

Geoffrey Chaucer: *The Knight's Tale*

Abbreviated and re-spelled by Brother Anthony

Part I

Summary of the opening portion of text: *Theseus returns to Athens with Hippolyta, his bride-to-be, and her sister Emelye.*

Theseus meets the widows

859: Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
860: There was a duke that highte Theseus;
861: Of Atthenes he was lord and governor,
862: And in his time such a conqueror,
863: That greater was there none under the sonne.
864: Full many a riche country had he wonne;
865: What with his wisdom and his chivalrye,
866: He conquered all the regne of Femenye,
867: That whilom was ycleped Scithia,
868: And weddede the queen Ypolita,
869: And broght her home with him in his contree
870: With muchel glory and great solempnytee,
871: And eek her younge sister Emelye.
872: And thus with victory and with melodye
873: Let I this noble duke to Atthenes ride,
874: And all his host in armes him beside.
875: And certes, if it nere too long to heare,
876: I wold have told you fully the mannere
877: How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
878: By Theseus and by his chivalrye;
879: And of the grete bataille for the nones
880: Bitwixen Atthenes and Amazones;
881: And how asseiged was Ypolita,
882: The fair, hardy queen of Scithia;
883: And of the feast that was at her weddinge,
884: And of the tempest at her home-cominge;
885: But all that thing I moot as now forbear.
886: I have, God woot, a large field to ere,
887: And weake been the oxen in my plough.
888: The remenant of the tale is long enough.
889: I wol nat letten eek none of this route;
890: Lat every fellow tell his tale aboute,
891: And lat see now who shall the supper winne;
892: And there I left, I wol again biginne.

He is met by a group of wailing widows whose husbands have been killed in the siege of Thebes. King Creon of Thebes is refusing to allow the dead to be buried. They appeal for his help. Theseus sends Hippolyta and Emelye into Athens and sets off for Thebes. He destroys the city, kills Creon, and enables the women to bury their dead husbands. He allows pillagers to go among the heaps of dead Theban soldiers

*to take anything of value. They find the cousins **Palamon and Arcite** wounded but not dead. Theseus allows them to live but declares that they will stay for ever in a prison cell. (This very harsh treatment is never explained).*

Summary of the next portion of text: *Through the cell window they both see Emelye in a garden and both fall in love with her. This rivalry destroys their close relationship.*

They see Emelye in the garden; it is May, the month of youthful love.

1030: And in a tower, in anguish and in wo,
1031: This Palamon and his fellow Arcite
1032: For everemoore; ther may no gold hem quite.
1033: This passeth year by year and day by day,
1034: Till it fell once, in a morrow of May,
1035: That Emelye, that fairer was to sene
1036: Than is the lilye upon his stalke greene,
1037: And fressher than the may with flowers newe --
1038: For with the rose colour stroof here hue,
1039: I noot which was the finer of them two --
1040: Er it were day, as was her wone to do,
1041: She was arisen and already dight;
1042: For May woll have no slogardie a-night.
1043: The seasoun priketh every gentil hearte,
1044: And maketh him out of his sleep to sterte,
1045: And sayth arise, and do thin observaunce.
1046: This maked Emelye have remembraunce
1047: To doon honour to May, and for to rise.
1048: Yclothed was she fresh, for to devise:
1049: Her yellow hair was broided in a tresse
1050: Behind hir bak, a yarde long, I guesse.
1051: And in the garden, at the sunne upriste,
1052: She walketh up and down, and as hire liste
1053: She gathereth flowers, party white and rede,
1054: To make a subtile garland for her heade;
1055: And as an angel heavenisshly she song.
1056: The greate tower, that was so thick and strong,
1057: Which of the castle was the chief dongeoun,
1058: (ther as the knightes weren in prison
1059: Of which I tolde yow and tellen shall)
1060: Was even joynant to the garden wall
1061: There as this Emelye had hir playinge.
1062: Bright was the sun and clear that morwenynge,
1063: And Palamoun, this woful prisoner,
1064: As was his wone, by leave of his jailer,
1065: Was risen and roamed in a chambre on high,
1066: In which he all the noble citee seigh,
1067: And eek the garden, ful of branches greene,
1068: There as this freshe Emelye the shene
1069: Was in hire walk, and roamed up and down.
1070: This sorrowful prisoner, this Palamoun,
1071: Goth in the chambre roaminge to and fro,

1072: And to himself complainyng of his wo.
1073: That he was born, full oft he said, Allas!
1074: And so bifell, by aventure or cas,
1075: That thurgh a window, thick of many a barre
1076: Of iron great and square as any sparre,
1077: He cast his eye upon Emelya,
1078: And therwithal he bleynte and cride, A!
1079: As though he stongen were unto the hearte.
1080: And with that cry Arcite anon up starte,
1081: And saide, '*Cousin min, what aileth thee,*
1082: *That art so pale and deadly on to see?*
1083: *Why cridestow? who hath thee done offence?*

Arcite mistakenly thinks he is upset at the injustice they are enduring, and tries kindly to comfort him with philosophy, ideas taken in fact from Boethius.

1084: *For Goddes love, take all in patience*
1085: *Oure prison, for it may noon other be.*
1086: *Fortune hath geven us this adversitee.*
1087: *Som wikke aspect or disposicioun*
1088: *Of Saturne, by som constellacioun,*
1089: *Hath geven us this, although we hadde it sworn;*
1090: *So stood the hevene whan that we were born.*
1091: *We must endure it; this is the short and playn.'*

Palamon explains.

1092: This Palamon answered and said again:
1093: '*Cousin, for sooth, of this opinion*
1094: *Thou hast a vain imaginacion.*
1095: *This prison caused me nat for to crye,*
1096: *But I was hurt right now thurghout mine ye*
1097: *Into mine hearte, that wol my bane be.*
1098: *The fairness of that lady that I see*
1099: *Yond in the garden roaming to and fro*
1100: *Is cause of all my cryng and my wo.*
1101: *I noot whe'r she be woman or goddesse,*
1102: *But Venus is it soothly, as I guesse.'*
1103: And therwithal on knees down he fill,
1104: And saide: '*Venus, if it be thy will*
1105: *You in this garden thus to transfigure*
1106: *Before me, sorrowful, wretched creature,*
1107: *Out of this prison help that we may scapen.*
1108: *And if so be my destiny be shapen*
1109: *By eterne word to dien in prison,*
1110: *Of oure linage have som compassion,*
1111: *That is so low ybrought by tyrannye.'*

Arcite in turn sees Emelye and falls in love.

