second lover. For to say that she should, absolutely, return to the first one, unless she does it under the persuasion of love's remorse, would be a shameful thing to say and would defeat the precept of Love. Nor can that rule you quoted—that no one should be deprived of his love without some fault on his part—stand in the way, because the first lover, who finds himself deprived of his love without any fault of his, cites it in his own defense. I have learned from people experienced in the law of Love that the rule we have just mentioned must be understood when it says 'without any fault of his' as meaning also 'or without any other good reason.' Therefore it cannot rightly follow, as you said it did, that a woman may spurn the love of one man and accept that of another if she is driven to do so by love's remorse; but if any man attempts to undermine her good faith, she must try to turn him away politely, and if he is too insistent she must finally tell him that she is already in love with someone else, that she ought not incline her heart to his words or remember what he tells her, or keep his image in her mind, or even think about him very often lest because women are weak she might open the way for some spark of love to enter and might direct her mind toward him. For if a woman does not begin to fall in love by thinking about a man continually and immoderately or by imagining the acts of delight, she will never care to seek a new love with any man."

The woman says: "I am very well pleased with your answers on both questions, because they seem to be supported by all the wisdom of erudition. Now, to keep anybody from having any reason to suspect evil of us because we have been talking so long, it seems to me proper that our discussion should end here."

The man says: "What you say seems to me very proper, but since I am yielding to you in this, I ask you to be so good as to answer me one question first: that is, whether a lover who comes to a second woman, but with no intention of loving her or of forgetting his affection for

the first one, ought to be punished by losing the love he has. It seems to me that no matter what one of the lovers does, if his feeling of love is not thereby lessened his fellow-lover ought to endure it patiently and by her rebukes teach him better."

The woman says: "I shall not be too eager with my answer to you on this point, but I wonder how your good sense can have any doubt about it, since a rule of Love clearly teaches us that a lover is bound to keep himself chaste for his beloved. I have therefore reason to infer, from a logical interpretation of this, that in the present case the lover should be punished by the loss of his love; I think it is sufficient that this conduct is forbidden by Love's mandate. However I believe that his beloved may, if she wishes, pardon the excesses of the offender."

The man says: "Your interpretation seems to me very severe, but I am afraid to oppose so great an authority. But there is still another doubt that disturbs my soul—that is, whether a lover should be punished by the loss of his love if he goes to another woman with no feeling of love for her and he fails to accomplish his desire. For it seems that he ought not be so severely punished for so slight an offense, when the other lover has sustained no injury."

The woman says: "This too deserves to be condemned by the same opinion, unless spontaneous repentance for his offense and every proof of the good faith of the offender should happen to soften the heart of his beloved. It does not seem to be in accordance with Love's precept to keep oneself chaste for a lover whose shameless attempt betrays a shameless mind."

CHAPTER VII. THE LOVE OF THE CLERGY

Now, since in the preceding sections we have dealt with three classes of men: namely, commoners, simple nobility, and the higher nobility, and we recall mentioning at the beginning of the discussion the noblest class of all—that is, the clergy—let us speak briefly concerning their

love affairs and see where the men of this fourth class get their nobility. Now the clerk is considered to be of the most noble class by virtue of his sacred calling, a nobility which we agree comes from God's bosom and is granted to him by the Divine Will, as God tells us Himself when he says, "He that toucheth you toucheth me," and, "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of my eye." [84] But so far as this nobility goes, a clerk cannot look for love, for on the strength of it he ought not devote himself to the works of love but is bound to renounce absolutely all the delights of the flesh and to keep himself free from all bodily filth, unspotted for the Lord whose service, according to our belief, he has taken upon him. A clerk's nobility, therefore, is not derived from his ancestors, nor can the secular power deprive him of it, but by God's grace alone, as we know, is it granted, and by His gift is it given, and by God alone may the privileges of this kind of nobility be annulled if His commands are violated. So it is very clear that a clerk, so far as concerns the distinction of this clerical nobility, cannot love, and thus it would be improper for me to treat of his love according to the dignity of this rank and the nobility of the order. A clerk ought therefore to be a stranger to every act of love and to put aside all uncleanness of body, or he will deserve to be deprived of this special nobility granted him by God. But since hardly anyone ever lives without carnal sin, and since the life of the clergy is, because of the continual idleness and the great abundance of food, naturally more liable to temptations of the body than that of any other men, if any clerk should wish to enter into the lists of Love let him speak and apply himself to Love's service in accordance with the rank or standing of his parents, as we have already fully explained in regard to the different ranks of men.

CHAPTER VIII. THE LOVE OF NUNS

You may be interested enough to ask what we have to say regarding the love of nuns. What we say is that their solaces must be absolutely

[84] Zach. 2:8.

avoided just as though they were a pestilence of the soul, because from them comes the great wrath of our Heavenly Father and the civil authorities are greatly stirred up and threaten the most severe punishments, and by all of this we become infamous among men and our good reputation is destroyed. Even Love's commandment warns us not to choose for our love any woman whom we may not properly seek to marry. And if anybody should think so little of himself and of both laws as to seek for the love of a nun, he would deserve to be despised by everybody and he ought to be avoided as an abominable beast. There is no reason to have any doubt about the faith of a man who for the sake of one act of momentary delight would not fear to subject himself to the death penalty and would have no shame about becoming a scandal to God and men. We should therefore condemn absolutely the love of nuns and reject their solaces just as though they carried the plague. We do not say this with the idea that one cannot love a nun, but because by such love body and soul are condemned to death. Therefore we do not want you to know any words that may be used to solicit them. For one time when we had a chance to speak to a certain nun we spoke so well on the art, not being ignorant of the art of soliciting nuns, that we forced her to assent to our desire; we were smitten with what we may call mental blindness, and wholly forgetting what was seemly (since "no lover ever sees what is seemly" [85] and also "Love does not see anything well, he sees everything with his blind eye") we straightway began to be violently attracted by her beauty and captured by her pleasant conversation. But in the meantime we realized the madness that was carrying us away, and with a great effort roused ourselves up from the deadly sleep. And although we consider ourselves very expert in the art of love and well instructed in its cure, we were barely able to avoid her pestilential snares and escape without contamination of the flesh. Be careful therefore, Walter, about seeking lonely places with nuns or looking for opportunities to talk with them, for if one of them should think that the place was suitable for wanton dalliance, she would have no hesitation in granting you what you desire

[85] Ovid *Heroides* IV. 154.

and preparing for you burning solaces, and you could hardly escape that worst of crimes, engaging in the work of Venus. For if the charm of such women forced us, who are experienced in every trick and esteemed for our knowledge of the art of love, to waver, how can your inexperienced youth prevent it? Therefore you should avoid a love of this kind, my friend.

CHAPTER IX. LOVE GOT WITH MONEY

Now let us see whether real love can be got with money or any other gift. Real love comes only from the affection of the heart and is granted out of pure grace and genuine liberality, and this most precious gift of love cannot be paid for at any set price or be cheapened by a matter of money. If any woman is so possessed with a feeling of avarice as to give herself to a lover for the sake of pay, let no one consider her a lover, but rather a counterfeiter of love, who ought to join those shameful women in the brothel. Indeed the wantonness of such women is more polluted than the passion of harlots who ply their trade openly, for they do what one expects them to, and they deceive no one since their intentions are perfectly obvious. But those others who pretend to be fine ladies of the very best breeding force men to languish for love of them, and under the false veil of affection they gleefully rob of all their wealth those who have been smitten by Cupid's arrow. Men are deceived by their fallacious looks, outwitted by their crafty beckonings, and impelled by their clever and deceitful demands; they are kept busy giving them as many good things as they can, and they get more pleasure out of what they give away than from what they keep for their own use. These women have all sorts of ways of asking for things, and so long as they see that a man can respond to their greedy desire for gifts, they say that he is their adored lover, and they never cease to drain away his property or ruin him by their constant demands. But when his substance is gone and his patrimony is exhausted they despise and hate him and cast him aside like an unproductive bee, and then they

begin to appear in their real colors. Any man who would seek for the love of women like these ought to be classed with shameless dogs and deserves no help from anybody. It ought therefore to be clear to everyone that the love which seeks for rewards should not be called love by anybody, but rather shameful harlotry and greedy wantonness, which no man's property can satisfy, nor can anybody's generosity mitigate it in the least by giving these women money. Anyone who has a firm manly character ought to exert himself to keep away from the allurements of women like these and to avoid their dangerous frauds. For a woman who is really in love always rejects and hates gifts from her lover, and devotes her efforts to increasing his wealth so that he may always have something he can give away and thereby increase his good name; she does not expect anything from him except the sweet solaces of the flesh and that her fame may increase among all men because he praises her. For a woman thinks that anything that her lover gives to others for her sake and for the sake of acquiring praise benefits her. Even though a woman is in need of a great many things, if she is really in love she thinks it a very serious thing to lessen her lover's property; but the lover, for his part, ought never to permit her to suffer for lack of anything if he can be of any assistance. It is a great disgrace for a lover to allow his beloved to be in need of anything when he himself has plenty. It is never held to the discredit of a woman if in a time of urgent need she accepts gifts from her lover and takes full advantage of his generosity. But when a woman has plenty of money it is enough that for her sake her lover gives gifts to others so far as is seemly.

