

Chapter 1 : Aucassin and Nicolette - Wikiquote

Aucassin and Nicolette, 19th-century oil-on-canvas by Marianne Stokes *Aucassin et Nicolette* (12th or 13th century) is an anonymous medieval French *chante-fable*, or combination of prose and verse (literally, a "sung story", similar to a *prosimetrum*).

She is a slave, bought by a captain of the town from the Saracens and reared as his own daughter. Count Garin agrees to the marriage of Aucassin to any daughter of a king or count but not to Nicolette. He goes to see the captain and tells him to send Nicolette away. The captain says that he will keep Nicolette out of sight, and she is imprisoned in the high chamber of a palace with an old woman to keep her company. Rumors speed through the countryside: Nicolette is lost; Nicolette fled the country; Nicolette was slain by order of Count Garin. Meanwhile, the war between the two counts grows more fierce, but Aucassin still refuses to fight. Father and son then make a covenant: Aucassin will go into the battle, and if God wills that he should survive, the count must agree to allow him two or three words and one kiss from Nicolette. Aucassin rides into the fray, but thoughts of Nicolette so distract him that he is captured. Then Aucassin reflects that if he is slain, he will have no chance at all to see Nicolette. Therefore, he puts his hand on his sword and begins fighting with all of his strength. He kills ten knights, wounds seven, and takes Count Bougars prisoner. Aucassin is cast into a dungeon. Nicolette, knowing her companion to be asleep, escapes from her prison by a rope made of bed linen and goes to the castle where Aucassin lies. A friendly sentinel, however, warns Nicolette of their coming. She leaps into the moat and, bruised and bleeding, climbs the outer wall. Nicolette falls asleep in a thicket near the castle. The next day, she sees some shepherds eating their lunch at a fountain nearby. She asks them to take a

The entire section is words.

Chapter 2 : Ballade of Aucassin by Andrew Lang

Aucassin rides into the fray, but thoughts of Nicolette so distract him that he is captured. Then Aucassin reflects that if he is slain, he will have no chance at all to see Nicolette.

Contact them to purchase the exquisite manuscript facsimile. Per la versione in italiano, Aucassin Nicoleta. It gives both words and music, but no illumination. Amongst his circle were such literary figures as Adam de la Halle and Brunetto Latino. The manuscript is thirteenth century. It mocks at the seriousness and hypocrisy of the Arthurian romance, blending together, in the same way as will Cervantes later in his Don Quixote, the pastoral and the epic. It plays games with reversals of conventions, the adynata, including those of gender, turning these inside out, the woman being the capable partner, the man afraid to fight, the woman being Saracen by birth, the man having the Saracen name, both being improbably blond, the king lying in childbirth while the queen fights his war - with apples and cheeses, such as are typically reflected in the drolleries of manuscript marginalia and in monastic misericordias. The manuscript is not illuminated. These reproductions are made from the fine manuscript facsimile of it published by M. Moleiro of Spain <http://www.moleiro.com>: A similar manuscript from the same workshop is in the Laurentian Library in Florence. It is hoped that this web essay will be of use to manuscript scholars and to undergraduate students, the latter of whom could even perform the text. Professor John Levy has made some corrections to the transcription and suggests parallels between this tale and Turkish oral anti-romances. I yearn to have a musicologist on the order of Manfred Bukhofzer supply us with a performance of the music in MP3 files. Sweet the song, fair the telling, And courteous and well bred So astonished man is none, Nor so doleful nor undone, None that doth so sorely all, If he hear, shall not be healed, And made glad again with joy, So sweet it is. Now they speak and they relate and they tell. How the Count Bougars of Valence made war on Count Garin of Beaucaire, so great and so wonderful and so deadly, that not a single day dawned, but he was at the gates and the walls and the barriers of the town, with a hundred knights, and with ten thousand soldiers on foot and on horseback; and he burned his land, and laid waste to his country, and killed his men. Count Garin of Beaucaire was old and feeble, and had out-lived his time. He had no heir, neither son nor daughter, save only one boy. The latter was such as I shall tell you. He was fair and slim, tall and well fashioned in legs and feet and body and arms. His hair was golden and in little curls; and his eyes were blue-grey and laughing; and his face was bright and oval; and his nose high and well-set; and so compact was he of good qualities, that there was none bad in him, but good only. But he was so overcome by Love, who conquers all, that he would not be a knight, nor take arms, nor go to the tourney, nor do anything of all that he ought to have done. His father and his mother said to him: If they see you among them, they will fight better for their lives and their goods, and for your land and ours! God will never give me ought I ask of Him, if I will be a knight, or mount horse, or go to war or to battle, where I may strike a knight or be struck, unless you give me Nicolete, my sweet friend, whom I love so much! For she is a captive maid, who was brought from a foreign land; and the Viscount of this town bought her from Saracens, and brought her to this town, and has reared her and baptized her, and made her his god-daughter; and one of these days he will give her for husband a young bachelor, who will earn bread for her honourably. Have nothing to do with this, and you will have a wife, I will give you the daughter of a King or a Count. Ses pere et se mere li disoient: Fix, car pren tes armes, si monte el ceval, si deffent te terre at aie tes homes: B] ne poroit estre. Et se tu fenme vix avoir, je te donrai le file a un roi u a un conte: Now it is sung. Aucassin was of Biaucaire And abode in castle fair. None can move him to forget Dainty-fashioned Nicolete, Whom his sire to him denies; And his mother sternly cries: Nicolete is blithe and fair Castaway from Carthage she! If with a woman you will mate Take a wife of great estate! Nicolete is debonair; Her lithe form, her face, her fairness, Do the heart of me enkindle, Fairly mine her love may be, So sweet is she. Now speak they and relate and tell. When the Count Garin of Beaucaire saw that he should not be able to turn Aucassin his son from his love for Nicolete, he went his way to the Viscount of the town, who was his vassal, and addressed him: Now get rid of Nicolete your god-daughter! Accursed be the land from which she was brought to this country! For through her I lose Aucassin; since he will not be a knight, nor do anything of all that he ought to do. And know well that if I can

