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A DISPUTACIOUN BETWYX þE BODY AND WORMES:
A TRANSLATION

by Jenny Rebecca Rytting

The medieval reader loved an argument, judging by the popularity of poetic debates during the Middle Ages. Written first in Latin and later in vernacular languages, such debates matched up opponents as widely varied as justice and mercy, winter and spring, an owl and a nightingale, a sheep and a flax plant, a Jew and a Christian, and the body and the soul.¹ This last pairing, dating in Old English back to the Exeter and Vercelli books, occurs often enough to constitute a discrete tradition within the larger genre of debate poetry. In a typical early “body and soul” poem, the soul chastises the body for sinning while it was alive and describes the body’s incipient decomposition. As the tradition develops, so does the balance within the debate: the body and the soul begin to argue about who is responsible for the sins that were committed during the pair’s mutual lifetime. Sometimes the poem ends with a hair-raising depiction of the soul being carried off to hell, meant to encourage the reader to repent and live a righteous life.² The most famous Middle English example of the tradition is *The Desputisoun bitwen þe Bodi and þe Soule*,³ sometimes identified by its first line, *Als I lay in a winteris nyt*.

The lesser-known Middle English poem *A Disputacioun betwux þe Body and Wormes*, while it fits within the body and soul tradition in that it shares such poems’ basic concerns with the decay of the body, the effects of sinning during mortality, and the afterlife, departs substantially from the standard pattern. Klaus Jankofsky, in his article “A View into the Grave: ‘A Disputacion betwux þe Body and Wormes’ in British Museum MS Add. 37049,” notes four important differences between *A Disputacioun* and other body and soul debates. First, the conversation in this poem occurs not between the body and the soul but between the body and the worms that are eating it as it lies in the grave.

¹John W. Conlee, *Middle English Debate Poetry: A Critical Anthology* (East Lansing, MI 1991) xii–xx.

²Ibid. xxiv–xxvi.

³Klaus Jankofsky, “A View into the Grave: ‘A Disputacion betwux þe Body and Wormes’ in British Museum MS Add. 37049,” *TAIUS* 1 (1974) 139.

Second, the body seems to be a specific person with a distinct personality, rather than an abstract representation of “the flesh.” Third, the poem ends not with a vision of the terror of death and hell but rather with the promise of resurrection. Finally, Jankofsky compares the illustrations that accompany the poem in the manuscript to the double-decker tombs (with effigies of the deceased lying in state above and a rendition of their decaying bodies beneath) that were then becoming popular among the upper classes.⁴

The first stanzas of *A Disputacioun* provide the dream-vision framework, a popular device in medieval debate poetry, in which a narrator falls asleep or into a trance and overhears a discussion between the disputing parties. In this case, an unidentified person, who has departed on a pilgrimage in order to flee the plague, stops at a church to pray but is distracted by the newly built tomb of a lady. As he looks at the epitaph, he falls into a dreamlike vision in which he hears a debate between the recently buried body and the worms that are eating it. This carefully constructed conversation leads the body from a disgust at the worms, a resistance to their ministrations, and a futile attempt at calling living knights to her defense to a realization that worldly beauty is vain, a reliance on God’s grace, and a reconciliation with the worms as she waits for Judgment Day and resurrection. The dream-vision framework resumes with the waking of the dreamer, who explains that the holy man to whom he related his experience told him to write it down for the edification of others, and the poem ends with an exhortation for all to trust in God.

A Disputacioun betwix þe Body and Wormes was collected with other didactic pieces and meditations for the instruction of Carthusian clerics in a monastery in northern England in the early fifteenth century.⁵ It appears in British Museum MS Additional 37049, which T. W. Ross calls “an odd assortment of late mediaeval writings, in English and Latin verse and prose.”⁶ The Middle English text reprinted here comes from “Mittelenglische Todesgedichte” by Karl Brunner, in *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 167 (1935) 30–35. I have followed Brunner’s transcription exactly, including his

⁴Ibid. 140.

⁵Conlee (n. 1 above) 50.

⁶Thomas Wynne Ross, “Five Fifteenth-Century ‘Emblem’ Verses from Brit. Mus. Addit. MS. 37049,” *Speculum* 32 (1957) 275.

use of italics to represent expanded abbreviations and his stanza divisions. (There are no spaces between stanzas in the manuscript.)