A woman who you know desires money in return for her love should be looked upon as a deadly enemy, and you should be careful to avoid her like a venomous animal that strikes with its tail and fawns with its mouth. If you are so driven by wantonness of the body that you want to seek paid women, it would be better for you to do business with the women who openly loiter in the brothels and sell their bodies for a small price than to be robbed of your property, under the fiction of

love, by some woman who pretends to be a lady, but acts like a strumpet. In such a business he is said to drive the best bargain who gets what he wants at the lowest price, and you get a thing more cheaply when it is offered for sale than when the buyer asks the other to sell. Alas, we grieve because we see the honorable name of ladies profaned by meretricious actions! Therefore let all worthy ladies take up arms when they see their rights usurped by unworthy women, and let them be zealous to avenge such infamous conduct, lest such a ruinous example spread further through the world.

Therefore do not let the distinguished but false outward show of a woman deceive you, or the ancestry of a degenerate woman, whose first enticements are sweeter than any honey, but whose last prove more bitter than gall or wormwood.[86] Whenever you notice a woman reminding you how generous someone else was in showering gifts upon his beloved, or hear her praise someone else's jewelry, or complain that some of her things have been pawned, or, under some pretext or other, ask for a piece of jewelry,[87] you must take good care to guard yourself against her wiles, for she doesn't want to be loved, but to draw money out of you. If nothing else could convince you of the truth of this, the rule of Love which says that love and avarice cannot dwell in the same abode would prove it. For if love does not come from the pure pleasure of giving and is not given without payment, it is not love, but a lying and profane imitation of it.

But although such an agreeable love can rarely be found, because the craving for money debases many women, you should strive with all your might to find a loved one whose faithfulness to you will not be changed if great poverty or misfortune should come upon you. For if you fall in love with a woman who is deceitful and desirous of being made rich, you can never gain her love, but she will deceive you by her foxy tricks; because when for the sake of what she can get out of you she makes you false signs of love, she will be giving you only a breath of empty air, while she leads you on to give her presents. And

[86] Prov. 5: 3–4.

[87] Compare with Ovid's *Art of Love* I. 417 ff.

then your dearest possession will seem very little to give in return for one of those expensive, deceitful nods, and so, taken in by a clever woman, you will be forced to sail to the coast of poverty and will be in all respects an object of contempt. All men throughout the world agree that there is nothing so contemptible as for a man to waste his substance on the work of the flesh and the solace of Venus, and what sort of love it is that is granted for a price can be very clear to you from this book. Therefore, my friend, you should always follow this maxim: whenever you have reason to believe that a woman is interested in piling up the coin, be careful to avoid her in the very beginning and not to involve yourself at all in her snares. For if you try to fall in with what she says in order to find out what her real intention is, you will find yourself foiled by your own plan, because no amount of searching will reveal how she feels and what she means to do until the leech is full of blood and leaves you only half alive with all the blood of your wealth drained off.[88] A wise man's best efforts can hardly find out what is beneath the guile of a deceitful lady-love, for she knows how to color her frauds by so many arts and with so much cleverness that the faithful lover is rarely clever enough to see through them. The ability of a greedy woman is greater than that of the Ancient Enemy was when by his shrewdness he cleverly perverted the mind of our first parent. Therefore you should use all your cleverness to see that you are not tripped up by the snares of such a woman, because a woman of that kind does not want to love, but to revel in your wealth. If we wanted to devote ourselves to the reform of such women and to call to mind their lives and their deeds, our span of life would be spent before there was any lack in the abundance of material to write about. We do not say these things with the desire of running down honorable women, but because we want to expose the lives of those who do not blush to bring disgrace upon the military service of a host of honorable women by the way they act, and to profane this service under the pretense of love. God forbid that we should ever

[88] Horace *Art of Poetry*, l. 476.

wish, or be able, to cast a slur upon the deeds of honorable women, or to run them down in the least in this little book of ours, because it is through them that all the world is induced to do good deeds, the rich increase in wealth, abundant provision is made for the needs of the poor, and the avaricious are brought back again to the path of rectitude and learn the way of generosity. Indeed, since women are able to confer praise, they give the occasion for doing all the good things that are done in the world. Now, Walter, if by continual reading you learn those things which we are telling you with such splendid brevity, it is not likely that you will be overreached by the tricks of a deceitful woman.

CHAPTER X. THE EASY ATTAINMENT OF ONE'S OBJECT

Let us see next whether if one attains one's object easily it may lead to love. First we must see what we mean by attaining it easily. We may say it is easily attained when a woman, under the impulse of carnal passion, readily gives herself to a man who asks her and will easily do the same to another who asks, feeling no trace of love when the deed is done, but accepting no pay for it. Do not fall into the toils of such a woman, because you cannot win her love no matter how hard you try. This kind of woman has so much of the spirit of Venus in her that she cannot confine herself to the love of any one man, but she desires to sate her lust with many. Therefore it is idle for you to seek her love unless you know that you are so potent at Venus's trade that you can satisfy her; that would be harder for you to do than to dry up the oceans, so we think that there is good reason for you to have nothing to do with her love. Although you may enjoy her embraces as fully as you wish, her solaces will cause you intolerable pain and will give rise to many woes for you. You can never know, until you have been through it, how bitter will be your grief when, as lovers will, you want to believe that you are the only one to enjoy her solaces, but you know that she has gratified the passion of another man and made you

share her with him. From what we have said it should be perfectly clear to you that where you find it easy to attain your desire you may be sure there is no love; for when a woman is so passionate that she cannot confine herself to one man, but desires to gratify the passion of many, there love can find no place at all. For true love joins the hearts of two persons with so great a feeling of delight that they cannot desire to embrace anybody else; on the contrary they take care to avoid the solaces of everybody else as though they were horrible things, and they keep themselves for each other. This readiness to grant requests is, we say, the same thing in women as overvoluptuousness in men—a thing which all agree should be a total stranger in the court of Love. For he who is so tormented by carnal passion that he cannot embrace anyone in heart-felt love, but basely lusts after every woman he sees, is not called a lover but a counterfeiter of love and a pretender, and he is lower than a shameless dog. Indeed the man who is so wanton that he cannot confine himself to the love of one woman deserves to be considered an impetuous ass. It will therefore be clear to you that you are bound to avoid an overabundance of passion and that you ought not to seek the love of a woman who you know will grant easily what you seek.

CHAPTER XI. THE LOVE OF PEASANTS

But lest you should consider that what we have already said about the love of the middle class applies also to farmers, we will add a little about their love. We say that it rarely happens that we find farmers serving in Love's court, but naturally, like a horse or a mule,[89] they give themselves up to the work of Venus, as nature's urging teaches them to do. For a farmer hard labor and the uninterrupted solaces of plough and mattock are sufficient. And even if it should happen at times, though rarely, that contrary to their nature they are stirred up by Cupid's arrows, it is not expedient that they should be instructed

[89] Tob. 6: 17.

in the theory of love, lest while they are devoting themselves to conduct which is not natural to them the kindly farms which are usually made fruitful by their efforts may through lack of cultivation prove useless to us. And if you should, by some chance, fall in love with some of their women, be careful to puff them up with lots of praise and then, when you find a convenient place, do not hesitate to take what you seek and to embrace them by force. For you can hardly soften their outward inflexibility so far that they will grant you their embraces quietly or permit you to have the solaces you desire unless first you use a little compulsion as a convenient cure for their shyness. We do not say these things, however, because we want to persuade you to love such women, but only so that, if through lack of caution you should be driven to love them, you may know, in brief compass, what to do.

CHAPTER XII. THE LOVE OF PROSTITUTES

Now in case anybody should ask how we feel about the love of prostitutes we say that they are all to be shunned absolutely, because it is most shameful to have dealings with them, and with them one almost always falls into the sin of lewdness. Besides, a prostitute seldom gives herself to anyone until she has been given a present that pleases her. Even if it should happen once in a while that a woman of this kind does fall in love, all agree that her love is harmful to men, because all wise men frown upon having familiar intercourse with prostitutes, and to do so spoils anybody's good name. Therefore we have no desire to explain to you the way to gain their love, because whatever the feeling that makes them give themselves to a suitor they always do so without much urging, so you don't need to ask for instructions on this point.