get hold of her I will burn her in a fire; and you too may have the utmost fear for yourself! I had bought her with my money, and had reared her, and baptized her, and made her my god-daughter, and I would have given her a young bachelor, who would have earned bread for her honourably. With this would Aucassin your son have nothing to do. But since it is your will and your good pleasure, I will send her to such a land and to such a country that he shall nevermore see her with his eyes. And the Viscount was a very rich man, and had a rich palace overlooking a garden. In a chamber of this he had Nicolete placed, on an upper story, and an old woman to keep her company and society; and he had bread put there, and flesh, and wine, and whatever they had need of. Then he had the door sealed up, so that there was no way to go in there, nor to go out, except that there was a window overlooking the garden, small enough, through which there came to them a little fresh air.

B] Il se departent. Et li visquens estoit molt rices hom, si avoit un rice palais par devers un gardin. Nicolete is now a prisoner In a vaulted chamber set, That was wrought by cunning rare, Painted marvellously fair. There she leaned, that luckless maid. Of pale gold was her hair, Exquisite her eyebrows were, Bright her face, curved delicately; Lovelier did you never see. Why am I in prison laid? Aucassin, liege lording dear, Now I am thy loving friend, Nor by you am I abhorred: For your sake I am in ward, In this painted chamber held, Where full evil days I spend. But, O Son of Mary Virgin! Nicole est in prison mise En une canbre vaultie K i faite est par grant devisse, P anturee a miramie. E sgarde par le gaudine E t vit la rose espanie E t les oisax qui se crient, D ont se clama orphenine: P or coi sui en prison misse? Then speak they and relate and tell. Nicolete was in prison, as you have listened and herd, in the chamber. The hue and cry went through all the land and through all the country, that Nicolete was lost. Some say that she fled out of the land; and some say Count Garin of Beaucaire had her slain. Whoever may have rejoiced at it, Aucassin was not glad; but he went his way to the Viscount of the town, and said to him: Have you carried her off, or stolen her away from me? Know well that if I die of this, vengeance will be demanded of you for it, and very right will it be. Nicolete is a captive maide, whom I brought from a foreign land, and I bought her with my coins from the Saracens. I have reared her, and baptized her and made her my god-daughter, and have cherished her, and one of these days I should have given her to a young bachelor who would earned bread for her honourably. Which this you have nothing to do; but instead take the daughter of a king or of a count. Moreover, what do you think you would gain, if you made her your paramour, and taken her to your bed? Very little would you have won, for your soul would be in Hellfire for all Eternity, since you would never enter Paradise! I seek not to enter there, unless to be with Nicolete my most sweet friend, whom I love so much. For none go to Paradise, except only these. Those old priests go there, and old cripples, and maimed wretches, who grovel all day and all night before those altars and in those old crypts; and folk clothed in old threadbare cloacks, and old rags and tatters, who are naked and barefoot and full of sores, who die of hunger and thirst and cold and misery. They go to Paradise. With them I have nothing to do, but to Hell will I go. For to Hell go the fine clerks and the fine knights, who have died in tourneys and in great wars, and the brave soldiers and the noble men. With those I will go. And there too go the fair and gracious ladies who have two or three friends besides their lord; and there go the sgold and the silver, and the vair and the grey of fur, and there too fo harpers and minstrels and kings of the world. He departs from the Viscount, sad at heart. Or dient et content et fablent. Mais en infer voil jou aler, car en infer vont li bel cleric, et li bel cevalier qui sont mort as tornois et a rices gueres, et li buen sergant et li franc home:

Chapter 3 : Erato The Muse of Love Literature at Elfinspell

Whilst Aucassin was in the chamber lamenting Nicolette, his friend, the count Bougars of Valence, wishful to end the war, pressed on his quarrel, and setting his pikemen and horsemen in array, drew near the.

Strange of pattern and design, Richly painted, rarely fine. At the window-sill of stone Leaned the maiden sad and lone. Yellow was her shining hair, And her eyebrow pencilled rare, Face fine-curved and colour fair: Never saw you lovelier. Caged and captive, why, ah why? Aucassin, young lord, prithee, Your sweetheart, am I not she? Ay, methinks you hate not me. Nicolette was in prison, as you have harkened and heard, in the chamber. The cry and the noise ran through all the land and through all the country that Nicolette was lost. There are some say she is fled abroad out of the land. Other some that Warren, Count of Beaucaire, has had her done to death. Rejoice who might, Aucassin was not well pleased. But he went straightway to the Viscount of the place, and thus addressed him: Have you stolen and taken her from me? Rest assured that if I die of this thing, my blood will be required of you; and very justly, when you have gone and killed me with your two hands. For you have stolen from me the thing that I love best in all the world. Nicolette is a slave-girl whom I fetched from a foreign land and bought for money of the heathen. I held her at the font, and christened her and stood godfather to her, and have brought her up. One of these days I would have given her a young fellow to win bread for her in wedlock. What is this to you? Moreover, what were you profited, think you, had you made her your concubine, or taken her to live with you? Mighty little had you got by that, seeing that your soul would be in Hell for ever and ever, for to Paradise you would never win! What have I to do there? I seek not to win Paradise, so I have Nicolette my sweet friend whom I love so well. Your old priests and your old cripples, and the halt and maimed, who are down on their knees day and night, before altars and in the old crypts; these also that wear mangy old cloaks, or go in rags and tatters, shivering and shoeless and showing their sores, and who die of hunger and want and cold and misery. Such are they who go to Paradise; and what have I to do with them? Hell is the place for me. For to Hell go the fine churchmen, and the fine knights, killed in the tourney or in some grand war, the brave soldiers and the gallant gentlemen. With them will I go. There go also the fair gracious ladies who have lovers two or three beside their lord. There go the gold and the silver, the sables and ermines. There go the harpers and the minstrels and the kings of the earth. With them will I go, so I have Nicolette my most sweet friend with me. And he departed from the Viscount, sorrowful. Aucassin has turned once more In wanhope and sorrow sore For his love-friend bright of face. None can help his evil case, None a word of counsel say. To the palace went his way; Step by step he climbed the stair; Entered in a chamber there. In thy talk and in thy toying, In thy jest and in thy joying, In thy kissing, in thy coying. I am sore distressed for thee. At the same time that Aucassin was in the chamber, bemoaning Nicolette his friend, Bulgarius Count of Valence, who had his war to maintain, forgot it not; but he had summoned his men, foot and horse, and advanced to assault the castle. And the cry went up and the noise; and the knights and men-at-arms girt on their armour, and hastened to the gates and walls to defend the castle; while the townsfolk mounted the parapets and hurled bolts and sharpened stakes. At this time when the assault was fast and furious, Warren Count of Beaucaire came into the chamber where Aucassin was weeping and bemoaning Nicolette his most sweet friend whom he loved so well. Know, moreover, that if thou lose it thou lovest thine inheritance! Come now, my son, take thine arms and to horse! Fight for thy land, and succour thy liegemen, and get thee to the field! Though thou strike never a man nor be thyself stricken, if they but see thee among them they will make a better fight for their lives and their havings, and for thy land and mine. Never God give me ought that I ask of him, if I take knighthood or mount horse or go to the fighting to smite knight or be myself smitten, if you give me not Nicolette, my sweet friend, whom I love so well! Rather would I suffer loss of all my inheritance, aye, of all I have, than that thou shouldst have her to woman or to wife! And when Aucassin saw him departing, he called him back. So he made agreement with him, and Aucassin was well-pleased. Aucassin heard of the kiss On returning to be his. Hundred thousand marks pure gold Him had made less blithe and bold. Arms he called for, rich and rare; They made ready for his wear. Hauberk donned he, double-lined; Helmet on his head did bind; Girt his sword with hilt pure gold; Mounted on his charger