A Disputacioun is written in rhyme royal, with the exception of one eight-line stanza early in the poem: Karl Brunner notes that six lines seem to be missing from the manuscript.⁷ Klaus Jankofsky explains that this probably represents a scribal error; after the lines describing the lady's hair in stanza four, we would expect a continuation of the blazon instead of the abrupt shift to the dreamer's nodding off. Presumably the scribe accidentally conflated two adjacent stanzas that happened to use the same rime, but because no other manuscript of the poem exists, any reconstruction of the missing lines would be entirely hypothetical.⁸ I have left the eight-line stanza as transcribed by Karl Brunner.

In translating the poem, I have tried to stick closely to the literal meaning of the text, while maintaining the rhyme scheme and reflecting the distinct voices of the Body and of the Worms. Often I have been able to use the same vocabulary—sometimes even the same rimes—as the Middle English original. Occasionally I have switched the order of two lines or slightly altered the sense of a half-line for poetic purposes, but only when such a change does not affect the meaning of the stanza as a whole.

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⁷Karl Brunner, "Mittelenglische Todesgedichte," *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 167 (1935) 30 n. 15.

⁸Jankofsky (n. 3 above) 158–159.

A Disputacioun betwix þe Body and Wormes

In þe ceson of huge mortalite
 Of sondre disseses with þe pestilence
 Heuely reynand whilom *in* cuntre
 To go pylgramege mefeld be my *conscience*
 And on my way went *with* spedily diligence 5
 In a holy day afore me I sawe a kyrk
 Wher to go I dressed my bedes to wirk

In a wilsom felde standyng desolate
 Vn to here a messe was my hole *intent*
 It was done *and* sayd be I come þerat 10
 Oppyn I fand þe dore *and* entre sone I hent
 I knelyd me downe *and* to my *prayers* went
With lawe obeysaunce mekyd me downe
 To ane ymage *with* gret deuocione

Bysyde me I sawe a towmbe or sepulture 15
 Ful freschly forgyd depycte *and* depynte
 Compassyd *and* made be newe *coniecture*
 Of sondre armes þer many a prynte
 Þe Epytaf to loke was I not faynte
 In gylt copyr *with* goldly schewyng þan 20
With a fresche fygyre fyne of a woman

Wele atyred *in* þe moste newe gyse
With long lokkes of þis disceyfyng
 In a slomer I slept taken I was *in* syche wyse
 Rapt *and* rauesched fro my selfe beynge 25
 Betwix þis body *and* wormes hyr fretynge
 Strangly ilk one oþer corespondyng
 In maner of a dyaloge it wente
 Þerfore to þis *insawmpyl* Ie take *intente*

Þe body spekes to þe wormes:

Wormes wormes þis body sayd 30
 Why do Ie þus what causes Iow me þus to ete
 By Iow my flesche is horribilly arayed
 Whilk was a fygyre whylom fresche *and* feete
 Right amyabyll *and* odorus *and* swete
 Beste beloved of any creature 35

Lady *and* soferayne cald I low ensure

Of bewte I was a lady *precious*
 Of gentil blode descendyng of right lyne
 Of eve and of trewe begynnyng generows
 Al hertes glad my plesaunce to dyuyne 40
 Men of honour *and* of grete worschip al dyd declyne
 And nowe here in erth mortal deth come me to
 Emand low wormes nakyd lyg I loo

Most vnkynde neighbours þat euer war wroght
 Dynner mete *and* sowper al to lyte 45
 Now fretyng *and* etyng Ie hafe me þorow soght
 With ane *insaciabyll and* gredy appetyte
 No rest bot alway Ie synk sowke *and* byte
 Day tyme ne houre *with* how is no abstynence
 Bot ay redy agayne me *with* vyolence 50

When Ie fyrst began to drawe me to
 It semes me Ie wer fed *in* a faynt pasture
 Now fatte waxen *and* vgly rownde *and* gret also
 Of curtasy *and* gentilnes lefe of me Iour cure
 And *with* sum oþer dwelle *and* endure 55
 Whilk may low rewarde *with* better wardone
 For ner am I wasted consumed *and* gone.