BOOK TWO

How Love May Be Retained

CHAPTER I. HOW LOVE, WHEN IT HAS BEEN ACQUIRED, MAY BE KEPT

Now since we have already said enough about acquiring love, it is not unfitting that we should next see and describe how this love may be retained after it has once been acquired. The man who wants to keep his love affair for a long time untroubled should above all things be careful not to let it be known to any outsider, but should keep it hidden from everybody; because when a number of people begin to get wind of such an affair, it ceases to develop naturally and even loses what progress it has already made. Furthermore a lover ought to appear to his beloved wise in every respect and restrained in his conduct, and he should do nothing disagreeable that might annoy her. Moreover every man is bound, in time of need, to come to the aid of his beloved, both by sympathizing with her in all her troubles and by acceding to all her reasonable desires. Even if he knows sometimes that what she wants is not so reasonable, he should be prepared to agree to it after he has asked her to reconsider. And if inadvertently he should do something improper that offends her, let him straightway confess with downcast face that he has done wrong, and let him give the excuse that he lost his temper or make some other suitable explanation that will fit the case. And every man ought to be sparing of praise of his beloved when he is among other men; he should not talk about her often or at great length, and he should not spend a great deal of time in places where she is. When he is with other men, if he meets her in a group of women, he should not try to communicate with her by signs, but

should treat her almost like a stranger, lest some person spying on their love might have opportunity to spread malicious gossip. Lovers should not even nod to each other unless they are sure that nobody is watching them. Every man should also wear things that his beloved likes and pay a reasonable amount of attention to his appearance—not too much because excessive care for one's looks is distasteful to everybody and leads people to despise the good looks that one has. If the lover is lavish in giving, that helps him retain a love he has acquired, for all lovers ought to despise all worldly riches and should give alms to those who have need of them. Nothing is considered more praiseworthy in a lover than to be known to be generous, and no matter how worthy a man may be otherwise, avarice degrades him, while many faults are excused if one has the virtue of liberality. Also, if the lover is one who is fitted to be a warrior, he should see to it that his courage is apparent to everybody, for it detracts very much from the good character of a man if he is timid in a fight. A lover should always offer his services and obedience freely to every lady, and he ought to root out all his pride and be very humble. He ought to give a good deal of attention to acting toward all in such fashion that no one may be sorry to call to mind his good deeds or have reason to censure anything he has done. Then, too, he must keep in mind the general rule that lovers must not neglect anything that good manners demand or good breeding suggests, but they should be very careful to do everything of this sort. Love may also be retained by indulging in the sweet and delightful solaces of the flesh, but only in such manner and in such number that they may never seem wearisome to the loved one. Let the lover strive to practice gracefully and manfully any act or mannerism which he has noticed is pleasing to his beloved. A clerk should not, of course, affect the manners or the dress of the laity, for no one is likely to please his beloved, if she is a wise woman, by wearing strange clothing or by practicing manners that do not suit his status. Furthermore a lover should make every attempt to be constantly in the company of good men and to avoid completely the society of the wicked. For association with the vulgar makes a lover who joins them a thing of contempt to his beloved.

What we have said about retaining love you should understand as referring to a lover of either sex. There are doubtless many other things which may be useful in retaining love that a wide-awake diligent lover may discover for himself.

CHAPTER II. HOW A LOVE, ONCE CONSUMMATED, MAY BE INCREASED

We shall attempt to show you in a few words how love may be increased after it has been consummated. Now in the first place it is said to increase if the lovers see each other rarely and with difficulty; for the greater the difficulty of exchanging solaces, the more do the desire for them and the feeling of love increase. Love increases, too, if one of the lovers shows that he is angry at the other; for the lover falls at once into a great fear that this feeling which has arisen in his beloved may last forever. Love increases, likewise, if one of the lovers feels real jealousy, which is called, in fact, the nurse of love. Even if he does not suffer from real jealousy, but from a shameful suspicion, still by virtue of this his love always increases and grows more powerful. What constitutes real jealousy and what shameful suspicion you can easily see in the discussion between the man of the higher nobility and the noblewoman.[1] Love increases, too, if it happens to last after it has been made public; ordinarily it does not last, but begins to fail just as soon as it is revealed. Again, if one of the lovers dreams about the other, that gives rise to love, or if love already exists it increases it. So, too, if you know that someone is trying to win your beloved away from you, that will no doubt increase your love and you will begin to feel more affection for her. I will go further and say that even though you know perfectly well that some other man is enjoying the embraces of your beloved, this will make you begin to value her solaces all the more,

[1] Pages 103 ff.

unless your greatness of soul and nobility of mind keep you from such wickedness. When you have gone to some other place or are about to go away—that increases your love, and so do the scoldings and beatings that lovers suffer from their parents, for not only does a scolding lecture cause love to increase after it is perfected, but it even gives a perfect reason for beginning a love affair that has not yet started. Frequent dwelling with delight on the thought of the beloved is of value in increasing love; so is the sight of her eyes when you are by yourselves and fearful, and her eager acceptance of a demand for the acts of love. Love is greatly intensified by a carriage and a way of walking that please the beloved, by a readiness to say pretty things, by a pleasant manner of speaking, and by hearing men sing the praises of the loved one. There are doubtless still other things by which love is increased which you can find out for yourself if you will study the matter attentively and if you have paid careful attention to those things that we have set down. For all the other things that are effective in such an affair seem to be dependent upon those which we have mentioned and to grow out of them.

CHAPTER III. IN WHAT WAYS LOVE MAY BE DECREASED

Now let us see in what ways love may be decreased. Too many opportunities for exchanging solaces, too many opportunities of seeing the loved one, too much chance to talk to each other all decrease love, and so does an uncultured appearance or manner of walking on the part of the lover or the sudden loss of his property. For a lover who suffers from great poverty is so tormented by the thought of household affairs and his urgent necessities that he can give no heed to the impulses of love and cannot allow it to increase as it should; as a result everybody tries to find fault with his character and his life, and he is despised and hated by all, and no one will look upon him as a friend because

While you are fortunate you will number many friends,
When the skies grow dark you will be alone.[2]

Because of all these things a man's face and figure begin to change, and restful sleep deserts him, and so he can hardly escape becoming contemptible in the eyes of his beloved. It also decreases love if one discovers any infamy in the lover or hears of any avarice, bad character, or any kind of unworthiness; so it does for him to have an affair with another woman, even if he is not in love with her. Love decreases, too, if the woman finds that her lover is foolish and indiscreet, or if he seems to go beyond reasonable bounds in his demands for love, or if she sees that he has no regard for her modesty and will not forgive her bashfulness. For a faithful lover ought to prefer love's greatest pains to making demands which deprive his beloved of her modesty or taking pleasure in making fun of her blushes; he is not called a lover, but a betrayer, who would consider only his own passions and who would be unmindful of the good of his beloved. Love decreases, too, if the woman considers that her lover is cowardly in battle, or sees that he is unrestrained in his speech or spoiled by the vice of arrogance. For nothing appears more seemly in the character of any lover at all than that he should be clad in the garment of humility and wholly lack the nakedness of pride. The utterance of silly and foolish words frequently decreases love. Many men, when with a woman, think that they will please her if they utter the first silly words that come into their heads, which is really a great mistake. The man who thinks he can please a wise woman by doing something foolish shows a great lack of sense.

Other things which weaken love are blasphemy against God or His saints, mockery of the ceremonies of the Church, and a deliberate withholding of charity from the poor. We find that love decreases very sharply if one is unfaithful to his friend, or if he brazenly says one thing while he deceitfully conceals a different idea in his heart. Love decreases, too, if the lover piles up more wealth than is proper, or if

[2] Quoted, not quite accurately, from Ovid *Tristia* I. ix. 5–6.

he is too ready to go to law over trifles. We could tell you many more things about the weakening of love, but we leave you to find these out for yourself, for we see that you are so devoted to the practice of love as to neglect all other business and so determined to love that nothing in the art of love can escape you, since there is not a thing in it that you leave undiscussed. But we do not want you to overlook the fact that when love has definitely begun to decline, it quickly comes to an end unless something comes to save it.

CHAPTER IV. HOW LOVE MAY COME TO AN END

Now having treated briefly of the lessening of love we shall try next to add for you an explanation of how it may come to an end. First of all we see that love comes to an end if one of the lovers breaks faith or tries to break faith with the other, or if he is found to go astray from the Catholic religion. It comes to an end also after it has been openly revealed and made known to men. So, too, if one of the lovers has plenty of money and does not come to the aid of the other who is in great need and lacks a great many things, then love usually becomes very cheap and comes to an ignominious end. An old love also ends when a new one begins, because no one can love two people at the same time. Furthermore, inequality of love and a fraudulent and deceitful duplicity of heart always drive out love, for a deceitful lover, no matter how worthy he is otherwise, ought to be rejected by any woman; it does not matter how well known his good qualities are and how great his wisdom, if he comes to love with a mind full of deceit, he deserves to be driven out of Love's court. Love seeks for two persons who are bound together by a mutual trust and an identity of desires, and other people lack all merit in love and are considered as strangers to his court. Again, if the parties concerned marry, love is violently put to flight, as is clearly shown by the teaching of certain lovers. Again, if by some chance one of the lovers becomes incapable of carrying out love's duties, love can no longer last between them and deserts them

completely. Likewise if one of the lovers becomes insane or develops a sudden timidity, love flees and becomes hateful. Having indicated these things to you briefly and in general terms, my friend, we leave it to you to figure out the other ways that love may be ended, for we do not want to indulge you in your indolence or to save you all exertion.

You may, however, ask whether a love once ended can ever come to life again. If this failure of love comes from ignorance of some particular thing, there is no doubt but that it may be revived; however, where it grows out of some misdeed of the lover or of some defect in his nature, we cannot remember any case where it has revived, although we do not say that it cannot, except perhaps in cases where this failure is due to some defect in the lover's nature. And if love should at some time happen to come to life again, we do not think that the lovers would have perfect confidence in each other.

