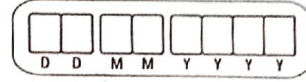


Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales



Geoffrey Chaucer : [1340 - 1400]

He was an English poet, author, and civil servant best known for "The Canterbury Tales". He has been ~~the~~ called the "Father of English literature". or, alternatively, the "Father of English poetry". He was the first writer to be buried in what has since come to be called "Poet's Corner", in Westminster Abbey.

He was born in London. He was the outstanding English poet before Shakespeare and "the first finder of our language". His The Canterbury Tales ranks as one of the greatest poetic works in English. He also contributed importantly in the second half of the 14th century to the management of public affairs as Courtier, diplomat, and civil servant. In that career he was trusted and aided by three successive kings -

* Edward III,

* Richard II

* Henry IV. But it is his avocation - the writing of poetry for which he is remembered.

His notable works are.....

1. House of Fame ✓
2. Legend of Good women ✓
3. The Book of the Duchess ✓
4. The Canon's Yeoman's Tale ✓
5. The Canterbury Tales ✓

He died on 95 October 1400 in London, England.

The Knight's Tale

"The Knight's Tale" is a story about war and love. There once was a king ← duke named Theseus. He was a powerful man and he ruled over all of Athens. He had just conquered the Amazons and married their queen, Hippolyta. She had a younger sister named Emily. And together they traveled back to the city of Athens with Theseus and his army.

On their journey back, Theseus was happy about his victory. But then he saw a group of women in the middle of the road. ~~Theseus~~ women were dressed all in black, like death. And they were crying. One of them grabbed the leash of Theseus's horse. "How dare you disrupt me and my victory!" Theseus shouted. Now, tell me who you people are." One woman answered "I am sorry. We do not mean to disrupt your victory. ~~One~~ We have been waiting for you we need your help."

Theseus asked, "why do you need my help, Believe it or not, I was once a beautiful queen. But now I am grieving. We all have lost our husbands at the Battle of Thebes. An evil man named Creon killed them and took over our city. He would not let us bury our men. He let wild dogs eat them! Please, help us," the woman cried.

Theseus thought his heart would break after hearing their story. He promised to avenge their husbands and defeat the evil Creon. He turned around on his horse and took his entire army to the city of Thebes. Theseus stopped at a field outside of the city. There, he fought Creon and his army. He killed Creon and then recaptured Thebes. He returned the bones of dead husbands to the women. They were able to bury their husbands and find peace.

Meanwhile, looters stole armor and weapons from the dead bodies on the battlefield. And while the looters searched, they found two young knights. These knights were cousins and belonged to the royal family of Thebes. Their names were Arcite and Palamon. But these young knights were badly wounded from battle and close to death. So the looters took the wounded knights to Theseus. Theseus ordered that the knights be taken to Athens and put in prison.

When Theseus returned to Athens, he was called a hero and given a crown made of flowers. Years passed, each one filled with honor for Duke Theseus, and misery for the two knights. But then, on a spring morning, something changed. Emilie, the Queen's beautiful sister, was walking through the garden. She sang songs and picked flowers. Above the garden was the prison tower where the two knights, Arcite and Palamon, lived.

Palamon walked in circles, feeling bad for himself. He wished he had never been born. Then, he saw the beautiful Emily. Palamon felt as if someone had stabbed his heart. "What's wrong, cousin? You look as white as a ghost," Arcite said.

"That is because I have seen the death of me," Palamon answered. "Below is the most beautiful woman. She is Venus herself. Dear gods, please have mercy on me and help me escape this prison!"

Arcite looked out the window and saw the woman. He then shared Palamon's pain. "She is more beautiful than Venus," Arcite said. Palamon was angry. He turned to Arcite and shouted, "Cousin, you are a traitor! I fell in love with her first. I will not let you steal her from me." Arcite laughed and said, "It's every man for himself out here, cousin. We both love her. And we are both stuck here in this prison. That is the end of that."

For a long time, Arcite and Palamon resented each other. Meanwhile, another duke named Perotheus came to Athens to visit Theseus. The two had been best friends since they were children. Duke Perotheus was also good friends with Arcite. So Perotheus begged Theseus to free his friend from the prison tower. And eventually Theseus did, but it took.