Wormes spekes to þe body:

Nay nay we will not lit departe þe fro
 While þat one of þi bones with oþer wil hange
 To we hafe scowred *and* pollysched to 60
 And made als clene as we can þaim amange
 For *our* labour we aske no maner of þing to fange
 Gold syluer ryches ne no oþer mede
 Bot onely vs wormes on þe to fede

Whilk may not sauour ne smell in no wyse 65
 Pine orrybyll flesche rotyng *and* stynkyng
 Of al creatures hated to devyse
 Safe onely of vs wretchid wormes beyng
 If we as bestes had smellyng *and* tastyng
 Trows þou þat we wald towche þi caryone playne 70
 Nay parde we wald it voyde for certayne

Þe body spekes to þe wormes:

Parde vncortes Ie be vn to me
 Þus heuely to threte me *and* manace
 And þus me lefe bot bare bones to see
 Now where be Ie knyghtes *cum* forth *in* place 75
 And Ie worschipful sqwyers both hye *and* base
 Þat *sumtyme* to me offerd Iour seruise
 Dayes of Iour lyfes of hertes frawnchsyse

Sayng permyttyng Iour lyfe to myne avyse
 To do me seruys *cum* *and* defende nowe me 80
 Fro þies gret horribil wormes vgly to se
 Here gnawying my flesche þus *with* gret cruelte
 Deuowryng *and* etyng nowe as Ie may se
 Þat *sumtyme* Ie lufed so interly
 Now socour *and* defende here my body 85

Þe wormes answers to þe body:

What suld þai do lat se vs vnto
 Of þaim drede we nocht ne of þair mone
 For at þe vtteraunce we hafe had to do
With alle þat wer myghty passed forth *and* gone 90
 Afore þis tyme hafyng þair diuiciacione
 Emproure kynge *and* conqwerours alle
 Lords *temperall* and *spyritualle*

Þe neyne worthy Judas Machabeus sure
 Julyus Cesar. Godfray de bolayne
 Alexander Dauyd Ector *and* Athure 95
 Kyng Charls Duk Josue þe captayne
 With al þe troiane knyghtes most souerayne
With fayr Elyn bewtyuows of vysage
 Pollysene Luces, Dydo of Cartage

Þies *and* oþer war also fayr as Ie 100
 Hit durst þai not styr n mofe *in* no wyse
 When possession on þaim taken had we
 For al venomos wormes to devyse
 Acowmpenyd ar to þat seruise
 With vs for to halde ar þai set fully 105
 How vnto devowre *and* waste vttyrly

Þe cokatrys þe basilysk *and* þe dragon
 Þe lyzard þe tortoys þe coluber
 Þe tode þe mowdewarp *and* þe scorpyon
 Þe vypera þe snake *and* þe eddyr 110
 Þe crawpaude þe pyssemoure *and* þe canker
 Þe spytterd þe mawkes þe evet of kynde
 Þe watyr leyche *and* oþer ar not behynde

Þe body spekes to þe wormes:

Remedy can I fynde none in no wyse
 Socowre ne no relese in no stownde 115
 Bot *in* þis case must I go after þair devyse
 Þorowly gnawen my flesche *and* sore bownde
 For þai ar hateful to lyfes kynde fownde
 What sal I do bot lat þaim hafe þair wyll
 Aventure me must abyde þof þai do me spyll 120

Þe wormes answers to þe body:

Þe fyrst day þow was borne *our* mesyngers we sende
 Vn to þaim we gaf in *our* commawndement
 As *in* charge þai suld vs not offende
 Ne not departe fro þe to deth on þe went
 Þe to frete *and* to gnawe was oure intent 125
 And after come *with* þe to *our* regyowne
 Þi flesche here to hafe for þair warysowne

Whilk has obeyde our *commaundment*
 Of þis may þou on no wyse say nay
 Bot þat *sum* both þi wombe *and* stomak hent 130
 Owdyr lyce or neytes in þi hede alway
 Wormes in þe handes flees *in* þe bedde I þe say.
With oþer venomosnes dyuers *and* sondry
 To warne low of vs to make low redy.