CHAPTER V. INDICATIONS THAT ONE'S LOVE IS RETURNED

Now that we have thus disposed of these questions and have, in a short space, finished them up, let us add to them a discussion of how to find out whether one's love is returned—something that we think will be useful and helpful to all lovers. Nothing is more necessary to lovers than to know beyond a doubt how the people they love feel towards them, for if they should go wrong on this point, they would get little honor from such a love affair and they might suffer a great loss. There are many ways in which a lover can find out the faith of his beloved and test her feelings. If you see that your loved one is missing all sorts of opportunities to meet you or is putting false obstacles in your path, you cannot hope long to enjoy her love. So, too, if you find her, for no reason at all, growing half-hearted about giving you the usual solaces, you may see that her faith is wavering. If you find that she keeps out of your sight more than she was accustomed to do, her feelings are not very stable; and if she tries to hide from your faithful messenger, there is no doubt that she has turned you

adrift in the mighty waves and that her love for you is only feigned. Again, if you find that she is refraining from sending you the usual messages or that her particularly faithful messenger is getting lax about bringing them to you as he used to do or is becoming a stranger to you, you may believe that your love has turned against you. If at the very moment of delight when she is offering you her sweet solaces the act is more wearisome to her than usual, or if you see that your solaces bore her, you need not doubt that she has no love for you. So, too, if she finds more fault with you than usual or demands things that she has not been in the habit of demanding, or if you find her less ready than usual to grant or to seek solaces, you may know that your love will not last much longer. Again, if when she is with you or someone else she frequently talks about what you did and what the other man did, without making any distinction between you, or if on some clever pretext she asks what sort of man he is or what sort of character he has, you may know that she is thinking about the love of the other man. Moreover, if you find that she is paying more attention to the care of her person than she had been doing, either her love for you is growing or she is interested in the love of someone else. On the other hand, a woman who turns pale in the presence of her lover is without a doubt really in love. He who wants to make a real test of the faith and affection of his beloved should, with the greatest care and subtlety, pretend to her that he desires the embraces of some other woman, and he should be seen near this woman more often than he has been. If he finds that this upsets his beloved he can be sure that she is very much in love with him and most constant in her affection. For when one of the lovers is seen to be enjoying the embraces of a new love, or for some reason or other the woman suspects that he is thinking of doing so, she begins at once to be greatly disturbed in heart and soul and to be deeply smitten with an unbearable jealousy; at once her face begins to make manifest this inner suffering of her soul. It is well if lovers pretend from time to time to be angry at each other, for if one lets the other see that he is angry and that something has made him indignant with his

loved one, he can find out clearly how faithful she is. For a true lover is always in fear and trembling lest the anger of his beloved last forever, and so, even if one lover does show at times that he is angry at the other without cause, this disturbance will last but a little while if they find that their feeling for each other is really love. You must not think that by quarrels of this kind the bonds of affection and love are weakened; it is only clearing away the rust. Another thing is that if one of the lovers is too much concerned with asking the other for gifts, unless he is driven to this by urgent necessity, he may pretend that he is in love, but he is a long way from having the affection of a lover; what he wants is, not to love, but to enjoy the wealth of somebody else.

There are, I suppose, a great many other things that may be of value as indications that one's love is returned, which an attentive reader can easily discover from what I have said.

CHAPTER VI. IF ONE OF THE LOVERS IS UNFAITHFUL TO THE OTHER

If one of the lovers should be unfaithful to the other, and the offender is the man, and he has an eye to a new love affair, he renders himself wholly unworthy of his former love, and she ought to deprive him completely of her embraces, because the feeling of love he formerly had is now completely gone. With good reason it has been shown to be wholly impossible for a man to think continually and excessively about a woman so as to give rise to a new love without completely driving out the old, for we are taught by the natural and universal tradition of love that no one can be bound by a twofold love. Therefore, if such a lover as this should seek for the usual embraces and ask to be rewarded with his former joys, the first woman should forbid him the house and treat him like a perfect stranger, because in such a case as this no amount of submission will help him unless the woman wishes to show him favor.

But let us see whether the woman, if she does accept such a lover,

does a praiseworthy act. I want to make it very clear to the women that it is a great blot on a woman's character if she has anything more to do with a lover who has engaged in a new love; a man deserves no mercy if he forgets honors of this kind which he has received and is so lacking in gratitude that he is not ashamed to think of embracing some other woman. For what greater favor can be shown to any man in the world than for him to have the love of the woman he desires? But if, as so often happens, the woman cannot get out of her mind her love for this deceiver, and if he persists with his new love, she may be very sure that she will suffer great torments every day before her desire comes to pass. For when a lover has taken up with a new love, he can rarely be won back easily to the old one; because a love that has died out can seldom be brought to life again. To a woman in such a position I cannot refuse this advice: if such a woman wants to keep hold of a wavering lover, she must be careful not to let him know her intentions and she must hide her real feelings and by careful dissimulation make it seem to him that she is not distressed by the upsetting of their love affair, and she must pretend to endure with patience and equanimity what her lover is doing. If she knows that he is walking through her neighborhood, she must not go where he can see her, as she has been in the habit of doing, but she must keep completely out of his sight. If the woman sees that she is getting no results by this method, she must very cautiously pretend that she is thinking about the embrace of some other man, so that the lover, when he thinks that those delightful solaces which formerly he was so eager to accept are now being given to someone else, may become jealous and fall to longing for them as he used to do. If the lost love cannot be recovered by these devices, the wisest plan would be for the woman to see if she couldn't forget him entirely and put quite out of her mind all remembrance of his love. Then if she has discreetly tried these remedies which I have mentioned and she doesn't notice that the wounds show any improvement, she will do wisely and well if she stops worrying over the love of such a man, because in a storm of this kind you can never

cast anchor on the shore you are seeking. Women should therefore take great care not to bind themselves to lovers of this kind, because from such a love they will get no true joy, but will be exposed to innumerable troubles and infinite griefs. Therefore, when a woman is asked for her love, before she grants it she should make every effort to find out the character and the good faith of the man who is asking, so that there will be nothing she does not know about him; because after she has heedlessly gone into the affair it is too late to seek the advice of a wise man or to torment herself with a tardy repentance. A woman must therefore be careful not to be tripped up by the snares of a deceitful lover, because so many of them do not desire to be loved, but merely to gratify their passions or to boast in company of their conquests over women. These men, before they get from a woman the fruit of their efforts, seem to say everything charmingly and in good faith and without guile; but after they attain their object they turn their backs upon the loved one, the duplicity which was hidden in their hearts begins to appear, and the poor, simple, overcredulous woman finds herself mortally deceived by the trickery of the pretended lover.

But what if the man should be unfaithful to his beloved—not with the idea of finding a new love, but because he has been driven to it by an irresistible passion for another woman? What, for instance, if chance should present to him an unknown woman in a convenient place or what if at a time when Venus is urging him on to that which I am talking about he should meet with a little strumpet or somebody's servant girl? Should he, just because he played with her in the grass, lose the love of his beloved? We can say without fear of contradiction that just for this a lover is not considered unworthy of the love of his beloved unless he indulges in so many excesses with a number of women that we may conclude that he is overpassionate. But if whenever he becomes acquainted with a woman he pesters her to gain his end, or if he attains his object as a result of his efforts, then rightly he does deserve to be deprived of his former love, because there is a strong presumption that he has acted in this way with an eye toward a new

one, especially where he has strayed with a woman of the nobility or otherwise of an honorable estate.

But perhaps you will ask what a woman is to do if her adored lover asks for permission to leave her in favor of some other woman. We are bound to say emphatically that a woman ought by no means to give her lover permission to enjoy the embraces of another woman; instead she should in very plain words forbid him the other woman's embraces. But if she has granted him such permission and he has taken advantage of this, it is just as useless for him to go back to his former love as if he had left her without receiving permission. For although by granting such a request the woman has clearly committed a sin against love, still her error cannot excuse the bad faith of the lover or cover up his offense. On the other hand, if the lover tried to take advantage of the permission she gave him but his attempt was unsuccessful, the woman cannot on this account deny him the regular solaces, since she, too, is at fault and one misdeed may balance the other.

But now let us discuss the old mistake and see what should be done if it is the woman who is unfaithful to her lover. The old opinion, held by some, is that when the woman is at fault the same rule should be followed as in the case of the man just mentioned. But this rule, although old, should not be respected on that account, since it would lead us into great error. God forbid that we should ever declare that a woman who is not ashamed to wanton with two men should go unpunished. Although in the case of men such a thing is tolerated because it is so common and because the sex has a privilege by which all things in this world which are by their nature immodest are more readily allowed to men, in the case of a woman they are, because of the decency of the modest sex, considered so disgraceful that after a woman has indulged the passions of several men everybody looks upon her as an unclean strumpet unfit to associate with other ladies. Therefore if a woman goes back to her former lover after enjoying the embraces of someone else, it is a disgrace to him, for he can see perfectly well that

she no longer has any love for him. Why, therefore, should he place his affection on her?

But perhaps you will say, "The lover so pines for love of this woman that he cannot by any means forget her or get her out of his mind; therefore, master, give him some means of saving himself." But may Andreas never enjoy the thing he desires most in this world, that without which he cannot even be happy in this mortal life, if he will ever give his aid to such a wretched man. It would seem more profitable to mankind for us to leave such a man to his own devices, letting his wounds go untouched like those of a dead man, than to teach him cures for love. For when a man is known to have degenerated so far from manly firmness as to love such women, he ought to be considered wholly unworthy of any help and worse than a dead man. I would prefer to have such a man, who has found a fit match in such a woman, continue to enjoy such a love.

But what if a woman should give kisses to such a man or let him hold her in his arms, but goes no further? We would like to give her the scolding she deserves and tell her that a woman who gives any man other than her lover a kiss or an embrace is acting shamefully, since these are always considered signs of love and are given to men as an indication that love is to follow.