bold; Spear and buckler then he took; At his two feet cast a look, In the stirrups trod they trim; Wondrous proud he carried him. Here they speak and tell the story. Aucassin was arrayed and mounted on his horse, as you have harkened and heard. And the boy was tall and strong and comely and slim and well-grown; and the horse he bestrode was fleet of foot and high of mettle, and the boy had put him through the gate cleverly. But his thought was so set upon Nicolette, his sweet friend, that he forgot the reins and all he had to do. And his horse, feeling the spur, dashed with him through the press, and charged right into the thick of the enemy, who laid hands on him on all sides, and made him prisoner. They took from him shield and lance, and led him captive then and there. They were already questioning one with another as to what manner of death they should put him to; and when Aucassin heard it, "Ah, gracious Heaven! And once I have my head cut off, nevermore shall I speak to Nicolette my sweet friend whom I love so well. Nay, I have yet a good sword, and under me a good steed untired. He put his hand to his sword and began to strike to right and to left, slashing helmet and nose-guard, fist and wrist, and making havoc all around him as the boar does when the dogs set on him in the forest; so that he overthrew ten of their knights and wounded seven; and charged then and there out of the press, and rode back full gallop, sword in hand. Bulgarius, Count of Valence, heard say that they were about to hang Aucassin his enemy, and came that way. Aucassin failed not to espy him; and gripping his sword, he smote him through the helmet so that he clave it to the skull. He was so stunned that he fell to earth; and Aucassin put out his hand and took him prisoner, and led him off by the nose-guard of his helmet, and delivered him to his father. Twenty years has this war lasted, and never a man to put an end to it. By the head of me, forget it who may, I do not mean to forget it. Rather have I laid it much to heart. Did you not make this covenant with me, that if I took arms and went out to the fighting, and if God brought me back safe and sound, you would let me see Nicolette my sweet friend for such time as I might speak two words to her or three, and once only kiss her? This covenant you made with me, and this covenant I will have you keep with me! You can ask me nothing, gold or silver, war-horses or palfreys, sables or ermines, hounds or hawks, that I will not give you. Loud lamenting he fell on, Thus as you shall hear anon. Sweet as cluster of the vine, Sweet as meed in maselyn. This I saw some yesterday, How a pilgrim on his wayâ€” Limousin his land wasâ€”lay Fevered on a bed within. Grievous had his sickness been, Great the fever he was in. From his bed he rose once more, And to his own land did flit, Safe and sound, whole ever whit. Coming, going, ever pleasing, In thy talk and in thy teasing, In thy jest and in thy joying, In thy kisses, in thy coying! There is none could hate thee, dear! Yet for thy sake am I here, In this dungeon hid from day. Where I cry Ah, well-a-way! Aucassin was put in prison, as you have listened and heard, and Nicolette was elsewhere in the chamber. Nicolette lay one night in her bed, and saw the moon shine bright through a window, and heard the nightingale sing in the garden; and she remembered Aucassin her friend, whom she loved so well. Then she fell a-thinking of Warren Count of Beaucaire, and how he hated her to death; and she thought within herself that she would abide there no longer; since if she were betrayed and Count Warren knew of her, he would put her to an evil death. She perceived that the old woman who was with her slept. And she arose and clad her in a goodly gown that she had of cloth-of-silk; and she took bedclothes and towels, and tied one to other and made a rope as long as she could, and made it fast to the window-shaft; and so got down into the garden. Then she took her dress in one hand before, and in the other behind, and girded herself, because of the dew she saw heavy on the grass, and went her way down the garden. She had golden hair in little curls, and laughing blue eyes, and a face finely curved, and a proud shapely nose, and lips more red than cherry or rose in summertime, and small white teeth, and little breasts that swelled beneath her clothes like two nuts of a walnut-tree. And her waist was so fine that your two hands could have girdled her; and the daisy-flowers snapped by her toes, and lying on the arch of her foot, were fairly black beside her feet and ankles, so very white the girl was. She came to the postern, and unfastened it and went out through the streets of Beaucaire, keeping to the shadow, for the moon shone very bright; and she went on till she came to the tower where her friend was. The tower had cracks in it here and there, and she crouched against one of the piers, and wrapped herself in her mantle, and thrust her head into a chink in the tower, which was old and ancient, and heard Aucassin within weeping and making very great sorrow, and lamenting for his sweet friend whom he loved so much. And when she had listened enough to him, she began to speak. Nicolette the bright of face Leaned her at the buttress-base, Heard within her lover