Þe body spekes to þe wormes:

Now knawe I wele *your* mensyngers þai were 135
 Þe whilk *with* me *in* lyfe keyyd resydence
 No langer wil I dispute þis matere
 Nor debate bot suffer *lour* violence
 Do *lour* will *with* me at *lour* beneuolence

Bot lit *in* þe sawter Daud says þat alle 140
 Sal be obeyent vn to mans calle

þe wormes awnswers to þe body:

þat power dures whils man has lyfe
 In þis wrechid world here ar þai þe apon
 Now þi lyfe is gone *with* vs may þou not stryfe
 þou art bot as erthe *and* as þinge to noght gone 145
 Lyke as I þe sayd was *in* þine aduencione
 Of lentyn comynge þe ask wedynsday
 When þe preste *with* asses crosses al way

And *with* asses blisses to hafe rememoraunce
 What þou art *and* wher to þou sal turne agayne 150
 For asses þou was afore þis instaunce
 And asses sal þou be *after* for certayne
 Be þou lord lady or hye sufferayne
 To powder *and* dust *in* tyme to *cum* þou salt
 Of worldly goynforth swylk is þi entyrvall 155

þe body spekes to þe wormes:

Allas alas now knaw I ful well
 þat in my lyfe was I made lewyd *and* vnwyse
With a reynawnde pryde so mykil for to mell
 For myne abowndant bewte to so devyse
 To prowde hafe I bene to wanton *and* to nyse 160
 In worldly plesaunce gret delyte hafyng
 To be my comper none worthy þinkyng

And now soget to wormes I am beyng
 Beryng þair *preue* mensyngers dayly
 As loppes *and* lyce *and* oþer wormes right *commerowsly* 165
 Vnknawyng fro whyne þai come trewly
 To þis can I say no more vttyrly
 Bot arme me I must *with* gode sufferaunce
 Oure lordes will to abyde *with* al þe *circumstaunce*.

þe wormes awnswers to þe body:

By þis sufferaunce of vs no thanke gyt lee 170
 For by *lour* wil lyfed hafe euer le walde

Rememor Ie sal with will of Iour hert fre
 In holy scripture *and* Ie wele behalde
 Þat þe fayrnes of women talde
 Is bot vayne þinge *and* transitory 175
 Women dredyng god sal be prayсед holy

Þe body spekes to þe wormes:

Ha now is to late tyme paste to call agayne
 As now at þis stownde bot put me onely
 In þe mercy of *our* lord god most sufferayne
 Whilk is for þe best so to do sothely 180
 And þat þos on lyfe may hafe space to be redy
 To rememor *in* þe same wyse also
 Contynewly þinkyng *in* þe tyme to cum þerto

What he sal be *and* also what is he
 Be it he or sche be þai *neuer* so fayr bewar 185
 Of pryde *with* his felows þat nocht be
 Þe whilk oft men brynges *in* to care
 As scripture *mencion* makes þe soth to declare
 Þerfore gode is to avoyde fleshly *temptacoun*
 By þe feende *our* foo both wroght *and* done 190

Þis þat I hafe *complened and* sayd
 In no displesyng take it Iow vnto
 Lat vs be frendes at þis sodayn brayde
 Neighbours *and* luf as before we gan do
 Let vs kys *and* dwell to gedyr euermore 195
 To þat god wil þat I sal agayne vpryse
 At þe day of dome before þe hye justyse

With þe body glorified to be
 And of þat nowmbyr þat I may be one
 To cum to þat blis of heuen *in* fee 200
 Þorow þe mene *and* þe mediacione
 Of *our* blisсед lord *our* verry patrone
 Þar *in* abilite to be for his hye plesaunce
 Amen Amen *pour* charite at þis *instaunce*.

Now spekes he þat sawe þe vysion:

Whit þis I woke fro slepe sompnolent 205

Or of a slomery meditacoun
 To a holy man of hye excellent
 Mefed I þis dreme *and* strange vysion
 Whilk bad me put it vndir scripcion
 Als nere as I cowde remembyr me *verely* 210
 In als fayn langage as I cowde godely

Vn to þe reders þinge delectabyll
 And a monyscyon both to styr *and* to mefe
 Man *and* woman to be acceptabyll
 Vn to *our* lord *and* al lustes for to lefe 215
 Of wardly þinges whilk dos þaim grefe
 And þe more rather to call vn to mynde
 Oure saueour *and* to hym vs bynde. Amen.

A Disputation Between the Body and the Worms
 Translation

During a season of great mortality,
 With pestilence reigning, and other disease,
 I felt a great urge to change my locality—
 To go as a pilgrim, my conscience to ease—
 And left for the country as quick as you please. 5
 I saw there a church on a holy day
 And, having made ready, I went there to pray.