But whether the woman or the lover may properly seek a new love we shall not trouble to explain to you here, because, rightly or wrongly, people do it, and after one has been smitten with a new love he is just as forcibly compelled to give way to his own impulses as though he were under the domination of some other person. But I know that once when I sought advice I got the answer that a true lover can never desire a new love unless he knows that for some definite and sufficient reason the old love is dead; we know from our own experience that this rule is very true.[3] We have fallen in love with a woman of the most admirable character, although we never have had, or hope to have, any

[3] The change in number follows the Latin.

fruit of this love. For we are compelled to pine away for love of a woman of such lofty station that we dare not say one word about it, nor dare we throw ourself upon her mercy, and so at length we are forced to find our body shipwrecked. But although rashly and without foresight we have fallen into such great waves in this tempest, still we cannot think about a new love or look for any other way to free ourself.

But since you are making a special study of the subject of love, you may well ask whether a man can have a pure love for one woman and a mixed or common love with another.[4] We will show you, by an unanswerable argument, that no one can feel affection for two women in this fashion. For although pure love and mixed love may seem to be very different things, if you will look at the matter properly you will see that pure love, so far as its substance goes, is the same as mixed love and comes from the same feeling of the heart. The substance of the love is the same in each case, and only the manner and form of loving are different, as this illustration will make clear to you. Sometimes we see a man with a desire to drink his wine unmixed, and at another time his appetite prompts him to drink only water or wine and water mixed; although his appetite manifests itself differently, the substance of it is the same and unchanged. So likewise when two people have long been united by pure love and afterwards desire to practice mixed love, the substance of the love remains the same in them, although the manner and form and the way of practicing it are different.

You may perhaps inquire, Walter, whether one should reject a woman who has been carried away by force and violated by another man. In such a case we say that it is not right for anybody to blame a woman for what she did under compulsion unless she has consented to the act by repeating it afterward. You will ask, too, whether a woman sins against the precepts of Love when she persuades some other lady to accept a new love although she knows that she already has a suitable lover. Reason forces us to say that no one may solicit, either for himself

[4] See p. 122.

or for somebody else, any woman whom he knows to be already properly matched.

And now you may ask whether a woman who has made a mistake and has offered her love to a man not worthy of her may deprive him of this love and freely seek the solaces of another lover. If any woman has made a mistake of this kind and has obligated herself to an unworthy lover, she ought to devote all her efforts to improving his character and drawing him away from his evil practices. But if she sees that all her efforts will not make any improvement in him, she may freely and without fear of blame send him away and never give him another embrace. The same thing should, we think, be said of a man who makes a mistake and carelessly joins himself to a woman of bad character.

You may possibly ask me whether if one of the lovers should not care to indulge in love's solaces any longer and holds aloof from the other he may be said to be unfaithful to her. We dare not presume to say that no one may refrain from the delights of the world, lest such a doctrine should seem to be contrary to the commands of God Himself, nor would it be safe to hold that a man ought not rather to devote himself to God than to worldly pleasures. But we do say that if he should afterwards decide to love again, according to the opinion of the ladies he must return to the arms of his first love if she cares to ask him to. But perhaps you will say: "Then this is contrary to that rule of Love which says that one's love must not be revealed." To this objection we answer that love may be revealed to three people besides the lovers themselves, for the lover is allowed to find a suitable confidant from whom he may get secret comfort in his love affair and who will offer him sympathy if things turn out badly; the woman may choose a similar confidante. Besides these they may have one faithful intermediary, chosen by common consent, through whom the affair may always be managed in secret and in the proper fashion. These two confidants are bound, when both of the lovers wish it and the occasion

demands, to go before the ladies and tell them what has happened, but without giving any information as to the identity of the lovers concerned in the case.

You may well ask, too, whether when love has been encouraged by the granting of hope or even has advanced to the second or third stage and then the woman has refused to grant the love she has promised, she may be said to be unfaithful to her lover. We believe we must firmly hold that when a woman has granted any man the hope of her love or has given him any of the other preliminary gifts, and she finds him not unworthy of this love, it is very wrong for her to try to deprive him of the love he has so long hoped for. It is not proper for any honest woman to put off without good cause the fulfillment of any of her promises; if she is fully determined not to listen to a suitor, she must not grant him hope or any of the other preliminary gifts of love, because it is considered very deceitful for her not to do what she has promised him. It is thought very shameful in a woman not to be careful to keep her promises; that is usually looked upon like the deceit of harlots, who in all their deeds and words are full of falsehood and all of whose thoughts are full of guile.

There is one thing about a harlot that we want you particularly to notice: if by some miracle she should happen some time to fall in love, she can never be unfaithful to her lover. We know, from some of her remarks, that the Countess of Champagne knew this, and we think that she mentioned it because she wanted to call attention to the baseness of a man who would chase after harlots, and to punish his expertness. The man who has indulged in so filthy a love does not deserve to be aided by any of the privileges of love when things turn out badly; he is bound to suffer in patience, since he joined himself to her with his eyes open. What we have said here about harlots applies not only to those who inhabit the stews but also to all women who give themselves to a lover in the expectation of payment of any kind.

You ask too, Walter, whether if two lovers are enjoying by mutual

agreement a pure love and later one of them desires a mixed or common one [5] the other may hold back. Now, we want you to be fully instructed on this point—that although all men ought to choose a pure love rather than a mixed or common one, still one of the lovers may not oppose the desire of the other unless at the beginning of the attachment they made an agreement that they would never engage in mixed love except by the free will and the full consent of both parties. But even if the lovers have made an agreement that neither may ask for anything more unless both are agreed to it, still it is not right for a woman to refuse to give in to her lover's desire on this point if she sees that he persists in it. For all lovers are bound, when practicing love's solaces, to be mutually obedient to each other's desires.

CHAPTER VII. VARIOUS DECISIONS IN LOVE CASES

Now then, let us come to various decisions in cases of love:

I. A man who was greatly enamoured of a certain woman devoted his whole heart to the love of her. But when she saw that he was in love with her, she absolutely forbade him to love. When she discovered that he was just as much in love with her as ever, she said to him one day, "I know it is true that you have striven a very long time for my love, but you can never get it unless you are willing to make me a firm promise that you will always obey all my commands and that if you oppose them in any way you will be willing to lose my love completely." The man answered her, "My lady, God forbid that I should ever be so much in error as to oppose your commands in anything; so, since what you ask is very pleasing, I gladly assent to it." After he had promised this she immediately ordered him to make no more effort to gain her love and not to dare to speak a good word of her to others. This was a heavy blow to the lover, yet he bore it patiently. But one day when this lover and some other knights were with some ladies he heard his companions speaking very shamefully about his lady and

[5] See p. 122.

saying things about her reputation that were neither right nor proper. He endured it for a while with an ill grace, but when he saw that they kept on disparaging the lady he burst out violently against them and began to accuse them of slander and to defend his lady's reputation. When all this came to her ears she said that he ought to lose her love completely because by praising her he had violated her commands.

This point the Countess of Champagne [6] explained as follows in her decision. She said that the lady was too severe in her command, because she was not ashamed to silence him by an unfair sentence after he had wholly submitted himself to her will and after she had given him the hope of her love by binding him to her with a promise which no honorable woman can break without a reason. Nor did the aforesaid lover sin at all when he tried to deliver a well-deserved rebuke to those who were slandering his lady. For although he did make such a promise in order the more easily to obtain her love, it seems unfair of the woman to lay upon him the command that he should trouble himself no more with love for her.

II. Again. Another man, although he was enjoying the embraces of a most excellent love, asked her for permission to obtain the embraces of a different woman. Having received this he went away and refrained longer than usual from the solaces of the first lady. But after a month had elapsed he came back to the first one and said that he had never received any solaces from the other lady, nor had he wished to receive them, but he had merely wanted to test the constancy of his loved one. This woman refused him her love on the ground that he was unworthy, saying that for him to ask and receive such permission was reason enough for her to deprive him of her love. But the opinion of Queen Eleanor,[7] who was consulted on the matter, seems to be just the opposite of this woman's. She said, "We know that it comes from the nature of love that those who are in love often falsely pretend that they desire new embraces, that they may the better test the faith and constancy of their co-lover. Therefore a woman sins against the nature

[6] See Introduction, p. 13.

[7] See Introduction, p. 15.

of love itself if she keeps back her embraces from her lover on this account or forbids him her love, unless she has clear evidence that he has been unfaithful to her."

III. There were two men who were equal in birth and life and morals and everything else except that one happened to have more property than the other, so that many wondered which was preferable as a lover. From this case came the dictum of the Countess of Champagne, who said, "It would not be right for one to prefer a vulgar rich man to a noble and handsome poor one. Indeed a handsome poor man may well be preferred to a rich nobleman [8] if both are seeking the love of a rich woman, since it is more worthy for a woman who is blessed with an abundance of property to accept a needy lover than one who has great wealth. Nothing should be more grievous to all good men than to see worth overshadowed by poverty or suffering from the lack of anything. It is right, therefore, for men to praise a wealthy woman who disregards money and seeks a needy lover whom she can help with her wealth, for nothing seems so praiseworthy in a lover of either sex as to relieve the necessities of the loved one so far as may be. But if the woman herself is in need, she is more ready to accept the rich lover; for if both lovers are oppressed by poverty there is little doubt that their love will be of short duration. Poverty brings a great feeling of shame to all honorable men and gives them many an anxious thought and is even a great disturber of quiet sleep; so as a result it commonly puts love to flight.

IV. Another question like this came up: two men who were in all things absolutely equal began to pay court at the same time and in the same manner and demanded urgently that they be loved. Therefore it was asked which man's love could be chosen in such a case. We are taught by the admonition of the same countess that in such a case the man who asks first should be given the preference; but if their proposals seem to be simultaneous, it is not unfair to leave it to the woman

[8] "We prefer a virtuous poor man to an unmannerly rich one." Seneca *Benefits* IV. iii.

to choose the one of the two toward whom she finds her heart inclining.