Perseus many requests and many prayers. But there was a catch. The catch was that Arcite could never return to Athens, no matter the ^{condition} reason. And if he did, Theseus would cut his head off. The only option Arcite had was to return to Thebes. This was awful for Arcite, because all he wanted was to see Emily. He would have rather stayed in prison if it meant he could see her.

"Curse my life! Palamon, you have won!" Arcite had shouted. "All I have ever wanted was to escape that tower, and now that I have, I am more miserable. I thought I knew what would make me happy, but I was wrong. We think we know where to find happiness, but we don't. We are like drunk men trying to find their houses but always get lost along the way. That is life. That is me now. Because I can't see you, my beautiful Emily, I might as well be dead."

Palamon, on the other hand, was furious that Arcite had escaped the tower. "Damn you, Arcite!" he cried, "You've won the fight. You are free to go back to Thebes. You can raise an army, capture Athens, and make Emily your Queen. And I will not be here." A fire grew within Palamon, and it burned with rage. "The gods are cruel!" he screamed. "You make all men, even the innocent, suffer. And then you let us die."

why should we even try to be good? You have allowed for an awful snake to get away and doomed me to waste away in this tower. The gods are punishing me! The summer passed miserably for both Arcite and Palamon. Each day was a day away from Emily. One was banished from Athens and the other was chained away in the prison tower.

Then one night, Arcite had a dream. In this dream, the god Mercury told him to go back to Athens. And so Arcite set off for the city where his beautiful Emily lived. Palamon had set off too. He had broken free from prison with the help of a friend. This friend had put opium in the prison guard's wine. Palamon hid in a grove, planning his next move to win Emily.

Now both Arcite and Palamon were in Athens and on one fateful day the two of them reconnected. Arcite had become Theseus's main servant through trickery. He pretended to be someone else, a man named Philostrato. And Palamon was hiding in a grove. When Arcite went for a stroll and cried about his love for Emily, Palamon jumped out from the bushes.

"Arcite, you traitor! It's me, Palamon! I have escaped from prison. You can either forget about Emily or die here by my bare hands! She is mine and mine only," Palamon screamed.

D O M M Y Y Y Y

Arcite drew his sword and said, "Love has made you crazy. If you had a weapon, I would kill you here and now! But since we are knights, we will act as knights. That is why I challenge you to battle. We fight tomorrow. Come alone. If you kill me, Emily is yours!"

Palamon agreed, and they parted ways. The next days they faced each other in the grove. They didn't say a word, but they helped each other ~~but~~ put on their armor. Then they grabbed their spears and began fighting. It lasted for hours. So much blood was spilled.

It was also this day that Theseus decided to go hunting in the grove. Hippolyta and Emily went with him. Theseus immediately found Arcite and Palamon battling like two of them and pulled out his sword. "Stop! I will kill whoever swings next! Tell me what is going on here!" Theseus demanded.

And so, the two knights confessed their crimes and their love for Emily. Theseus also learned of Arcite's trickery. But before theseus could swing his sword, Hippolyta and Emily begged him to stop. They convinced him to have mercy. He did, but under the condition that the knights never war against Athens. Arcite and Palamon agreed and thanked him.

Then Theseus told the knights to leave for a year and prepare for a tournament in Athens. The winner would marry Emily.

The day of the tournament came quickly. Theseus had a grand stadium built for the event, while both knights railed an army to fight for them. But their armies were no ordinary group of fighters. Their armies included kings from other great cities and knights of the best kind.

All of Athens was excited for this day. Everyone, except for the lovely Emily.

The morning of the tournament, Emily prayed to the goddess Diana. She begged for Diana to stop the battle from happening.

Truly, all Emily wanted was to remain unmarried and to serve Diana. She did not want these men to fight over her.

However, Diana appeared before Emily and told her that she would marry one of the knights. Emily was in shock but decided to trust Diana's plan for her. And so the tournament! The crowd shouted with excitement as Theseus, Palamon, and Arcite rode in with a grand parade. Both armies lined up, each one equal in skill and honor.

Once everyone found their place, the announcer shouted, "Let the battle begin!" And with that, the trumpets blared, and the fight started! The knights raced on their horses, spears went flying into the air, and blood splattered the stadium. Arcite and Palamon fought like hungry lions.

No one knew who would win. No one, except the gods.

It was Palamon who met defeat. still, he fought. Even though he was losing, he did not want to accept his loss. He could not Emily.