The church stood in a field alone.
 To hear a mass was my full intent.
 Ere I came the mass was said and done, 10
 But the church-door was open, and in I went.
 I knelt to pray and humbly bent
 My knees, making deep obeisance
 Before an image, with great reverence.

Beside me I saw a tomb or sepulcher 15
 That seemed to be freshly adorned and raised—
 Just newly made, by my conjecture—
 With sundry arms thereon emblazed.
 Upon the epitaph I boldly gazed.
 Gilt gold on copper gleamed each line, 20
 With a woman's figure, fresh and fine.

She was well attired in the newest array.
 Her long locks had a golden gleam.
 As I slept I was taken in such a way
 I was rapt from myself into a dream. 25
 I heard, strange to say, all manner of jawing
 Between this fair corpse and the worms on her gnawing.
 In the manner of a dialogue it went.
 Take heed, therefore, from this event:

The Body speaks to the Worms:

“Worms, O worms,” this body mourned. 30
 “Why do you thus? What makes you eat?
 By you my flesh is foully adorned,
 Which once was a figure fresh and sweet,
 Right amiable, fragrant, and always neat.
 Of all creatures I was loved the best, 35
 Called lady and sovereign, I do attest.

As to beauty, I was a lady of worth,
 From gentle blood descending in right line
 From Eve, and of true noble birth.
 All hearts were glad my presence to divine; 40
 Men of honor and worship to me did incline;
 And now here in earth death has come to me.
 Among worms I lie naked—behold and see!

Most unnatural neighbors that ever were known!
 You have me for lunch and for supper at night, 45
 Now gnawing and eating me right to the bone
 With a greedy, insatiable appetite.
 There’s no rest, for always you suck and bite.
 You won’t abstain for a single hour
 But are always ready to cruelly devour! 50

When first you worms my body found
 It seems you’d been fed but meagerly.
 Now you’ve grown fat and ugly and round.
 Leave me alone, out of courtesy,
 And dwell with someone else besides me, 55
 Who may reward you with better pay,
 For I’m almost gone—almost eaten away!”

The Worms speak to the Body:

“No, no, we won’t depart from you
 While one of your bones with another’s connected,
 Till we have scoured and polished ‘em, too, 60
 Made ‘em clean as can be, not a joint neglected.
 And for our work, there’s no pay expected.
 For gold, silver, or riches we have no need.
 We only ask your flesh on which to feed.

For we have no way of tasting or smelling 65
 Your horrible, rotting, stinking waste.
 All creatures find you extremely repelling
 Except for us worms; we’re already disgraced.
 If we, as beasts, could smell or taste,
 Do you think that we your corpse would touch? 70
 Nope, we’d surely avoid it, thank you very much!”

The Body speaks to the Worms:

“My word, you are discourteous to me
 To threaten me so, and my body deface,
 And thus leave me only bare bones to see.
 Now where are my knights? Come forth to this place! 75
 And you worshipful squires, both high and base—
 Who once offered me your whole devotion
 And life-long service, with heart-felt emotion,

Committing your lives into my charge—
 To do me service, now come and defend me 80
 From these nasty worms, so ugly and large,
 That are gnawing my flesh with such cruelty,
 Devouring and eating now as you see.
 You who once said you loved me dear
 Now save and succor my body here!” 85

The Worms answer the Body:

“What should they do? We want to hear.
 We dread them not, nor fear their moans,
 For we’ve to the uttermost made good cheer
 With all that were mighty, who’ve left their thrones
 Before this time, having received their bones. 90

All of them: conquerors, emperors, kings,
Lords both over temporal and spiritual things.

All the nine worthy: Alexander the Great,
Judas Maccabeus, and David of old,
Caesar and Hector and Guinevere's mate, 95
Godfrey and Joshua and Charlemagne bold,
With all Trojan knights, each with honor untold,
And beautiful Helen, so fair of visage,
Polyxena, Lucrece, and Dido of Carthage.

These—and more—were your equals in looks 100
Yet dared they not to stir or move
Once we possession of them took.
For all venomous worms it does behoove
To do this labor, as soon they'll prove.
With us to stay they're fully set: 105
They'll waste and devour you utterly yet.

The cockatrice, the basilisk, and the dragon,
The toad and the tortoise with his shell on his back,
The newt, the mole, and the scorpion, 110
The crab and the ants, both red and black,
The viper, the adder, all prepped to attack,
The maggots, the leeches, the spiders (all kinds),
And the lizard—and others are not far behind."