1112: And with that word Arcite gan espye
1113: Whereas this lady roamed to and fro,

1114: And with that sight hir beauty hurt him so,
1115: That, if that Palamon was wounded sore,
1116: Arcite is hurt as much as he, or more.
1117: And with a sigh he saide pitously:
1118: *The fresshe beauty sleeth me suddenly*
1119: *Of hire that roameth in the yonder place,*
1120: *And but I have her mercy and her grace,*
1121: *That I may seen her atte leaste waye,*
1122: *I nam but dead; ther nis namore to saye.'*

They quarrel, because 'love knows no laws'.

1123: This Palamon, whan he tho wordes herde,
1124: Dispitously he looked and answerde,
1125: Wheither seistow this in earnest or in pley?
1126: Nay, quod Arcite, in earnest, by my fey!
1127: God helpe me so, me list ful yvele pleye.
1128: This Palamon gan knytte his browes tweye.
1129: It nere, quod he, to thee no greet honour
1130: For to be fals, ne for to be traitour
1131: To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother
1132: Ysworn ful depe, and ech of us til oother,
1133: That nevere, for to dyen in the peyne,
1134: Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne,
1135: Neither of us in love to hyndre oother,
1136: Ne in noon oother cas, my leeve brother;
1137: But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me
1138: In every cas, as I shal forthren thee, --
1139: This was thyn ooth, and myn also, certeyn;
1140: I woot right wel, thou darst it nat withseyn.
1141: Thus artow of my conseil, out of doute,
1142: And now thow woldest falsly been aboute
1143: To love my lady, whom I love and serve,
1144: And evere shal til that myn herte sterve.
1145: Nay, certes, false Arcite, thow shalt nat so.
1146: I loved hire first, and tolde thee my wo
1147: As to my conseil and my brother sworn
1148: To forthre me, as I have toold biforn.
1149: For which thou art ybounden as a knyght
1150: To helpen me, if it lay in thy myght,
1151: Or elles artow fals, I dar wel seyn.
1152: This Arcite ful proudly spak ageyn:
1153: Thow shalt, quod he, be rather fals than I;
1154: And thou art fals, I telle thee outrely,
1155: For paramour I loved hire first er thow.
1156: What wiltow seyen? thou woost nat yet now
1157: Wheither she be a womman or goddesse!
1158: Thyn is affeccoun of hoolynesse,
1159: And myn is love, as to a creature;
1160: For which I tolde thee myn aventure
1161: As to my cosyn and my brother sworn.
1162: I pose that thow lovedest hire biforn;

1163: Wostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,
1164: That "who shal yeve a lovere any lawe?"
1165: Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan,
1166: Than may be yeve to any erthely man;
1167: And therefore positif lawe and swich decree
1168: Is broken al day for love in ech degree.
1169: A man moot nedes love, maugree his heed.
1170: He may nat fleen it, thogh he sholde be deed,
1171: Al be she mayde, or wydwe, or elles wyf.
1172: And eek it is nat likly al thy lyf
1173: To stonden in hir grace; namoore shal I;
1174: For wel thou woost thyselven, verraily,
1175: That thou and I be dampned to prisoun
1176: Perpetuelly; us gayneth no raunsoun.
1177: We stryve as dide the houndes for the boon;
1178: They foughte al day, and yet hir part was noon.
1179: Ther cam a kyte, whil that they were so wrothe,
1180: And baar away the boon bitwixe hem bothe.
1181: And therefore, at the kynges court, my brother,
1182: Ech man for hymself, ther is noon oother.
1183: Love, if thee list, for I love and ay shal;
1184: And soothly, leeve brother, this is al.
1185: Heere in this prisoun moote we endure,
1186: And everich of us take his aventure.

Thanks to the request of a king visiting Theseus, Arcite is set free but is obliged to return to Thebes. Far from Emelye, he is unhappy, but Palamon, obliged to remain in prison) is equally unhappy.

Arcite's despairing lament, forced to live far away from Athens and Emelye

1223: He seyde, allas that day that I was born!
1224: Now is my prisoun worse than biforn;
1225: Now is me shape eternally to dwelle.
1226: Noght in purgatorie, but in helle.
1227: Allas, that evere knew I Perotheus!
1228: For elles hadde I dwelled with Theseus,
1229: Yfetered in his prisoun everemo.
1230: Thanne hadde I been in blisse, and nat in wo.
1231: Oonly the sighte of hire whom that I serve,
1232: Though that I nevere hir grace may deserve,
1233: Wolde han suffised right ynough for me.
1234: O deere cosyn Palamon, quod he,
1235: Thyn is the victorie of this aventure.
1236: Ful blisfully in prison maistow dure, --
1237: In prison? certes nay, but in paradys!
1238: Wel hath Fortune yturned thee the dys,
1239: That hast the sighte of hire, and I th' absence.
1240: For possible is, syn thou hast hire presence,
1241: And art a knyght, a worthy and an able,
1242: That by som cas, syn Fortune is chaungeable,
1243: Thow maist to thy desir somtyme atteyne.
1244: But I, that am exiled and bareyne

1245: Of alle grace, and in so greet dispeir,
 1246: That ther nys erthe, water, fir, ne eir,
 1247: Ne creature that of hem maked is,
 1248: That may me helpe or doon confort in this,
 1249: Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope and distresse.
 1250: Farwel my lif, my lust, and my gladnesse!
 1251: Allas, why pleynten folk so in commune
 1252: On purveiaunce of god, or of Fortune,
 1253: That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse
 1254: Wel bettre than they kan hemself devyse?
 1255: Som man desireth for to han richesse,
 1256: That cause is of his mordre or greet siknesse;
 1257: And som man wolde out of his prisoun fayn,
 1258: That in his hous is of his meynee slayn.
 1259: Infinite harmes been in this mateere.
 1260: We witen nat what thing we preyen heere:
 1261: We faren as he that dronke is as a mous.
 1262: A dronke man woot wel he hath an hous,
 1263: But he noot which the righte wey is thider,
 1264: And to a dronke man the wey is slider.
 1265: And certes, in this world so faren we;
 1266: We seken faste after felicitee,
 1267: But we goon wrong ful often, trewely.
 1268: Thus may we seyen alle, and namely I,
 1269: That wende and hadde a greet opinioun
 1270: That if I myghte escapen from prisoun,
 1271: Thanne hadde I been in joye and perfit heele,
 1272: Ther now I am exiled fro my wele.
 1273: Syn that I may nat seen you, Emelye,
 1274: I nam but deed; ther nys no remedye.