So, Theseus ended the battle. He saw that Palamon had lost. It was announced that Arcite would marry Emily. The Ground cheered! Arcite rode on his horse victoriously. Though, not all the gods were happy with this outcome. The goddess Venus had wanted Palamon to win. She was so sad that he lost. Whereas the god Mars so happy that Arcite won. Meanwhile, the god Saturn had another plan.

Suddenly, an earthquake shook the ground. Arcite flew off his horse. He was badly hurt. Blood covered his face. Arcite was taken to get his wounds healed, but they only grew worse. He was heartbroken. He knew he would die. So he asked Emily to do him a favor. "Emily, my love," Arcite said. "I am so sorry. But please, if you decide to marry again, marry Palamon, my dear Cousin."

Then Arcite died, and the god Mars took care of his soul. Emily cried and cried, as did Palamon. In fact, all of Athens cried. It was a tragic moment. A moment that lasted for several years. Eventually, time healed this wound and Theseus called for Palamon and Emily to talk with him. He decided it would be best to unite Thebes and Athens. He asked the knight and the beautiful woman to marry.

"We must not grieve forever," Theseus said. "To do so brings no honor to the dead. It brings no honor to Arcite. It is time we turn our sorrows into joy." So Theseus married Emily and Palamon. As husband and wife, they loved each other deeply and never fought or suffered. In the end, Palamon finally won Emily, his true love.

Miller's Tale

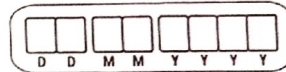
Fate:—

Like the Knight's Tale, this story deals with fate and the idea of getting what you deserve. For his trickery, Nicholas ends up with a burnt arse. John ends up with a wife who cheated on him and looking a fool, despite all of his worry and jealousy. Absolon ends up kissing an arse.

Comedy and Seriousness.

This story is obviously comedic and absurd at some points. But there is also a serious aspect to it. It seems funny that the two have tricked John, but the final scene is told more seriously, showing an old man very injured and meanly ticked.

"The Miller's Tale"



The Miller

- * A large man with a red beard.
- * Often steals from his customers or overcharges them.
- * He's the ideal Medieval "lower class", but does tell a clever story.

Prologue

Now it's the Monk's turn to tell his tale. However, the drunk Miller interrupts, and insists he has a tale better than the knight. The Host tries to make him wait his turn, but he threatens to leave if he can't go, so they let him. He says this is a tale about how a clerk made a fool of a Carpenter (meaning he slept with his wife.). The Reeve objects to such a story, but the Miller carries on.

There was an Oxford student named Nicholas. He was staying with an old Carpenter, John and his wife Alisoun. John was possessive of his wife, as she was quite beautiful and young.

One day, Nicholas and Alisoun begin to flirt. She agrees to sleep with him, but only when they know they won't get caught. A religious man named Absolon also loves Alisoun and tries to woo her constantly. She does not like him. Nicholas comes up with a plan to sleep with Alisoun.

He has her tell John that he is ill. John sends a servant to check on him, who confirms the man looks unwell. He goes to check on Nicholas himself. Nicholas tells him he's had a vision - on Monday, a flood larger than Noah's flood will come and destroy all life. John seems to believe him. Nicholas tells him to fasten a tub for each of them to the roof and fill them with food and water. They will sleep in the tubs and when the flood comes, float off until the water drains. Monday comes, and they are all in their tubs on the roof.

Once John falls asleep, Nicholas and Alison sneak out and go to sleep together in the house. Early in the morning, Absolon passes by. He calls to her asking for a kiss. She tries to get him to go away, but finally gives him one quick kiss. He leans ^{forward} ~~bend~~ again, but she turns around and he ends up kissing her naked "arse". Nicholas and her laugh. Angered, Absolon goes to the blacksmith and fetches ^{chiefly dialectal} a hot iron. He turns to the window and asks for a kiss. Nicholas sticks his own arse out the window, but Absolon hit him with the iron and he cries out.

to apply forcefully

The Reeve's Tale:

D	D	M	M	Y	Y

A Reeve is someone who manages someone else's estate. The Reeve in this story also used to be a carpenter. His is known to steal from his master and has a sickly look. The Reeve did not like ~~the~~ the Miller's tale - mainly because he was once a carpenter himself. He says that he will get revenge for the Miller's story before starting his own.