The Body speaks to the Worms:

"Of cure or of remedy I can find none,
Release or succor can't be found, 115
I must do their bidding, when all's said and done,
With chewed-up flesh, here underground,
For towards all the living their hate does abound.
What shall I do but let them enjoy me?
My fate awaits, although they destroy me!" 120

The Worms answer the Body:

"The day you were born our heralds we sent,
And charged them straitly not to fail.
We gave them a strict commandment
Not to leave you till death made you pale,

Intending them to fret and gnaw and ail, 125
 And then to come to this region with you
 To have your flesh here as their due.

They have obeyed and done as we said—
 To this you certainly cannot say nay.
 You've had worms in your hands and fleas in your bed 130
 Or lice or nits in your hair each day,
 Also stomach-worms to plague you in every way,
 And venomous creatures, night and morning,
 To make you ready and give you warning.

The Body speaks to the Worms:

“Now to you I can those vermin impute, 135
 Which with me in life kept residence.
 I will no longer keep up this dispute
 Nor debate, but suffer your violence.
 Do your will with me at your benevolence.
 But yet David's Psalter says that all 140
 Shall be obedient unto Man's call.”

The Worms answer the Body:

“That power lasts only while Man is alive;
 Here in the grave, we have the last say.
 Since your life is gone, you may no longer strive
 Against us worms, for you're nothing but clay, 145
 As you'll recall from that holy day
 When the priest, to mark the start of Lent,
 Makes a cross of ash on each penitent.

And with ash blesses you to have in mind
 What you are, and to what you'll turn again, 150
 For ashes you were before this time,
 And ashes you'll be hereafter for certain.
 Be you lord, lady, or high sovereign,
 To powder and dust in time you will come,
 Of your worldly sojourn such is the sum.” 155

The Body speaks to the Worms:

“Alas, alas, now I know full well,

That all my life I was a fool.
 With a reigning pride too much to tell,
 I thought of myself as a beautiful jewel
 And was wanton and frivolous, as a rule, 160
 Having great delight in worldly pleasure,
 Thinking none to be my equal measure.

As for these worms who now address me,
 I bore their messengers each day—
 Those fleas and lice that sore oppressed me— 165
 Not knowing how they came my way.
 More truly than this I cannot say,
 But I must myself with patience provide,
 In all circumstances God's will to abide.”

The Worms answer the Body:

“You get no thanks from us for this admission: 170
 If you had your will, to life you'd hold.
 But if you by your heart's volition
 Look in holy scripture, you may behold
 That the fairness of women, as therein told,
 Is but a vain thing, and transitory. 175
 But God-fearing women shall be praised as holy.”

The Body speaks to the Worms:

“Yes, now it's far too late to call
 At this point in time, but put me there—
 Which to do is truly the best of all—
 In the mercy of our Lord's constant care. 180
 And that those in life may have space to prepare,
 To consider in the same wise also,
 They should think, in the time before they go,

Of their future states and their origins.
 Whether man or woman, no matter how fair, 185
 Beware of pride and his fellow sins
 Which often bring mortals into care,
 As scripture makes mention, the truth to declare.
 It is good to shun temptations of flesh,
 By the fiend our foe made to enmesh. 190

For all that I've said, and you worms reviled,
 Be not displeased, I humbly implore.
 Let us be friends for a little while
 And love each other as we did before.
 Let us dwell together forevermore— 195
 Till I rise again at God's command
 On Judgment Day, and before him stand.

With this body to be glorified.
 And of that number may I be one
 With heaven's bliss to be supplied 200
 Through the mercy and mediation
 Of our blessed Lord, our very patron,
 There to dwell forever for his delight:
 Amen, Amen, for his love and might."

Now speaks he who saw the vision:

With this I from my dream awoke— 205
 Or from my slumbering meditation.
 Of this dream, this vision, then I spoke
 To a holy man of high reputation.
 To write it down was his exhortation,
 As nearly as I could remember it, 210
 In fair language, according to my wit,

To be to the reader a great delight,
 And an admonition to all who believe—
 Both men and women—to live upright
 Before God and all their lusts to leave 215
 For worldly things which their spirits grieve,
 And rather the more to call to mind
 Our Savior and to him us bind. Amen.