Palamon's despairing lament, obliged to be in prison

1275: Upon that oother syde Palamon,
 1276: Whan that he wiste Arcite was agon,
 1277: Swich sorwe he maketh that the grete tour
 1278: Resouneth of his youlyng and clamour.
 1279: The pure fettres on his shynes grete
 1280: Weren of his bittre, salte teeres wete.
 1281: Allas, quod he, Arcita, cosyn myn,
 1282: Of al oure strif, God woot, the fruyt is thyn.
 1283: Thou walkest now in Thebes at thy large,
 1284: And of my wo thou yevest litel charge.
 1285: Thou mayst, syn thou hast wisdom and manhede,
 1286: Assemblen alle the folk of oure kynrede,
 1287: And make a werre so sharp on this citee,
 1288: That by som aventure or some treetee
 1289: Thou mayst have hire to lady and to wyf
 1290: For whom that I moste nedes lese my lyf.
 1291: For, as by wey of possibilitee,
 1292: Sith thou art at thy large, of prisoun free,
 1293: And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage

1294: Moore than is myn, that sterve here in a cage.
1295: For I moot wepe and wayle, whil I lyve,
1296: With al the wo that prison may me yive,
1297: And eek with peyne that love me yeveth also,
1298: That doubleth al my torment and my wo.
1299: Therwith the fyr of jalousie up sterte
1300: Withinne his brest, and hente him by the herte
1301: So woodly that he lyk was to biholde
1302: The boxtree or the asshen dede and colde.

Palamon's Boethian question as to why some people have to suffer so much.

1303: Thanne seyde he, o cruell goddes that governe
1304: This world with byndyng of youre word eterne,
1305: And writen in the table of atthamaunt
1306: Youre parlement and youre eterne graunt,
1307: What is mankynde moore unto you holde
1308: Than is the sheep that rouketh in the folde?
1309: For slayn is man right as another beest,
1310: And dwelleth eek in prison and arreest,
1311: And hath siknesse and greet adversitee,
1312: And ofte tymes giltelees, pardee.
1313: What governance is in this prescience,
1314: That giltelees tormenteth innocence?
1315: And yet encresseth this al my penaunce,
1316: That man is bounden to his observaunce,
1317: For goddes sake, to letten of his wille,
1318: Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfille.
1319: And whan a beest is deed he hath no peyne;
1320: But man after his deeth moot wepe and pleyne,
1321: Though in this world he have care and wo.
1322: Withouten doute it may stonden so.
1323: The answeere of this lete I to dyvynys,
1324: But wel I woot that in this world greet pyne ys.
1325: Allas, I se a serpent or a theef,
1326: That many a trewe man hath doon mescheef,
1327: Goon at his large, and where hym list may turne.
1328: But I moot been in prisoun thurgh Saturne,
1329: And eek thurgh Juno, jalous and eek wood,
1330: That hath destroyed wel ny al the blood
1331: Of Thebes with his waste walles wyde;
1332: And Venus sleeth me on that oother syde
1333: For jalousie and fere of hym Arcite.

A question by the narrator for the audience to debate: which is more unhappy?

1334: Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite,
1335: And lete hym in his prisoun stille dwelle,
1336: And of Arcite forth I wol yow telle.
1337: The somer passeth, and the nyghtes longe
1338: Encressen double wise the peynes stronge
1339: Bothe of the loveere and the prisoner.

1340: I noot which hath the wofuller mester.
 1341: For, shortly for to seyn, this Palamoun
 1342: Perpetuelly is dampned to prisoun,
 1343: In cheynes and in fettres to been deed;
 1344: And Arcite is exiled upon his heed
 1345: For everemo, as out of that contree,
 1346: Ne nevere mo he shal his lady see.
 1347: Yow loveres axe I now this questioun:
 1348: Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun?
 1349: That oon may seen his lady day by day,
 1350: But in prison he moot dwelle alway;
 1351: That oother wher hym list may ride or go,
 1352: But seen his lady shal he nevere mo.
 1353: Now demeth as yow liste, ye that kan,
 1354: For I wol telle forth as I bigan.

Part II

Arcite returns to Thebes in great sorrow at being separated from the sight of Emelye. His pain is so great that his appearance changes. A year or two pass. The god Mercury appears to him in a dream and encourages him to return to Athens: 1392: Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende. Unaware of the ambiguity of this oracle, he returns to Athens and very soon gets a job at court; at first a humble laborer in Emelye's household, he is soon noticed by the court and Theseus as a very promising young man.

Yet we are told nothing of his contacts with or feelings toward Emelye during the 3 years that he spends in her service. In all, we learn, 7 years have now passed. One day Palamon drugs his guards, escapes from prison, and hides in a grove (wood) just outside of Athens. Arcite goes to the same grove; they meet and agree to fight to the death to decide who should have Emelye.

Theseus, Hippolyta and Emelye go hunting and find them fighting. The two explain who they are and why they are fighting. They each ask Theseus to kill them both, rather than let the other have Emelye. Theseus agrees but the women beg him to have pity, and he accepts their request. He ponders:

Theseus comments on love

1785: The God of love, a, benedicite!
 1786: How myghty and how greet a lord is he!
 1787: Ayeyns his myght ther gayneth none obstacles.
 1788: He may be cleped a God for his myracles;
 1789: For he kan maken, at his owene gyse,
 1790: Of everich herte as that hym list divyse.
 1791: Lo heere this Arcite and this Palamoun,
 1792: That quitly weren out of my prisoun,
 1793: And myghte han lyved in Thebes roially,
 1794: And witen I am hir mortal enemy,
 1795: And that hir deth lith in my myght also;
 1796: And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,
 1797: Broght hem hyder bothe for to dye.
 1798: Now looketh, is nat that an heigh folye?
 1799: Who may been a fool, but if he love?
 1800: Bihoold, for goddes sake that sit above,

