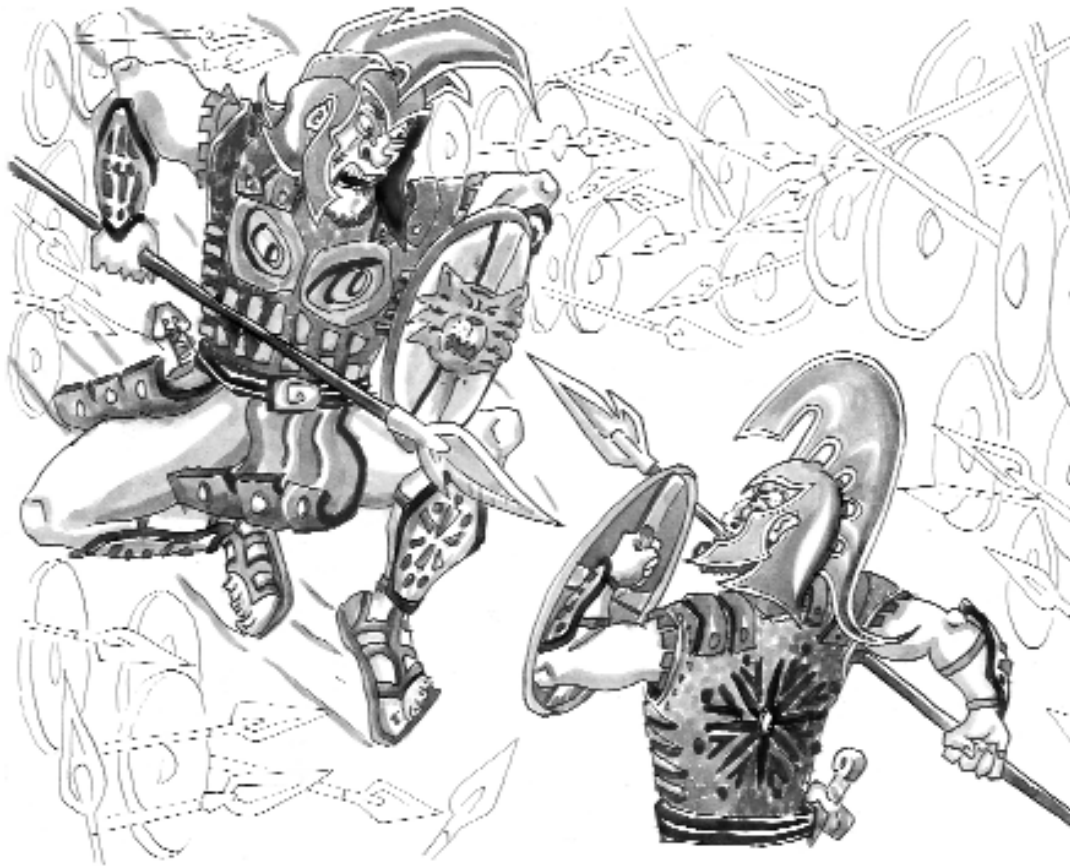


Up spryngen speres twenty foot on highte;
 Out goon the swerdes as the silver brighte;
 1751 The helmes they tohewen and toshrede;
 1752 Out brest the blood with stierne stremes rede;
 1753 With myghty maces the bones they tobreste.
 1754 He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste;
 Ther stomblen steedes stronge, and doun gooth al;
 He rolleth under foot as dooth a bal;
 1757 He foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,
 1758 And he hym hurtleth with his hors adoun;
 1759 He thurgh the body is hurt and sithen ytake,
 1760 Maugree his heed, and broght unto the stake;
 1761 As forward was, right there he moste abyde;
 Another lad is on that oother syde.
 1763 And som tyme dooth hem Theseus to reste,
 1764 Hem to refresshe, and drynken if hem leste.
 Ful ofte a day han thise Thebanes two
 1766 Togydre ymet, and wroght his felawe wo;
 Unhorsed hath ech oother of hem tweye.
 Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgopheye,
 1769 Whan that hir whelp is stole whan it is lite,
 So crueel on the hunte as is Arcite
 For jelous herte upon this Palamon;
 1772 Ne in Belmarye ther nys so fel leon
 1773 That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
 Ne of his praye desireth so the blood,
 1775 As Palamon to sleen his foo Arcite.



1751/ tohewen and toshrede = cut to pieces and shreds. 1752/ brest = burst; stierne = strong. 1753/ tobreste = smash. 1754/ He thurgh ... threste = He thrusts through the thickest of the crowd. 1757/ foyneth = stabs; tronchoun = spear shaft. 1758/ hurtleth = hurls. 1759/ sithen ytake = then taken. 1760/ Maugree his heed = Despite his efforts. 1761/ As forward was = As was agreed. 1763/ dooth hem Theseus to reste = Theseus makes them rest. 1764/ if hem leste = if they like. 1766/ wroght his felawe wo = made his opponent suffer. 1769/ whelp = cub; lite = little. 1772/ fel leon = fierce lion. 1773/ wood = mad. 1775/ sleen his foo = kill his enemy.

Arcite, a worthy fighter,
Attacked his brother like a tiger,
And Palamon, alike a lion,
With equal fierceness did defy him.
The first, though not for lack of tryin',
Could no fatal blow get by him.