This story is about ^{to reduce to powder} a miller who is dishonest and often steals from the Corn that people bring to his mill for grinding. One day, a steward sends his meal to be milled, but is too sick to go and watch the miller grind it. The miller then robs ^{steal from} him of what he sent.

Two nearby students, John and Alon, hear about this and decide to make it right. They go to the mill to watch the miller grind. The miller knows what they are up to, and untethers their horse so that he can steal from them. They chase the horse and finally catch it after dark.

Now that it is dark, they ask to stay at the miller's house. He agrees. The miller has a wife, 30 year-old daughter and an infant. They have only two beds, so the miller and his wife sleep on one next to the Cradle, the daughter sleeps on one and the two boys on the third.
 → got for a baby

The boys want to think of a way to get revenge on the miller. Alan declares he will sleep with the daughter. John does not join, but doesn't want to sleep alone. He moves the baby's cradle closer to his ~~old~~ bed. The wife goes out to relieve herself, and when she comes back she mistakenly thinks John's bed is her own because the cradle is next to it. She climbs in and they sleep together.

Alan gets up early from the daughter's bed and she tells him where he can find the ^{a fine soft powder} flour her father stole from them. He gets up to find John, but, mistaking the bed without the cradle next to it as John's he climbs into bed with the miller. He whispers ^{noise} to John's, & he climbs into bed with the miller. He ~~with~~ whispers to "John" (really the miller) that he's had the daughter three times that night.

The miller gets up, ^{angry} ~~ferocious~~ and begins cursing. The wife wakes up, thinking it is one of the boys making such noise. She grabs a club and hits him. The boys grab their flour and flee.
↳ to impress deeply

The Reeve's Tale is a response to the one before it, the miller's. While the Miller's Tale played with some of the same themes as the Knight's Tale, the Reeve's Tale is more obviously in direct response to the miller.

The Wife of Bath's Tale.

The Wife of Bath begins by telling everyone that she knows much about marriage. Since she has been married five times since she was 12. She says many men criticize her, but she argues that no one knows what God wants from men and women, and many famous Bible figures had many wives. She says women control their husbands with their sexual prowess. The Pardoner interrupts to say he is getting married soon, and does not want to be controlled by his wife. She tells him to listen to the story.

She speaks about her husbands, three were good because they were rich and old. Her fourth husband was young and had a mistress. Her fifth husband she loved very much but he hit her and treated her badly. She met her fifth husband while she was married to her fourth. He was much younger, but she said if her husband died she would marry him. Sure enough, he does die and they marry. The fifth husband had a book entitled "wicked wives". One day, she took pages from it and hit him. He hits and they finally agree that he will hand over his estate to her and she will act kind.

Her tale takes place in Britain, in the age of King Arthur. One day, a knight happens across a young lady and rapes her. He is to be put to death, but Arthur's queen asks to give him one chance. The queen tells him that if, within one year, he can find "what women want most in the world", he can keep his life. If he cannot find the answer, he will die.

The knight goes on his way, asking every woman this question. The answers vary: honor, looks, sex, money, freedom. One says to be discreet, and the wife of Bath interrupts to tell us this isn't true, recounting Mides' story as proof.

The knight's time is almost up, and he heads home without an answer. On his way, he comes across a group of dancing women. He approaches, but the group suddenly disappears and only one ugly old woman stands there. The knight explains his problem to her. She says she can help, but he must pledge to be with her always. He agrees.

They return, and the knight tells the queen what the old woman has told him. "Women desire to be in charge of their husbands and lovers." The women of the court agree, and the knight's life is spared.

The Old woman asks him to marry her, and he is horrified. He begs her for another option, but she refuses. He owes her. They are married and go home together, where the knight is unhappy. She asks him why he is so upset, and he complains about her ugliness. She asks him if he would rather she be ugly but good and loyal or beautiful but unfaithful. He replies that he will leave it to her to choose. The Knight's answer gives the freedom and power. She wanted allows her to become beautiful and good. They have a long and happy marriage.

The lesson of the wife of Bath's tale seems to be that women should always be obeyed by their husbands. While many things are unsafe and unjust for women in this time - the girl the knight raped was merely walking along - there is also some power allotted to them. The queen is the one who decides the knight's fate. He must get his answer, the King that will save his life, through women as well.