1801: Se how they blede! be they nocht wel arrayed?
 1802: Thus hath hir lord, the God of love, ypayed
 1803: Hir wages and hir fees for hir servyse!
 1804: And yet they wenen for to been ful wyse
 1805: That serven love, for aught that may bifalle.
 1806: But this is yet the beste game of alle,
 1807: That she for whom they han this jolitee
 1808: Kan hem therfore as mucche thank as me.
 1809: She woot namoore of al this hoot fare,
 1810: By god, than woot a cokkow or an hare!
 1811: But all moot ben assayed, hoot and coold;
 1812: A man moot ben a fool, or yong or oold, --
 1813: I woot it by myself ful yore agon,
 1814: For in my tyme a servant was I oon.
 1815: And therfore, syn I knowe of loves peyne,
 1816: And woot hou soore it kan a man distreyne,
 1817: As he that hath ben caught ofte in his laas,
 1818: I yow foryeve al hoolly this trespaas,
 1819: At requeste of the queene, that kneleth heere,
 1820: And eek of Emelye, my suster deere.
 1821: And ye shul bothe anon unto me swere
 1822: That nevere mo ye shal my contree dere,
 1823: Ne make werre upon me nyght ne day,
 1824: But been my freendes in all that ye may.
 1825: I yow foryeve this trespas every deel.

Theseus proposes a tournament to decide which of them should marry Emelye. They accept and set off to find their teams of 100 knights each.

Part III

Theseus builds an arena ('lists') for the tournament, with three temples above the gates: Venus above the east gate, Mars over the west gate, and Diana over the north gate. The paintings in each temple are described in great detail.

The temple of Venus

1918: First in the temple of Venus maystow se
 1919: Wroght on the wal, ful pitous to biholde,
 1920: The broken slespes, and the sikes colde,
 1921: The sacred teeris, and the waymentynge,
 1922: The firy strokes of the desiryng
 1923: That loves servantz in this lyf endure;
 1924: The othes that hir covenantz assuren;
 1925: Plesaunce and hope, desir, foolhardynesse,
 1926: Beautee and youthe, bauderie, richesse,
 1927: Charmes and force, lesynges, flaterye,
 1928: Despense, bisynesse, and jalousye,
 1929: That wered of yelewe gooldes a gerland,
 1930: And a cokkow sittyng on hir hand;
 1931: Festes, instrumentz, caroles, daunces,
 1932: Lust and array, and alle the circumstaunces

1933: Of love, which that I rekned and rekne shal,
 1934: By ordre weren peynted on the wal,
 1935: And mo than I kan make of mencioun.
 1936: For soothly al the mount of citheroun,
 1937: Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellynge,
 1938: Was shewed on the wal in portreyngge,
 1939: With al the gardyn and the lustynesse.
 1940: Nat was foryeten the porter, Ydelnesse,
 1941: Ne Narcisus the faire of yore agon,
 1942: Ne yet the folye of kyng Salomon,
 1943: Ne yet the grete strengthe of Ercules --
 1944: Th-enchautementz of Medea and Circes --
 1945: Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage,
 1946: The riche Cresus, kaytyf in servage.
 1947: Thus may ye seen that wysdom ne richesse,
 1948: Beautee ne sleighte, strengthe ne hardynesse,
 1949: Ne may with Venus holde champartie,
 1950: For as hir list the world than may she gye.
 1951: Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las,
 1952: Til they for wo ful ofte seyde allas!
 1953: Suffiseth heere ensamples oon or two,
 1954: And though I koude rekene a thousand mo.
 1955: The statue of Venus, glorious for to se,
 1956: Was naked, fletyngge in the large see,
 1957: And fro the navele doun al covered was
 1958: With wawes grene, and brighte as any glas.
 1959: A citole in hir right hand hadde she,
 1960: And on hir heed, ful semely for to se,
 1961: A rose gerland, fressh and wel smellyngge;
 1962: Above hir heed hir dowves flikeryngge.
 1963: Biforn hire stood hir sone Cupido;
 1964: Upon his shuldres wynges hadde he two,
 1965: And blynd he was, as it is often seene;
 1966: A bowe he bar and arwes brighte and kene.

The temple of Mars

1967: Why sholde I nocht as wel eek telle yow al
 1968: The portreiture that was upon the wal
 1969: Withinne the temple of myghty Mars the rede?
 1970: Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and brede,
 1971: Lyk to the estres of the grisly place
 1972: That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace,
 1973: In thilke colde, frosty regioun
 1974: Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.
 1975: First on the wal was peynted a forest,
 1976: In which ther dwelleth neither man ne best,
 1977: With knotty, knarry, bareyne trees olde,
 1978: Of stubbes sharpe and hidouse to biholde,
 1979: In which ther ran a rumbel in a swough,
 1980: As though a storm sholde bresten every bough.
 1981: And dounward from an hille, under a bente,

1982: Ther stood the temple of Mars armypotente,
1983: Wroght al of burned steel, of which the entree
1984: Was long and streit, and gastly for to see.
1985: And therout came a rage and swich a veze
1986: That it made al the gate for to rese.
1987: The northren lyght in at the dores shoon,
1988: For wyndowe on the wal ne was ther noon,
1989: Thurgh which men myghten any light discerne.
1990: The dore was al of adamant eterne,
1991: Yclenched overthwart and endelong
1992: With iren tough; and for to make it strong,
1993: Every pyler, the temple to sustene,
1994: Was tonne-greet, of iren bright and shene.
1995: Ther saugh I first the derke ymaginyng
1996: Of felonye, and al the compassyng;
1997: The crueel ire, reed as any gleede;
1998: The pykepurs, and eek the pale drede;
1999: The smylere with the knyf under the cloke;
2000: The shepne brennyng with the blake smoke;
2001: The tresoun of the mordrynge in the bedde;
2002: The open werre, with woundes al bibledded;
2003: Contek, with blody knyf and sharp manace.
2004: Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.
2005: The sleere of hymself yet saugh I ther, --
2006: His herte-blood hath bathed al his heer;
2007: The nayl ydryven in the shode a-nyght;
2008: The colde deeth, with mouth gapyng upright.
2009: Amyddes of the temple sat Meschaunce,
2010: With disconfort and sory contenance.
2011: Yet saugh I Woodnesse, laughyng in his rage,
2012: Armed compleint, outhees, and fiers outrage;
2013: The careyne in the busk, with throte ycorve;
2014: A thousand slayn, and nat of qualm ystorve;
2015: The tiraunt, with the pray by force yraft;
2016: The toun destroyed, ther was no thyng laft.
2017: Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres;
2018: The hunte strangled with the wilde beres;
2019: The sowe freten the child right in the cradel;
2020: The cook yscalded, for al his longe ladel.
2021: Noght was foryeten by the infortune of Marte
2022: The cartere overryden with his carte:
2023: Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.
2024: Ther were also, of Martes divisioun,
2025: The barbour, and the bocher, and the smyth,
2026: That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his styth.
2027: And al above, depeynted in a tour,
2028: Saugh I Conquest, sittynge in greet honour,
2029: With the sharpe swerd over his heed
2030: Hangynge by a soutil twynes threed.
2031: Depeynted was the slaughtre of Julius,
2032: Of grete Nero, and of Antonius;
2033: Al be that thilke tyme they were unborn,