1776 The jelous strokes on hir helmes byte;
 1777 Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydes rede.
 Som tyme an ende ther is of every dede.
 For er the sonne unto the reste wente,
 1780 The stronge kyng Emetreus gan hente
 This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,
 And made his swerd depe in his flessch to byte,
 And by the force of twenty is he take
 1784 Unyolden, and ydrawe unto the stake.
 1785 And in the rescus of this Palamoun
 The stronge kyng Lygurge is born adoun,
 And kyng Emetreus, for al his strengthe,
 Is born out of his sadel a swerdes lengthe,
 So hitte him Palamoun er he were take;
 But al for noght, he was broght to the stake.
 His hardy herte myghte hym helpe naught;
 He moste abyde, whan that he was caught,
 1793 By force and eek by composicioun.
 1794 Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun,
 That moot namoore goon agayn to fighte?
 And whan that Theseus hadde seyn this sighte,
 1797 Unto the folk that foghten thus echon
 1798 He cryde, "Hoo! namoore, for it is doon!
 1799 I wol be trewe juge, and no partie;
 Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelie,
 That by his fortune hath hir faire ywonne!"



1776/ jelous = furious. 1777/ renneth = runs. 1780/ hente = grabbed. 1784/ Unyolden = Without having surrendered. 1785/ rescus = rescue. 1793/ composicioun = according to the rules. 1794/ sorweth = is sorry. 1797/ echon = each one. 1798/ Hoo! = Stop! 1799/ partie = partisan.

But then, to Palamon's poor luck,
Arcite's knight behind him snuck,
And stuck a spear into his gut;
Though far from mortal was the cut,
It was enough; Arcite struck,
And Palamon, too hurt to duck,
Was knocked down, and dropped in shock
Onto the rocky ground. Not a sound,
Nor any talk was found among the crowd,
'Til Theseus declared aloud:

 "Arcite is the victor proud,
And Emelye, as I avowed,
To thee shall now be well endowed!"



Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne
 For joye of this, so loude and heighe withalle
 It semed that the lystes sholde falle.

What kan now faire Venus doon above?
 What seith she now? What dooth this queene of Love?
 But wepeth so, for wantynge of hir wille,
 Til that hir teeres in the lystes fille.
 She seyde, "I am ashamed, doutelees."

Saturnus seyde, "Doghter, hoold thy pees;
 1811 Mars hath his wille, his knyght hath al his boone,
 1812 And, by myn heed, thow shalt been esed soone."

The trompes with the loude mynstralcie,
 The heraudes that ful loude yolle and crie,
 1815 Been in hir wele for joye of daun Arcite.
 But herkneth me, and stynteth noyse a lite,
 1817 Which a myracle ther bifel anon.

1818 This fierse Arcite hath of his helm ydon,
 And on a courser for to shewe his face
 1820 He priketh endelong the large place,
 Lokynge upward upon this Emelye,
 1822 And she agayn hym caste a freendlich eye,
 1823 (For wommen, as to speken in comune,
 Thei folwen alle the favour of Fortune)
 1825 And was al his chiere, as in his herte.



1811/ boone = desire. 1812/ esed = eased. 1815/ in hir wele for joye = overjoyed; daun = Sir. 1817/ Which = What. 1818/ of his helm ydon = taken off his helmet. 1820/ priketh endelong = pranced from end to end. 1822/ agayn hym = in return. 1823/ in comune = in general. 1825/ al his chiere = his inspiration.

Arcite's happiness exploded
In him, and he rose and showed it,
As above his foe he gloated,
Crowed and boasted and showboated,



1826 Out of the ground a furie infernal sterte,
 From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne,
 For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
 1829 And leep aside and foundred as he leep;
 1830 And er that Arcite may taken keep,
 1831 He pighte hym on the pomel of his heed,
 That in the place he lay as he were deed,
 1833 His brest tobrosten with his sadel-bowe.
 1834 As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,
 So was the blood yronnen in his face.
 Anon he was yborn out of the place,
 With herte soor, to Theseus paleys.
 1838 Tho was he korven out of his harneys,
 1839 And in a bed ybrought ful faire and blyve,
 1840 For he was yet in memorie and alyve,
 And alwey crynge after Emelye.

 1885 Swellleth the brest of Arcite, and the soore
 Encresseth at his herte moore and moore.
 1887 The clothered blood, for any lechecraft,
 1888 Corrupteth, and is in his bouk ylaft,
 1889 That neither veyne-blood, ne ventusyng,
 Ne drynke of herbes may ben his helpyng.
 1891 The vertu expulsif, or animal,
 Fro thilke vertu cleped natural
 1893 Ne may the venym voyden ne expelle.



1826/ a furie infernal sterte = a jet of flame burst. 1829/ foundred = stumbled; leep = leapt. 1830/ taken keep = catch himself. 1831/ He pighte hym on the pomel = He landed on the crown. 1833/ brest tobrosten = chest shattered. 1834/ cole = coal. 1838/ Tho = Then; korven = cut; harneys = armour. 1839/ faire and blyve = carefully and quickly. 1840/ in memorie = conscious. 1885/ soore = pain. 1887/ clothered = clotted; for any lechecraft = despite any medicine. 1888/ Corrupteth ... ylaft = Got infected and was left in his body. 1889/ veyne-blood = bleeding; ventusyng = suction-cupping. 1891/ vertu expulsif = purgative. 1893/ the venym voyden = clear the poison.

'Til the gods were overloaded
With his pride, and so they smote it;
Arcite, with a blow demoted,
Fell onto his dome and broke it.