dear Weeping and bewailing her; Then she spake the thought in her: What your wailing, what your woe? Aucassin, that lover true, Took them and did honour due, Fondly kissed them and caressed, And bestowed them in his breast. When Aucassin heard Nicolette say that she would depart into another country, he felt nothing but anger. The first man that set eyes on you and could do so would straightway lay hands on you and take you to be his concubine. And once you had lived with any man but me, now dream not that I should wait to find a knife wherewith to strike me to the heart and kill me!

Chapter 4 : POEM: BALLADE OF AUCASSIN BY ANDREW LANG

Aucassin et Nicolette is an Old French story written in a mixture of prose and poetry. The name of the author is unknown, but he probably lived in Picardy during the early 13th century.

Introduction The opening lines of the story of Aucassin and Nicolette suggest that it is a typical courtly romance, but as the story unfolds, we discover that it is not so simple. The ambiguity rests primarily in the person of Nicolette. Although she has a French name, she is a Saracen, bought as a slave, baptised and raised as god-daughter by the Viscount of Beaucaire. She is viewed with great suspicion by the parents of her love Aucassin, and his father threatens her with death if she is not removed from the situation. Subsequently imprisoned, Nicolette does not wait for Aucassin to rescue her, but climbs down from her tower prison and goes in search of him. When he disappoints her, she leaves of her own accord, escaping into the forest, where she sets in motion her plan to be reunited with Aucassin. Her subsequent adventures and choices see her identity and gender shift as required to fit the situation in which she finds herself, and in the end she and Aucassin, their fathers having died and themselves having respectively been discovered as Saracen princess and elevated to the rank of Count, marry. The original manuscript MS. It is estimated that it dates from either the last quarter of the 12th century or the first part of the 13th century. You may ask yourselves, what is an action transvestite? She is neither Christian nor Saracen, neither female nor male, neither blonde nor brunette, neither white-skinned nor dark-skinned, neither human nor animal, neither mortal nor supernatural, adopting or being assigned by others all these identities only transiently until she achieves her ultimate goal of being reunited in love with Aucassin, once he has proved himself worthy of her. Only then does she choose a fixed identity, again expressed in her "last" change of appearance, irrevocably recreating herself as Christian, wife, and woman. I will take you through the story of Aucassin and Nicolette, as it is told through her changes in dress and identity, focusing on five key moments. I will look at the various ways in which Nicolette is undressed and dressed, by herself and by others characters and narrator. I will argue that she is more than a character in the story, she is the story, moving forward through her changes in dress and identity. He hath nourished and baptized her, and How by grievous pains distraught, held her at the font. On a near day he will give her Noble deeds the varlet wrought to some young bachelor, who will gain her bread in For his love, and her bright face! My emphasis all honour. With this what hast thou to do? Ask for a wife, and I will find thee the daughter of a king, or a count. Were he the richest man in France his daughter shalt thou have, if so thou wilt. Slim the body, fair the face, Since a wife beseems thee good Make my heart a lighted place; Take a wife of wholesome blood. Love has set her as my peer, Too sweet, my dear. I have bought her with my money, and nourished At the marble casement stayed and baptized her, and held her at the font. On her elbow leaned the maid; Moreover, I am fain to give her to some young Golden showed her golden hair, bachelor, who will gain her bread in all honour. With Softly curved her eyebrows rare, this Aucassin your son had nought to do. But since Fair her face, and brightly flushed, this is your will and your pleasure, I will send her to Sweeter maiden never blushed. The initial impression thus created is that Nicolette is a typical courtly romance heroine. Furthermore, the story suggests that Aucassin is a typical courtly knight, suffering for his lady love. The subsequent narrative makes it very clear that the dynamic of the relationship is considerably more ambiguous. Nicolette is cast as the maiden for whom the knight will suffer. In all respects, she appears to be entirely typical of the French courtly romance heroine. Indeed, her name is French, while it has been suggested that Aucassin bears a variation on the name of an eleventh-century Moorish king of Cordoba "Alcazin. Thus far, her person is wholly unproblematic; the smallest hint of her dominance in the coming story is in the placement of her name before his. It is only when Aucassin and his parents have their first of many confrontations that Nicolette seems to be other than what was suggested by the narrator in the opening text. She is a Saracen, bought as a slave by a local vicomte, and baptised by him, thus becoming his god-daughter. Jane Burns confirms the role of exotic textiles in European love stories: It may also be argued that he defines her as the cure for what ails him: Nicolette is debonair; Slim the body, fair the face, Make my heart a lighted place; Love has set her as my peer, Too sweet, my dear. Specifically, he threatens to have her burned at the