2034: Yet was hir deth depeynted ther-biforn
2035: By manasyng of Mars, right by figure.
2036: So was it shewed in that portreiture,
2037: As is depeynted in the sterres above
2038: Who shal be slayn or elles deed for love.
2039: Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde;
2040: I may nat rekene hem alle though I wolde.
2041: The statue of Mars upon a carte stood
2042: Armed, and looked grym as he were wood;
2043: And over his heed ther shynen two figures
2044: Of sterres, that been cleped in scriptures,
2045: That oon Puella, that oother Rubeus --
2046: This God of armes was arrayed thus.
2047: A wolf ther stood biforn hym at his feet
2048: With eyen rede, and of a man he eet;
2049: With soutil pencil depeynted was this storie
2050: In redoutynge of Mars and of his glorie.

The temple of Diana

2051: Now to the temple of Dyane the chaste,
2052: As shortly as I kan, I wol me haste,
2053: To telle yow al the descripsioun.
2054: Depeynted been the walles up and down
2055: Of huntyng and of shamefast chastitee.
2056: Ther saugh I how woful Calistopee,
2057: Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
2058: Was turned from a womman til a bere,
2059: And after was she maad the loode-sterre;
2060: Thus was it peynted, I kan sey yow no ferre.
2061: Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may see.
2062: Ther saugh I Dane, yturned til a tree, --
2063: I mene nat the goddesse Diane,
2064: But Penneus doghter, which that highte Dane.
2065: Ther saugh I Attheon an hert ymaked,
2066: For vengeaunce that he saugh Diane al naked;
2067: I saugh how that his houndes have hym caught
2068: And freeten hym, for that they knewe hym naught.
2069: Yet peynted was a litel forther moor
2070: How Atthalante hunted the wilde boor,
2071: And Meleagre, and many another mo,
2072: For which Dyane wroghte hym care and wo.
2073: Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
2074: The which me list nat drawen to memorie.
2075: This goddesse on an hert ful hye seet,
2076: With smale houndes al aboute hir feet;
2077: And underne the hir feet she hadde a moone, --
2078: Wexynge it was and sholde wanye soone.
2079: In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,
2080: With bowe in honde, and arwes in a cas.
2081: Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun,
2082: Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.

2083: A womman travaillynge was hire biforn;
2084: But for hir child so longe was unborn,
2085: Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle,
2086: And seyde, Help, for thou mayst best of alle!
2087: Wel koude he peynten lifly that it wroghte;
2088: With many a floryn he the hewes boghte.

Palamoun asks the great hero Lygurge to act as his main companion, Arcite has Emetreus. The two are described at length. A year passes and the two groups arrive at Athens. Theseus welcomes them and holds a great feast that Chaucer describes while saying he is not describing it.

The feast

2197: The mynstralcy, the service at the feeste,
2198: The grete yiftes to the meeste and leeste,
2199: The riche array of theseus paleys,
2200: Ne who sat first ne last upon the deys,
2201: What ladyes fairest been or best daunsynge,
2202: Or which of hem kan dauncen best and synge,
2203: Ne who moost felyngly speketh of love;
2204: What haukes sitten on the perche above,
2205: What houndes liggen on the floor adoun, --
2206: Of al this make I now no mencion,
2207: But al th' effect, that thynketh me the beste.
2208: Now cometh the point, and herkneth if yow leste.

Before the battle, Palamon, Arcite, and Emelye go to the temples of their respective gods and pray; the two knights both receive signs promising victory; Emelye is told she will have to marry one of the two.

The gods quarrel

2438: And right anon swich strif ther is bigonne,
2439: For thilke grauntyng, in the hevne above,
2440: Bitwixe Venus, the goddesse of love,
2441: And Mars, the stierne God armypotente,
2442: That Juppiter was bisy it to stente;
2443: Til that the pale Saturnus the colde,
2444: That knew so manye of adventures olde,
2445: Foond in his olde experience an art
2446: That he ful soone hath plesed every part.
2447: As sooth is seyde, elde hath greet advantage;
2448: In elde is bothe wysdom and usage;
2449: Men may the olde atrenne, and nocht atrede.
2450: Saturne anon, to stynten strif and drede,
2451: Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,
2452: Of al this strif he gan remedie fynde.

Saturn's speech, his self-description very similar to the style of the description of the paintings in the temples

2453: My deere doghter Venus, quod Saturne,
 2454: My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,
 2455: Hath moore power than woot any man.
 2456: Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan;
 2457: Myn is the prison in the derke cote;
 2458: Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte,
 2459: The murmure and the cherles rebellyng,
 2460: The groynynge, and the pryvee empoysonyng;
 2461: I do vengeance and pleyn correcLioun,
 2462: Whil I dwelle in the signe of the leoun.
 2463: Myn is the ruyne of the hye halles,
 2464: The fallynge of the toures and of the walles
 2465: Upon the mynour or the carpenter.
 2466: I slow Sampson, shakynge the piler;
 2467: And myne be the maladyes colde,
 2468: The derke tresons, and the castes olde;
 2469: My lookyng is the fader of pestilence.
 2470: Now weep namoore, I shal doon diligence
 2471: That Palamon, that is thyn owene knyght,
 2472: Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.
 2473: Though Mars shal helpe his knyght, yet nathelees
 2474: Bitwixe yow ther moot be som tyme pees,
 2475: Al be ye noght of o compleccioun,
 2476: That causeth al day swich divisioun.
 2477: I am thyn aiel, redy at thy wille;
 2478: Weep now namoore, I wol thy lust fulfille.
 2479: Now wol I stynten of the goddes above,
 2480: Of Mars, and of Venus, goddessse of love,
 2481: And telle yow as pleynly as I kan
 2482: The grete effect, for which that I bygan.