V. A certain knight loved his lady beyond all measure and enjoyed her full embrace, but she did not love him with equal ardor. He sought to leave her, but she, desiring to retain him in his former status, opposed his wish. In this affair the Countess gave this response: "It is considered very unseemly for a woman to seek to be loved and yet to refuse to love. It is silly for anybody disrespectfully to ask of others what she herself wholly refuses to give to others."

VI. Then a question like this came up: A worthless young man and an older knight of excellent character sought the love of the same woman. The young man argued that she ought to prefer him to the older man because if he got the love he was after he might by means of it acquire an excellent character, and it would be no small credit to the woman if through her a worthless man was made into a man of good character.

To this Queen Eleanor replied as follows: "Although the young man may show that by receiving love he might rise to be a worthy man, a woman does not do very wisely if she chooses to love an unworthy man, especially when a good and eminently worthy one seeks her love. It might happen that because of the faults of the unworthy man his character would not be improved even if he did receive the good things he was hoping for, since the seeds which we sow do not always produce a crop."

VII. This other love affair was submitted to the decision of the same queen. A certain man who had in ignorance joined in love with a woman who was related to him, sought to leave her when he discovered his fault. But the woman was bound by the chain of love and tried to keep him in love's observances, saying that the crime was fully excused by the fact that when they began to enjoy the love it was without any sin.

In this affair the Queen answered as follows: "A woman who under the excuse of a mistake of any kind seeks to preserve an incestuous love is clearly going contrary to what is right and proper. We are always bound to oppose any of those incestuous and damnable actions which we know even human laws punish by very heavy penalties."

VIII. A certain lady had a proper enough lover, but was afterward, through no fault of her own, married to an honorable man, and she avoided her love and denied him his usual solaces. But Lady Ermengarde of Narbonne [9] demonstrated the lady's bad character in these words: "The later contracting of a marital union does not properly exclude an early love except in cases where the woman gives up love entirely and is determined by no means to love any more."

IX. A certain man asked the same lady to make clear where there was the greater affection—between lovers or between married people. The lady gave him a logical answer. She said: "We consider that marital affection and the true love of lovers are wholly different and arise from entirely different sources, and so the ambiguous nature of the word prevents the comparison of the things and we have to place them in different classes. Comparisons of more or less are not valid when things are grouped together under an ambiguous heading and the comparison is made in regard to that ambiguous term. It is no true comparison to say that a name is simpler than a body or that the outline of a speech is better arranged than the delivery.

X. The same man asked the same lady this question. A certain woman had been married, but was now separated from her husband by a divorce, and her former husband sought eagerly for her love. In this case the lady replied: "If any two people have been married and afterwards separate in any way, we consider love between them wholly wicked."

XI. A good and prudent man sought the love of a woman; then later a still more worthy man came and urgently sought her love. Which lover, then, should she choose? Ermengarde of Narbonne settled the case in this way: "It is left to the woman to choose whether she will listen to the good man or to the better one."

XII. Another case in love runs like this: A man who had a suitable enough lover most urgently besought another lady for her love just as though he didn't have the love of any other woman; and from her he obtained all his heart's desire, all he so ardently sought. After his

[9] She became Viscountess of Narbonne about 1142 and died about 1187.

efforts had been rewarded he sought again the embraces of the first lady and turned his back on the second. What punishment, then, should be given to this wicked man? In this affair the opinion of the Countess of Flanders [10] attracted notice.

"The man who plotted so fraudulently ought to be deprived of the love of both women and should never in the future enjoy the love of any honorable lady, since we think he is swayed by strong voluptuousness and this is a direct enemy of love as you are shown more fully in the teaching of the Chaplain. But the woman should not consider it any reflection on her reputation, since any woman who wants to have the praise of the world must indulge in love, and it is not easy for anybody to examine a man's innermost faith and the secrets of his heart, and so we often find wisdom deceived under the cloak of many words. However, if the man does not return to his first love, but desires to stay in love with the second, the first has no cause for complaint against the other if she tries to cultivate his new-born love and allows another woman rather than herself to lose by his clever deception."

XIII. Another case comes up in this way: A certain knight, although he was lacking in every manly virtue so that every woman rejected him as a lover, so impudently demanded a certain lady's love that she granted him the hope of it. By her teaching she developed in this lover so good a character that she gave him a kiss and an embrace and through her he was brought to the highest excellence of conduct and was praised for all the good qualities. After he had been established as a pattern of virtue and a model of good manners, another lady strongly invited him to love her and the knight became wholly obedient to her will, forgetting, so it seems, the gift of the first lady.

On this point we have the response of the Countess of Flanders. She said: "We all think it commendable that the first lady should reclaim from the embraces of any other woman the lover whom she by great

[10] Isabelle (sometimes called Elizabeth) of Vermandois was a cousin of Countess Marie; she married Count Philip of Flanders in 1156 and died in 1182. See Introduction, p. 20.

industry raised from the depths of worthlessness to the height of courtesy and the summit of worthiness. We think that a woman has a just and reasonable claim upon a man whom she, by working with him, made worthy, after he had been worthless, and by laborious care made more honorable and set in the way of good manners."

XIV. A certain lady, while her lover was on an expedition overseas and she had no hope of his early return and nearly everybody had given up all hope that he would ever come, sought for herself another lover. But a confidant of the first lover, who was very much grieved by the lady's change of faith, forbade her this new love. The woman did not accept his advice and defended herself by saying, "If a woman who is left a widow by the death of her lover may seek a new love after two years have elapsed, this should be much more permissible for a woman who is left a widow while her lover is still alive and who for this length of time hasn't had the satisfaction of any messenger or letter from him, especially when there has been no lack of messengers." After the question had been disputed pro and con for a long time it was referred to the Countess of Champagne, who settled it with this decision. "It is not right for the lady to give up her love because her lover has been away for a long time (unless she knows that he was the first to fail in his love or that he has clearly been unfaithful) in cases in which it is obvious that his absence is due to necessity or to some especially praiseworthy cause. Nothing should bring more joy to the soul of a woman who is in love than to hear from distant regions the praise of her lover or to know that he is respected by honorable assemblages of great men. That he is said to have refrained from communicating with her by letters or messengers may be considered great prudence on his part, since he may not reveal this secret to any third party. If he had sent letters, even though their contents were kept secret from the bearer, it might easily happen, through the wickedness of the bearer or because he died on the journey, that the secret of their love would be made public."

XV. Still another love case came up. A certain lover, when he has lost

an eye or some other ornament of his body while fighting bravely, is rejected by his loved one as unworthy and loathsome, and she denies him the customary embraces. Opposed to this woman is the opinion of the lady of Narbonne, who said on the subject: "We think that a woman is unworthy of any honor if she has decided that her lover ought to be deprived of her love because of some deformity resulting from the common chance of war, which is apt to happen to those who fight bravely. Ordinarily the bravery of men very much incites the love of women and makes them retain this love for a long time. Why, then, should some deformity of the members which naturally and inevitably results from this bravery afflict a lover with the loss of his love?"

XVI. Another problem of this kind was brought before them. A certain knight was suing for a woman's love, and he did not have frequent opportunities of speaking to her, so with the woman's consent he chose a go-between for this purpose, that with his help each of them might the more easily know the other's wishes and in greater secrecy make known his own and that the love between them might forever be managed in even greater secrecy. This go-between accepted the office of legate, but broke faith with his confederate, took upon himself the name of lover, and commenced to look out for himself. The lady in the case had the bad taste to assent to his fraud, and finally she consummated love with him and fulfilled all his wishes. But the knight was wrought up over the fraud and told the whole course of the affair to the Countess of Champagne, asking that the culprit be tried by her decision and that of the other ladies. Even the wrongdoer praised the Countess's verdict. She summoned sixty ladies to her assistance and settled the matter with this decision: "Let that crafty lover who has found a woman suited to his deserts, one who wasn't ashamed to accept so great a villain, enjoy his evilly acquired love if he wants to, and let her enjoy the kind of lover she deserves. But let both be forever deprived of the love of any other person, and let neither be invited henceforward to gatherings of ladies or courts of knights, because he has acted contrary to the honesty of the order of knighthood and she, contrary to the decency of ladies, has disgracefully assented to the love of a go-between."

XVII. Again. A certain knight was in love with a woman who had given her love to another man, but he got from her this much hope of her love—that if it should ever happen that she lost the love of her beloved, then without a doubt her love would go to this man. A little while after this the woman married her lover. The other knight then demanded that she give him the fruit of the hope she had granted him, but this she absolutely refused to do, saying that she had not lost the love of her lover. In this affair the Queen [11] gave her decision as follows: "We dare not oppose the opinion of the Countess of Champagne, who ruled that love can exert no power between husband and wife.[12] Therefore we recommend that the lady should grant the love she has promised."

XVIII. A certain knight shamefully divulged the intimacies and the secrets of his love. All those who were serving in the camp of Love demanded that this offense should be most severely punished, lest if so serious a transgression went unavenged, the example might give occasion to others to do likewise. A court of ladies was therefore assembled in Gascony, and they decided unanimously that forever after he should be deprived of all hope of love and that in every court of ladies or of knights he should be an object of contempt and abuse to all. And if any woman should dare to violate this rule of the ladies, for example by giving him her love, she should be subject to the same punishment, and should henceforth be an enemy of all honest women.