stake – an execution customarily reserved for witches and infidels. Nicole est en prison mise en une canbre vaultie, ki faite est par grant devise, panturee a miramie. Ele avoit blonde la crigne et faite la sorcille, la face clere et traitice: At the marble casement stayed On her elbow leaned the maid; Golden showed her golden hair, Softly curved her eyebrows rare, Fair her face, and brightly flushed, Sweeter maiden never blushed. In the garden from her room She might watch the roses bloom, Hear the birds make tender moan; Then she knew herself alone. This time, she appears active, not passive, less of a possession, through the use of verbs - standing at the window, watching the flowers and the birds, bemoaning her fate. Her first real action, however, and the first real indication of her strength of character, is in her speech: Meanwhile, Aucassin returns from a successful war against the Valencian invaders, but his father refuses to acknowledge their bargain – that Aucassin may speak to and kiss Nicolette in exchange for his military triumph. At first he offers Aucassin material goods, again reinforcing Nicolette as a commodity for which furs, gold, silver, horses, dogs and birds are considered equivalents. Her whiteness is again reinforced, in contrast with her hitherto-emphasised Saracen otherness. Aucassin then transforms her from the temptress Eve perceived by his family, into a female saint, like Mary, if not like Jesus, through his recounting a memory of the effects of her beauty and person. On a day this chanced to you; Out of Limousin there drew One, a pilgrim, sore adread, Lay in pain upon his bed, Tossed, and took with fear his breath, Very dolent, near to death. Then a wondrous thing befell, Straight he rose up sound and well, Left his bed, took cross in hand, Sought again his own dear land. Aucassin verbally undresses Nicolette, reliving in slow motion the moment where she lifted the trailing hem of her ermine-lined tunic, her white chemise, finally revealing her leg. Aucassin here seems to be a voyeur in a private moment, but there is no suggestion that Nicolette has acted deliberately to cure the pilgrim. I have thus concluded that her ability in this regard is innate. So do we see Nicolette more clearly through this act of undressing, or is she even more ambiguous? Could we also, or instead, argue that here we are presented with a – heretical, to medieval understanding - Saracen, female, Jesus, with the power to save and to heal: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk Matthew She was a princess who made a vow of chastity to God, but her father sought to marry her off. He imprisoned her for her refusal, and there she prayed to God to make her unattractive to her new husband. Nicolette lies in her bed looking out at the bright moon, with which she is consistently linked throughout the story, listening to the nightingale, and while she does as a courtly maiden in love should do, thinking of her love, such thoughts quickly pass to his father and she decides that she will not wait in her tower for him to come to kill her. Although in haste, she takes care of her dress once on the ground, lifting the hem in an action reminiscent of the moment where she cured the pilgrim to keep it out of the dew – Nicolette is a lady even under such dangerous conditions. Thus she is simultaneously a disruptively active rebel and a proper courtly woman. At the same time, it is worth noting the ambiguity of the garment which she wears, the bliaut, which can be worn by a woman or a man. The narrator again describes her physically, this time in much more detail than before, from head to toe. It is again a voyeuristic moment, as our eyes move with his down the form of the young woman alone in a garden in the dark. Her vulnerability is thus