Part IV

The next day all gather at the lists after a night of great activity:

Preparations for the battle

2496: Ther maystow seen devisyng of harneys
 2497: So unkouth and so riche, and wroght so weel
 2498: Of goldsmythrye, of browdyng, and of steel;
 2499: The sheeldes brighte, testeris, and trappures,
 2500: Gold-hewen helmes, hauberkes, cote-armures;
 2501: Lordes in parementz on hir courseres,
 2502: Knyghtes of retenue, and eek squieres
 2503: Nailynge the speres, and helmes bokelynge;
 2504: Giggynge of sheeldes, with layneres lacyng
 2505: (there as nede is they weren no thyng ydel);
 2506: The fomy steedes on the golden brydel
 2507: Gnawynge, and faste the armurers also
 2508: With fyle and hamer prikyng to and fro;
 2509: Yemen on foote, and communes many oon
 2510: With fyle and hamer prikyng to and fro;
 2511: Pypes, trompes, nakers, clariounes,

2512: That in the bataille blowen bloody sounes;
2513: The paleys ful of peple up and doun,
2514: Heere thre, ther ten, holdynge hir questioun,
2515: Dyvynyng of thise Thebane knyghtes two.
2516: Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal be so;
2517: Somme helden with hym with the blake berd,
2518: Somme with the balled, somme with the thikke herd;
2519: Somme seyde he looked grymme, and he wolde fighte;
2520: He hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte.
2521: Thus was the halle ful of divynyng,
2522: Longe after that the sonne gan to sprynge.

Theseus decides to eliminate all dangerous weapons from the 'battle' to prevent any of these noble knights from being killed. When any knight is overpowered, he is to be removed from the fighting, and if either Palamon or Arcite is taken prisoner or killed, that is the end. All gather at the lists. The heralds announce the battle and the fight begins:

2601: Ther is namoore to seyn, but west and est
2602: In goon the speres ful sadly in arrest;
2603: In gooth the sharpe spore into the syde.
2604: Ther seen men who kan juste and who kan ryde;
2605: Ther shyveren shaftes upon sheeldes thikke;
2606: He feeleth thurgh the herte-spoon the prikke.
2607: Up sprynge speres twenty foot on highte;
2608: Out goon the swerdes as the silver brighte;
2609: The helmes they tohewen and toshrede;
2610: Out brest the blood with stierne stremes rede;
2611: With myghty maces the bones they tobreste.
2612: He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste;
2613: Ther stomblen steedes stronge, and doun gooth al;
2614: He rolleth under foot as dooth a bal;
2615: He foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,
2616: And he hym hurtleth with hors adoun;
2617: He thurgh the body is hurt and sither take,
2618: Maugree his heed, and broght unto the stake:
2619: As forward was, right there he moste abyde.
2620: Another lad is on that oother syde.
2621: And some tyme dooth hem Theseus to reste,
2622: Hem to refresshe and drynken, if hem leste.
2623: Ful ofte a day han thise Thebanes two
2624: Togydre ymet, and wroght his felawe wo;
2625: Unhorsed hath ech oother of hem tweye.
2626: Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgopheye,
2627: Whan that hir whelp is stole whan it is lite,
2628: So crueel on the hunte as is Arcite
2629: For jelous herte upon this Palamon.
2630: Ne in Belmarye ther nys so fel leon,
2631: That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
2632: Ne of his praye desireth so the blood,
2633: As Palamon to sleen his foo Arcite.
2634: The jelous strokes on hir helmes byte;

2635: Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydes rede.

Palamon is captured. Everyone is happy, but not Venus. Saturn reassures her that her promise will be satisfied too.

Arcite's fate

2671: The trompours, with the loude mynstralcie,
2672: The heraudes, that ful loude yelle and crie,
2673: Been in hire wele for joye of daun Arcite.
2674: But herkneth me, and stynteth noyse a lite,
2675: Which a myracle ther bifel anon.
2676: This fierse Arcite hath of his helm ydon,
2677: And on a courser, for to shewe his face,
2678: He priketh endelong the large place
2679: Lokynge upward upon this Emelye;
2680: And she agayn hym caste a freendlich ye
2681: (for wommen, as to speken in comune,
2682: Thei folwen alle the favour of Fortune)
2683: And was al his chiere, as in his herte.
2684: Out of the ground a furie infernal sterte,
2685: From Pluto sent at requeste of Saturne,
2686: For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
2687: And leep aside, and foundred as he leep;
2688: And er that Arcite may taken keep,
2689: He pighte hym on the pomel of his heed,
2690: That in the place he lay as he were deed,
2691: His brest tobrosten with his sadel-bowe.
2692: As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,
2693: So was the blood yronnen in his face.
2694: Anon he was yborn out of the place,
2695: With herte soor, to Theseus paleys.
2696: Tho was he korven out of his harneys,
2697: And in a bed ybrought ful faire and blyve;
2698: For he was yet in memorie and alyve,
2699: And alwey crynge after Emelye.
2700: Duc Theseus, with al his compaignye,
2701: Is comen hoom to Atthenes his citee,
2702: With alle blisse and greet solempnitee.
2703: Al be it that this aventure was falle,
2704: He nolde nocht disconforten hem alle.
2705: Men seyde eek that Arcite shal nat dye;
2706: He shal been heeled of his maladye.

Theseus feasts everyone and sends them back home. But Arcite's wound is too severe and he cannot live. He takes a last farewell of Emelye:

Arcite's last words

2765: Naught may the woful spirit in myn herte
2766: Declare o point of alle my sorwes smerte
2767: To yow, my lady, that I love moost;

2768: But I biquethe the servyce of my goost
2769: To yow aboven every creature,
2770: Syn that my lyf may no lenger dure.
2771: Allas, the wo! allas, the peynes stronge,
2772: That I for yow have suffred, and so longe!
2773: Allas, the deeth! allas, myn Emelye!
2774: Allas, departyng of oure compaignye!
2775: Allas, myn hertes queene! allas, my wyf!
2776: Myn hertes lady, endere of my lyf!
2777: What is this world? what asketh men to have?
2778: Now with his love, now in his colde grave
2779: Allone, withouten any compaignye.
2780: Fare wel, my sweete foo, myn Emelye!
2781: And softe taak me in youre armes tweye,
2782: For love of god, and herkneth what I seye.
2783: I have heer with my cosyn Palamon
2784: Had strif and rancour many a day agon
2785: For love of yow, and for my jalousye.