XIX. Another decision very properly belongs with these. A certain knight asked for the love of a certain lady, and she absolutely refused to love him. The knight sent her some rather handsome presents, and these she accepted with eager face and greedy heart; she did not, however, grow any more yielding in the matter of love, but gave him a

[11] Probably Adèle of Champagne, third wife of King Louis of France; she married in 1165 and was left a widow in 1180.

[12] See p. 106.

flat refusal. The knight complained that the woman, by accepting appropriate gifts, had given him a hope of love, which she was trying to take away from him without a cause. To those facts the Queen responded in this fashion. "Let a woman either decline gifts which are offered her with a view to love, or let her pay for them with her love, or let her suffer in patience being classed with the prostitutes."

XX. The Queen was also asked which was preferable: the love of a young man or of one advanced in years. She answered this question with wonderful subtlety by saying, "We distinguish between a good and a better love by the man's knowledge and his character and his praiseworthy manners, not by his age. But as regards that natural instinct of passion, young men are usually more eager to gratify it with older women than with young ones of their own age; those who are older prefer to receive the embraces and kisses of young women rather than of the older ones. But on the other hand a woman whether young or somewhat older likes the embraces and solaces of young men better than those of older ones. The explanation of this fact seems to be a physiological one."

XXI. The Countess of Champagne was also asked what gifts it was proper for ladies to accept from their lovers. To the man who asked this the Countess replied, "A woman who loves may freely accept from her lover the following: a handkerchief, a fillet for the hair, a wreath of gold or silver, a breastpin, a mirror, a girdle, a purse, a tassel, a comb, sleeves, gloves, a ring, a compact, a picture, a wash basin, little dishes, trays, a flag as a souvenir, and, to speak in general terms, a woman may accept from her lover any little gift which may be useful for the care of the person or pleasing to look at or which may call the lover to her mind, if it is clear that in accepting the gift she is free from all avarice. But we wish all of Love's knights to be taught that if a woman receives a ring from her lover as a pledge of love she ought to put it on her left hand and on her little finger, and she should always keep the stone hidden on the inside of her hand; this is because the left hand is usually kept freer from dishonesty and shameful contacts, and a man's life

and death are said to reside more in his little finger than in the others,[13] and because all lovers are bound to keep their love secret. Likewise, if they correspond with each other by letter they should refrain from signing their own names. Furthermore, if the lovers should for any reason come before a court of ladies, the identity of the lovers should never be revealed to the judges, but the case should be presented anonymously. And they ought not to seal their letters to each other with their own seals unless they happen to have secret seals known only to themselves and their confidants. In this way their love will always be retained unimpaired."

CHAPTER VIII. THE RULES OF LOVE

Let us come now to the rules of love, and I shall try to present to you very briefly those rules which the King of Love is said to have proclaimed with his own mouth and to have given in writing to all lovers.

One of the knights of Britain was riding alone through the royal forest, going to see Arthur, and when he had got well into the interior of this forest he came unexpectedly upon a young girl of marvellous beauty, sitting on a fine horse and binding up her hair. The knight lost no time in saluting her, and she answered him courteously and said, "Briton, no matter how hard you try you can't succeed in your quest unless you have our help." When he had heard these words he quickly asked the girl to tell him what he had come for, and then after that he would believe what she said to him. The young girl said to him, "When you asked for the love of a certain British lady, she told you that you could never obtain it unless you first brought back that victorious hawk which, men say, is on a golden perch in Arthur's court." [14] The Briton admitted that all this was true, and the girl went on, "You can't

[13] John of Salisbury (*Policraticus* VI. xii) records this as a well-known tradition of the ancient Greeks, but he applies it to the finger next to the little finger.

[14] For a list of parallel incidents see the note by William Albert Nitze in *Modern Philology*, XI (1914), 450–51.

get this hawk that you are seeking unless you prove, by a combat in Arthur's palace, that you enjoy the love of a more beautiful lady than any man at Arthur's court has; you can't even enter the palace until you show the guards the hawk's gauntlet, and you can't get this gauntlet except by overcoming two mighty knights in a double combat."

The Briton answered, "I know that I cannot accomplish this task without your aid, and so I will submit myself to your direction, humbly beseeching you to give me your help in the matter and to permit me to claim, in view of the fact that you are directing me, that I enjoy the love of the more beautiful lady."

The young girl said to him, "If your heart is so stout that you are not afraid to carry out those things of which we have spoken, you may have from us what you ask." The Briton answered, "If you will grant my request, I know that I shall succeed in all that I hope for."

The young girl said to him, "Then let what you request be freely granted to you." Then she gave him the kiss of love and said, indicating the horse on which she was sitting, "This horse will take you everywhere you want to go; but you must go forward without any fear and oppose with the highest courage all those who try to stop you. But bear in mind that after you have gained the victory over the first two who defend the gauntlet you must not accept it from them, but must take it for yourself from the golden pillar where it hangs; otherwise you cannot prevail in the combat at the palace or accomplish what you desire."

When she finished speaking, the Briton put on his arms and, after she had given him leave to depart, began to go at a walk through the wood. At length, as he was passing through a wild and lonely place, he came to a certain river of marvellous breadth and depth, with great waves in it, and because of the great height of its banks it was impossible for anyone to reach it. But as he rode along the edge of the bank he came to a bridge which was of gold and had one end fastened to each bank; the middle of it, however, rested in the water, and he

could see that it was so shaken that great waves often covered it. At that end of it which the Briton was approaching there was a knight of a ferocious aspect who was sitting on a horse. The Briton greeted him courteously enough, but the knight scorned to return the greeting and said, "Armed Briton, who come from such distant regions, what are you seeking?"

The Briton answered, "I am trying to cross the river by the bridge"; and the bridge keeper said, "Then you must be seeking death, which no stranger here has been able to escape. But if you want to go back home and leave all your arms here, I will take pity on your youth which has led you so rashly and so foolishly into other men's countries and into strange realms."

The Briton replied, "If I were to lay down my arms, you would gain little credit for the victory of a man in arms over an unarmed man; but if you can keep an armed man from going along the public way, then you may consider that your victory has won you glory. If you do not make way peaceably for me to go across the bridge, I shall simply try to force a passage with my sword."

When the bridge keeper heard that the young man was trying to force a passage with his sword, he began to gnash his teeth, and he fell into a great rage and said, "Young man, Britain sent you here in an evil hour, since you shall perish by the sword in this wilderness, and you will never be able to bring back news of the country to your lady. Woe to you, wretched Briton, who have not been afraid to seek the place of your death at the persuasion of a woman!" Then spurring his horse against the Briton he began to attack him with his sharp sword and to hammer him so cruelly that one stroke, glancing off his shield, cut through two folds of his hauberk and into the flesh of his side so that the blood commenced to flow in abundance from the wound. The young man, stung by the pain of his wound, directed the point of his lance at the knight of the bridge, and with a mighty thrust pierced him through, bore him from his horse, and stretched him shamefully

upon the ground. But when the Briton was about to smite off his head, the bridge keeper, by the most humble entreaties, sought and obtained mercy.

But on the other side of the river there stood a man of tremendous size, who, seeing the bridge keeper overcome by the Briton and this same Briton starting to cross the golden bridge, began to shake it so violently that much of the time it was hidden by the waves. But the Briton, having great confidence in the excellence of his horse, did not cease to press forward manfully over the bridge, and at length, after great difficulty and many duckings, he arrived at the farther end of it by virtue of his horse's efforts; there he drowned beneath the water the man who had been shaking the bridge and bound up the wound in his own side as well as he could.[15]

After this the Briton began to ride through very beautiful fields, and after he had ridden for about a mile [16] the path came out into a pleasant meadow, fragrant with all sorts of flowers. In this meadow was a palace, marvellously built in a circular form and very beautifully decorated. He could not find a door anywhere in the palace, nor could he see any inhabitants; but in the fields he found silver tables, and on them were all sorts of food and drink set among snow-white napkins. In the same pleasant meadow was a shell of the purest silver in which there was sufficient food and drink for a horse. He therefore drove his horse off to feed, and he himself walked completely around the palace; but finding no sign of any entrance to the dwelling or any evidence that the place was inhabited, he drew near to the table and, driven by his hunger, began ravenously to devour the food he found there. A very little while after he had begun to eat, a door of the palace opened quickly with such violence that the shock of it resounded like near-by thunder, and suddenly out of this door came a man of gigantic size, brandishing in his hands a copper club of immense weight,

[15] Helaine Newstead (*Bran the Blessed*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1939, p. 141) suggests that this is the story to which Chrétien referred in *The Knight of the Cart*, ll. 670–71, but which he did not tell.

[16] Ten stades.

which he shook like a straw without the least effort. To the youth at the table he said, "What sort of man are you, so presumptuous that you were not afraid to come to this royal place and so coolly and disrespectfully to eat the food on the royal table of the knights?" [17]

The Briton answered, "The royal table should be freely open to everybody, and it is not proper that anybody should be refused the royal food and drink. Moreover it is right for me to partake of the rations prepared for the knights, since knighthood is my sole care and a knightly task has brought me to this place. You are therefore doubly discourteous in trying to forbid me the royal table."