He tells Emelye that Palamon is worthy of her,

Arcite's death

2798: And with that word his speche faille gan,
2799: For from his feet up to his brest was come
2800: The coold of deeth, that hadde hym overcome,
2801: And yet mooreover, for in his armes two
2802: The vital strengthe is lost and al ago.
2803: Oonly the intellect, withouten moore,
2804: That dwelled in his herte syk and soore,
2805: Gan faillen whan the herte felte deeth.
2806: Dusked his eyen two, and failed breath,
2807: But on his lady yet caste he his ye;
2808: His laste word was, Mercy, Emelye!
2809: His spirit chaunged hous and wente ther,
2810: As I cam nevere, I kan nat tellen wher.
2811: Therefore I stynte, I nam no divinistre;
2812: Of soules fynde I nat in this registre,
2813: Ne me ne list thilke opinions to telle
2814: Of hem, though that they writen wher they dwelle.
2815: Arcite is coold, ther Mars his soule gye!

Theseus is 'comforted' by his father Egeus:

Egeus' speech

2837: No man myghte gladen Theseus,
2838: Savyng his olde fader Egeus,
2839: That knew this worldes transmutacioun,
2840: As he hadde seyn it chaunge bothe up and down,
2841: Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse,
2842: And shewed hem ensamples and liknesse.
2843: Right as ther dyed nevere man, quod he,

2844: That he ne lyvede in erthe in some degree,
2845: Right so ther lyvede never man, he seyde,
2846: In al this world, that som tyme he ne deyde.
2847: This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,
2848: And we been pilgrymes, passynge to and fro.
2849: Deeth is an ende of every worldly soore.
2850: And over al this yet seyde he muchel moore
2851: To this effect, ful wisely to enhorte
2852: The peple that they sholde hem reconforte.

The trees in the grove are cut down to make the funeral pyre and all is prepared:

Arcite's funeral

2870: And after this, Theseus hath ysent
2871: After a beere, and it al over spradde
2872: With clooth of gold, the richeste that he hadde.
2873: And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite;
2874: Upon his hondes hadde he gloves white,
2875: Eek on his heed a coroune of laurer grene,
2876: And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
2877: He leyde hym, bare the visage, on the beere;
2878: Therwith he weep that pitee was to heere.
2879: And for the peple sholde seen hym alle,
2880: Whan it was day, he broghte hym to the halle,
2881: That roreth of the cryng and the soun.
2882: Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,
2883: With flotery berd and ruggy, asschy heeres,
2884: In clothes blake, ydropped al with teeres;
2885: And, passynge othere of wepyng, Emelye,
2886: The rewefulleste of al the compaignye.
2887: In as muche as the servyce sholde be
2888: The moore noble and riche in his degree,
2889: Duc Theseus leet forth thre steedes bryng,
2890: That trapped were in steel al gliteryng,
2891: And covered with the armes of daun Arcite.
2892: Upon this steedes, that weren grete and white,
2893: Ther seten folk, of whiche oon baar his sheeld,
2894: Another his spere up on his hondes heeld,
2895: The thridde baar with hym his bowe turkeys
2896: (of brend gold was the caas and eek the harneys);
2897: And riden forth a paas with sorweful cheere
2898: Toward the grove, as ye shul after heere.
2899: The nobleste of the Grekes that ther were
2900: Upon hir shuldres caryeden the beere,
2901: With slakke paas, and eyen rede and wete,
2902: Thurghout the citee by the maister strete,
2903: That sprad was al with blak, and wonder hye
2904: Right of the same is the strete ywrye.
2905: Upon the right hond wente olde Egeus,
2906: And on that oother syde duc Theseus,
2907: With vessels in hir hand of gold ful fyn,

2908: Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn;
 2909: Eek Palamon, with ful greet compaignye;
 2910: And after that cam woful Emelye,
 2911: With fyr in honde, as was that tyme the gyse,
 2912: To do the office of funeral servyse.
 2913: Heigh labour and ful greet apparaillynge
 2914: Was at the service and the fyr-makyng,
 2915: That with his grene top the hevne raughte;
 2916: And twenty fadme of brede the armes straughte --
 2917: This is to seyn, the bowes weren so brode.
 2918: Of stree first ther was leyd ful many a lode.
 2919: But how the fyr was maked upon highte,
 2920: Ne eek the names that the trees highte,
 2921: As ook, firre, birch, aspe, alder, holm, popler,
 2922: Wylugh, elm, plane, assh, box, chasteyn, lynde, laurer,
 2923: Mapul, thorn, bech, hasel, ew, whippeltree, --
 2924: How they weren feld, shal nat be toold for me;
 2925: Ne hou the goddes ronnen up and doun,
 2926: Disherited of hire habitacioun,
 2927: In which they woneden in reste and pees,
 2928: Nymphes, fawnes and amadrides;
 2929: Ne hou the beestes and the briddes alle
 2930: Fledden for fere, whan the wode was falle;
 2931: Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
 2932: That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright;
 2933: Ne how the fyr was couched first with stree,
 2934: And thanne with drye stikkis cloven a thre,
 2935: And thanne with grene wode and spicerye,
 2936: And thanne with clooth of gold and with perrye,
 2937: And gerlandes, hangyng with ful many a flour;
 2938: The mirre, th' encens, with al so greet odour;
 2939: Ne how Arcite lay among al this,
 2940: Ne what richesse aboute his body is;
 2941: Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,
 2942: Putte in the fyr of funeral servyse;
 2943: Ne how she swowned whan men made the fyr,
 2944: Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desir;
 2945: Ne what jeweles men in the fyre caste,
 2946: Whan that the fyr was greet and brente faste;
 2947: Ne how somme caste hir sheeld, and somme hir spere,
 2948: And of hire vestimentz, whiche that they were,
 2949: And coppes fulle of wyn, and milk, and blood,
 2950: Into the fyr, that brente as it were wood;
 2951: Ne how the Grekes, with an huge route,
 2952: Thries riden al the fyr aboute
 2953: Upon the left hand, with a loud shoutyng,
 2954: And thries with hir speres clateryng;
 2955: And thries how the ladyes gonne crye;
 2956: Ne how that lad was homward Emelye;
 2957: Ne how Arcite is brent to asshen colde;
 2958: Ne how that lyche-wake was yholde
 2959: Al thilke nyght; ne how the Grekes pleye

2960: The wake-pleyes, ne kepe I nat to seye;
2961: Who wrastleth best naked with oille enoynt,
2962: Ne who that baar hym best, in no disjoynt.
2963: I wol nat tellen eek how that they goon
2964: Hoom til Atthenes, whan the pley is doon;
2965: But shortly to the point thanne wol I wende,
2966: And maken of my longe tale an ende.

Theseus, anxious to make peace with Thebes, later sends for Palamon and Emelye and addresses them using terms from Boethius. First there is a long discourse about the happiness of dying young. Then he tells them to stop grieving and get married.

Theseus's speech

2987: The firste moevere of the cause above,
2988: Whan he first made the faire cheyne of love,
2989: Greet was th' effect, and heigh was his entente.
2990: Wel wiste he why, and what thereof he mente;
2991: For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
2992: The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond
2993: In certeyn boundes, that they may nat flee.
2994: That same prince and that moevere, quod he,
2995: Hath stablissed in this wrecched world adoun
2996: Certeyne dayes and duracioun
2997: To al that is engendred in this place,
2998: Over the whiche day they may nat pace,
2999: Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge.
3000: Ther nedeth noight noon auctoritee t' allegge,
3001: For it is preeved by experience,
3002: But that me list declaren my sentence.
3003: Thanne may men by this ordre wel discerne
3004: That thilke moevere stable is and eterne.
3005: Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,
3006: That every part dirryveth from his hool;
3007: For nature hath nat taken his bigynnyng
3008: Of no partie or cantel of a thyng,
3009: But of a thyng that parfit is and stable,
3010: Descendynge so til it be corrumpable.
3011: And therefore, of his wise purveiaunce,
3012: He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,
3013: That spesces of thynges and progressiouns
3014: Shullen enduren by successiouns,
3015: And nat eterne, withouten any lye.
3016: This maystow understonde and seen at ye.
3017: Loo the ook, that hath so long a norisshynge
3018: From tyme that it first bigynneth to sprynge,
3019: And hath so long a lif, as we may see,
3020: Yet at the laste wasted is the tree.
3021: Considereth eek how that the harde stoon
3022: Under oure feet, on which we trede and goon,
3023: Yet wasteth it as it lyth by the weye.
3024: The brode ryver somtyme wexeth dreye;

3025: The grete tounes se we wane and wende.
 3026: Thanne may ye se that al this thyng hath ende.
 3027: Of man and womman seen we wel also
 3028: That nedes, in oon of thise termes two,
 3029: This is to seyn, in youthe or elles age,
 3030: He moot be deed, the kyng as shal a page;
 3031: Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
 3032: Som in the large feeld, as men may see;
 3033: Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilke weye.
 3034: Thanne may I seyn that al this thyng moot deye.
 3035: What maketh this but Juppiter, the kyng,
 3036: That is prince and cause of alle thyng,
 3037: Convertinge al unto his propre welle
 3038: From which it is dirryved, sooth to telle?
 3039: And heer-agayns no creature on lyve,
 3040: Of no degree, availleth for to stryve.
 3041: Thanne is it wysdom, as it thynketh me,
 3042: To maken vertu of necessitee,
 3043: And take it weel that we may nat eschue,
 3044: And namely that to us alle is due.
 3045: And whoso gruccheth ought, he dooth folye,
 3046: And rebel is to hym that al may gye.
 3047: And certainly a man hath moost honour
 3048: To dyen in his excellence and flour,
 3049: Whan he is siker of his goode name;
 3050: Thanne hath he doon his freend, ne hym, no shame.
 3051: And gladder oghte his freend been of his deeth,
 3052: Whan with honour up yolden is his breath,
 3053: Than whan his name apalled is for age,
 3054: For al forgeten is his vassellage.
 3055: Thanne is it best, as for a worthy fame,
 3056: To dyen whan that he is best of name.
 3057: The contrarie of al this is wilfulnesse.
 3058: Why grucchen we, why have we hevynesse,
 3059: That goode Arcite, of chivalrie the flour,
 3060: Departed is with duetee and honour
 3061: Out of this foule prisoun of this lyf?
 3062: Why grucchen heere his cosyn and his wyf
 3063: Of his welfare, that loved hem so weel?
 3064: Kan he hem thank? nay, God woot, never a deel,
 3065: That both his soule and eek himself offende,
 3066: And yet they mowe hir lustes nat amende.
 3067: What may I conclude of this longe serye,
 3068: But after wo I rede us to be merye,
 3069: And thanken Juppiter of al his grace?
 3070: And er that we departen from this place
 3071: I rede that we make of sorwes two
 3072: O parfit joye, lastynge everemo.
 3073: And looketh now, wher moost sorwe is herinne,
 3074: Ther wol we first amenden and bigynne.
 3075: Suster, quod he, this is my fulle assent,
 3076: With al th' avys heere of my parlement,

3077: That gentil Palamon, youre owene knyght,
3078: That serveth yow with wille herte, and myght,
3079: And ever hath doon syn ye first hym knewe,
3080: That ye shul of youre grace upon hym rewe,
3081: And taken hym for housbonde and for lord.
3082: Lene me youre hond, for this is oure accord.
3083: Lat se now of youre wommanly pitee.
3084: He is kynges brother sone, pardee;
3085: And though he were a povre bacheler,
3086: Syn he hath served yow so many a yeer,
3087: And had for yow so greet adversitee,
3088: It moste been considered, leeveth me;
3089: For gentil mercy oghte to passen right.
3090: Thanne seyde he thus to Palamon the knight:
3091: I trowe ther nedeth litel sermonyng
3092: To make yow assente to this thyng.
3093: Com neer, and taak youre lady by the hond.

Conclusion

3094: Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond
3095: That highte matrimoigne or mariage,
3096: By al the conseil and the baronage.
3097: And thus with alle blisse and melodye
3098: Hath Palamon ywedded Emelye.
3099: And God, that al this wyde world hath wroght,
3100: Sende hym his love that hath it deere aboght;
3101: For now is Palamon in alle wele,
3102: Lyvyng in blisse, in richesse, and in heele,
3103: And Emelye hym loveth so tendrely,
3104: And he hire serveth al so gentilly,
3105: That nevere was ther no word hem bitwene
3106: Of jalousie or any oother teene.
3107: Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye;
3108: And God save al this faire compaignye! Amen.