To this the doorkeeper replied, "Although this is the royal table, it is not proper for anyone to eat at it except those who are assigned to this palace, and they allow no one to go beyond this point unless he fights with the palace guards and defeats them. And if anyone is beaten by them, there is no hope for him. Therefore get up from the table and hurry back to where you belong, or tell me that you want to fight your way onward and why you have come this far."

The Briton said to him, "I am seeking the hawk's gauntlet; that is why I came. When I get it I shall try to go further and as victor in Arthur's court take the hawk. Where is this palace guard you mention who will keep me from going on?"

The doorkeeper replied, "You fool! What madness possesses you, Briton! It would be easier for you to die and come to life again ten times than to get those things you mention. I am the palace guard who will deprive you of your reputation and spoil Britain of your youth. I am so strong that when I an angry two hundred of the best knights of Britain can hardly withstand me."

The Briton answered, "Although you say you are very powerful, I would like to fight with you to show you what sort of men Britain produces; however, it isn't proper for a knight to fight with a footman."

[17] Miss Newstead (*op. cit.*, p. 142) suggests that this giant is derived (although not directly) from Welsh legends concerning Bran. Thomas Jones (in his review in *Modern Language Review*, XXXV, 402–4) points out that Bran was sometimes called "Brangaled," which means "Bran the Niggardly."

The doorkeeper said to him, "I see that your bad luck has brought you to death in this place where my right hand has felled more than a thousand. And although I am not reckoned among the knights, I would like to fight with you while you are on horseback, because then if you yield to the valor of a footman you will have good reason to know what sort of person would be overcome by the boldness of a man like me if I were on horseback."

To this the Briton answered, "God forbid that I should ever fight on horseback against a man on foot, for against a foot soldier every man should fight on foot," and grasping his arms he rushed bravely at the enemy before him and with a blow of his sword slightly damaged the latter's shield. The guardian of the palace, greatly enraged at this and contemptuous of the Briton's small size, shook his brazen club so furiously that the Briton's shield was almost shattered by the concussion, and he himself was greatly terrified. Thinking that a second blow would finish the Briton, the guard raised his hand to strike again, but before the blow could fall the other quickly feinted and with his sword caught him on the arm, so that the right hand, still holding the club, fell to the ground. But as he was about to put an end to him, the guard cried out, "Are you the one discourteous knight that sweet Britain has produced, you who would slay a wounded man? If you will spare my life I can easily get for you what you want, but without me you can gain nothing."

The Briton said, "Porter, I will spare your life if you will do what you promise."

The guard said, "Wait a bit and I will quickly get you the hawk's gauntlet."

The Briton answered, "You robber and deceiver of men! Now I see plainly that you are trying to cheat me. If you want to save your life just show me the place where that gauntlet of yours is kept."

The guard then led the Briton into the innermost part of the palace where there was a very beautiful golden column that held up the whole weight of the palace, and on this column hung the gauntlet he

was seeking. As he grasped it boldly and held it firmly in his left hand he heard a great noise, and although he saw nobody, a wailing began to resound throughout the palace, and a cry, "Woe! woe! in spite of us the victor enemy is carrying away the spoil."

He left the palace and, mounting his horse which was already saddled, continued his journey until he came to a delightful place where there were more of those beautiful fields filled with flowers, and in the fields was a palace finely built of gold. Its length was six hundred cubits, and its width two hundred. The roof and all the outer walls were of silver, and the inside was all of gold set with precious stones. The palace was divided into a great many rooms, and in the hall of state King Arthur was sitting on a golden throne surrounded by beautiful women, more than I could count, and before him stood many splendid knights. In this palace was a beautifully fashioned golden perch on which was the hawk he was seeking, and chained near by lay two hawking dogs. But before he could get to the palace his way was blocked by a heavily fortified barbican, raised to protect the palace, and to the defense of it were assigned twelve very strong knights who permitted no one to pass unless he showed them the gauntlet for the hawk or forced his way sword in hand.

When the Briton saw them, he quickly showed them the gauntlet and they fell back, saying, "Your life isn't safe if you go on this way; it will lead you to great trouble." But the Briton continued on to the interior of the palace and saluted King Arthur. When the knights pressed him to know why he had come there, he replied that he had come to carry off the hawk. One of the knights of the court asked him, "Why are you trying to get the hawk?" and he replied, "Because I enjoy the love of a more beautiful woman than any knight in this court has." The other answered him, "Before you can take away the hawk you will have to fight to prove that statement." "Gladly!" said the Briton. After a suitable shield had been given him both took their places armed within the lists; setting spurs to their horses, they rushed together violently, shattering each other's shields and splintering their

lances; then with their swords they smote each other and hewed to pieces the iron armor. After they had fought in this fashion for a long time, the vision of the knight of the palace, whom the Briton had struck on the head with two shrewd blows in rapid succession, began to be so disturbed that he could see almost nothing. When the Briton perceived this, he leapt boldly upon him and quickly struck him, beaten, from his horse. Then he seized the hawk, and, glancing as he did so at the two dogs, he saw a written parchment, which was fastened to the perch with a little gold chain. When he inquired carefully concerning this, he was told, "This is the parchment on which are written the rules of love which the King of Love himself, with his own mouth, pronounced for lovers. You should take it with you and make these rules known to lovers if you want to take away the hawk peaceably." He took the parchment, and after he had been given courteous permission to depart, quickly returned, without any opposition, to the lady of the wood, whom he found in the same place in the grove where she was when he first came upon her as he was riding along. She rejoiced greatly over the victory he had gained and dismissed him with these words, "Dearest friend, go with my permission, since sweet Britain desires you. But, that your departure may not seem too grievous to you, I ask you to come here sometimes alone, and you can always have me with you." He kissed her thirteen times over and went joyfully back to Britain. Afterward he looked over the rules which he had found written in the parchment, and then, in accordance with the answer he had previously received, he made them known to all lovers. These are the rules.

I. Marriage is no real excuse for not loving.
II. He who is not jealous cannot love.
III. No one can be bound by a double love.
IV. It is well known that love is always increasing or decreasing.
V. That which a lover takes against the will of his beloved has no relish.
VI. Boys do not love until they arrive at the age of maturity.

VII. When one lover dies, a widowhood of two years is required of the survivor.
VIII. No one should be deprived of love without the very best of reasons.
IX. No one can love unless he is impelled by the persuasion of love.
X. Love is always a stranger in the home of avarice.
XI. It is not proper to love any woman whom one would be ashamed to seek to marry.
XII. A true lover does not desire to embrace in love anyone except his beloved.
XIII. When made public love rarely endures.
XIV. The easy attainment of love makes it of little value; difficulty of attainment makes it prized.
XV. Every lover regularly turns pale in the presence of his beloved.
XVI. When a lover suddenly catches sight of his beloved his heart palpitates.
XVII. A new love puts to flight an old one.[18]
XVIII. Good character alone makes any man worthy of love.
XIX. If love diminishes, it quickly fails and rarely revives.
XX. A man in love is always apprehensive.
XXI. Real jealousy always increases the feeling of love.
XXII. Jealousy, and therefore love, are increased when one suspects his beloved.
XXIII. He whom the thought of love vexes eats and sleeps very little.
XXIV. Every act of a lover ends in the thought of his beloved.
XXV. A true lover considers nothing good except what he thinks will please his beloved.
XXVI. Love can deny nothing to love.
XXVII. A lover can never have enough of the solaces of his beloved.

[18] Compare Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* IV. XXXV.

XXVIII. A slight presumption causes a lover to suspect his beloved.

XXIX. A man who is vexed by too much passion usually does not love.

XXX. A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved.

XXXI. Nothing forbids one woman being loved by two men or one man by two women.

These rules, as I have said, the Briton brought back with him on behalf of the King of Love to the lady for whose sake he endured so many perils when he brought her back the hawk. When she was convinced of the complete faithfulness of this knight and understood better how boldly he had striven, she rewarded him with her love. Then she called together a court of a great many ladies and knights and laid before them these rules of Love, and bade every lover keep them faithfully under threat of punishment by the King of Love. These laws the whole court received in their entirety and promised forever to obey in order to avoid punishment by Love. Every person who had been summoned and had come to the court took home a written copy of the rules and gave them out to all lovers in all parts of the world.

BOOK THREE

The Rejection of Love

Now, FRIEND WALTER, if you will lend attentive ears to those things which after careful consideration we wrote down for you because you urged us so strongly, you can lack nothing in the art of love, since in this little book we gave you the theory of the subject, fully and completely, being willing to accede to your requests because of the great love we have for you. You should know that we did not do this because we consider it advisable for you or any other man to fall in love, but for fear lest you might think us stupid; we believe, though, that any man who devotes his efforts to love loses all his usefulness. Read this little book, then, not as one seeking to take up the life of a lover, but that, invigorated by the theory and trained to excite the minds of women to love, you may, by refraining from so doing, win an eternal recompense and thereby deserve a greater reward from God. For God is more pleased with a man who is able to sin and does not, than with a man who has no opportunity to sin.

Now for many reasons any wise man is bound to avoid all the deeds of love and to oppose all its mandates. The first of these reasons is one which it is not right for anyone to oppose, for no man, so long as he devotes himself to the service of love, can please God by any other works, even if they are good ones. For God hates, and in both testaments commands the punishment of,[1] those whom he sees engaged in the works of Venus outside the bonds of wedlock or caught in the toils of any sort of passion. What good therefore can be found in a thing in which nothing is done except what is contrary to the will of God? Alas what

[1] Lev. 20:10; Prov. 6:32; Apocalypse 21:8.