clarified, yet she proves impossible to catch, crushing the daisies as she walks quickly through the garden to the door. She is described in terms of flowers, fruits and nuts – her lips redder than roses and cherries in the summer, her breasts like large nuts, her skin so white that the white daisies which they crush are black in comparison. The descriptions of her lips and breasts relate her again to the beloved in the Song of Songs. To my mind, however, her turning the daisies black, albeit metaphorical, is unsettling. Compare her to Olwen in How Culhwch won Olwen: Olwen came, dressed in a flame-red silk robe, with a torque of red gold around her neck, studded with precious pearls and rubies. Neither the eye of a mewed hawk nor the eye of a thrice-mewed falcon was fairer than hers ; her breasts were whiter than the breast of a white swan, her cheeks were redder than the reddest foxgloves –. Wherever she went four white trefoils appeared behind her, and for that reason she was called Olwen The Mabinogion, translated by Jeffrey Gantz, pp. The first beings whom Nicolette encounters in the forest are a group of shepherd boys, and she opens the conversation with Christian greetings – again through her speech she emphasises her Christian beliefs and further distances herself from her Saracen origins. Nicolette here draws on standard courtly love rhetoric, in which love is equated with hunting, in which the man must capture the woman. Thus her entire being is again transformed. The fairy is another

stock character in medieval literature; such otherworldly women are characterised by their superlative beauty and rich dress, and by their existing in forests. Nicolette meets all the criteria. Dans ce pavillon, la jeune fille: Whiter she was than any altar lily, and more sweetly flushed than the new born rose in time of summer heat. Very fresh and slender showed the lady in her vesture of spotless linen. About her person she had drawn a mantle of ermine, edged with purple dye from the vats of Alexandria. By reason of the heat her raiment was unfastened for a little, and her throat and the rondure of her bosom showed whiter and more untouched than hawthorn in May. While the fairy may only be in her white chemise, her coat, of Alexandrian purple, is of Saracen origins like Nicolette. If the women look alike, what of their personalities and abilities? Such fairies as the one who loves Lanval are dynamic like Nicolette, and do not act like passive maidens. When Nicolette is separated from Aucassin by a storm at sea, her ship is driven onto the shores of Carthage. The ship belongs to the King of Carthage, who is at this point identified as her father. Her beauty is not questioned – given the emphasis on her blonde hair and white skin up to this point in the story, it is intriguing that the Saracens do not comment on it. Instead, they celebrate her because of her beauty, and the narrator describes how she truly seemed to be a woman of noble blood. It appears that they therefore do recognise her as one of their own, after all, which raises again the question of her appearance – could she truly be blond-haired and white-skinned after all? The depiction of Saracens in medieval art and literature only increases the ambiguity, instead of offering answers. This is open to interpretation – I suggest that she sees her own appearance reflected back at her from the people, art and sculpture around her. But what does she see? She prays to the Christian God that she will again hold him in her arms. However, her family have other ideas, and seek to marry her to a pagan king. Her subsequent actions link her to many female saints whose families attempt to marry them to pagan kings against their will. We voyeuristically follow Nicolette through her assumption of a disguise:

Aucassin et Nicolette, early 13th-century French *chante-fable* (a story told in alternating sections of verse and prose, the former sung, the latter recited). Aucassin, "endowed with all good qualities," is the son of the Count of Beaucaire and falls in love with Nicolette, a captive Saracen turned Christian.

Such a method differs entirely from all those in which an author is represented, either by one or more extracts from his work, or else by a formal summary or criticism of it in a language not his own. And, since the style and language of an original is what often constitutes the wings upon which alone its thought will fly, to have access to its thought without its form is too often to possess a skeleton without the spirit which alone could animate it. Page 2 For better than all books are the truths which books contain, and to condense those truths into a form that makes them available is not only to invest them with new powers and an enlarged range of usefulness, but is also not necessarily to interfere with any of those essential qualities that make up the exquisite literary flavor of a fine original. An important additional feature of the work is the brief, yet highly critical biographical and bibliographical note which accompanies every author and every selection throughout the twenty volumes. With respect to the selections themselves, it may be added that, even where they are derived from foreign originals, they have often been prepared from those originals rather than from any existing translations of them, as in the fine translation of Catullus by Professor Wight Duff, or the condensations from Euripides, Corneille, Kant, Tacitus, and very many more. Robert Hichens in Fiction, etc. From this, and still more from the list of authors itself, it will be found, we hope, that besides a completely modern aim, a distinctly proper proportion of modern literature has found a place in the work, and that the best of French, German, Scandinavian, Russian, and other authors take rank in it with American and English, as do the best of the ancients with the best among the moderns. This does not apply, however, to translations from the shorter poems of ancient classical literature, which, however short they may be, cannot be said to be already generally available for everyday reading. To set it up even would seem ridiculous to any one acquainted with the enormous range of the subject. Not so ridiculous, however, may seem the claim to have established a standard and a form of achievement new in the annals of literary production; and one, moreover, whose importance as an educative factor, no less than as a test of the special needs of the era wherein we are living, may be as valid in its own way and in its own time as some of those other contributions which have helped along the revival of learning and of letters, from that first awakening of the Renaissance humanists down to our own day. Even in childhood he displayed the vivacity of mind and the irreverent spirit which were to make him the most entertaining anti-clerical writer of his period. His tales have the qualities of the best writing of the eighteenth century, enhanced by the modern interest of his own century. In About was working as a poor archaeologist at the French School at Athens, where he noticed there was a curious understanding between the brigands and the police of modern Hellas. Brigandage was becoming a safe and almost a respectable Greek industry. It is a present I received from my parents, and I wish to preserve it as long as possible in remembrance of them. So, on my arrival at Athens, in April, , I refrained from going into the country. But I had merely been sent, at a salary of L10 a month, to collect the rarer specimens of the flora of Greece. I therefore began by studying the native plants in the royal gardens; and put off the work of searching for new species and varieties. John Harris and William Lobster, who lodged with me at the shop of the pastry cook, Christodulos, in Hermes Street, were persons of a more adventurous temperament. Borrowing the only two horses that Christodulos possessed, they rode out into the country. But they had scarcely gone a mile when they were stopped by a band of brigands, and urgently invited to pay a visit to the King of the Mountains. The Americans refused to go, as the King of the Mountains had an unkindly way of holding his visitors to large ransoms, and killing them if the money were not quickly paid. Neither Harris nor Lobster was made of the kind of wood of which faggots are composed. They drew their revolvers, and used them with astonishing effect. They lost the horses, but got safely back to Athens. Hadgi Stavros was by far the most popular leader among the insurgent Greeks. His hatred of the Turks did not blind him to such a point that he passed through a Greek village without plundering it. A vigorous impartiality enabled him to advance his fame

by increasing his wealth. Lord Byron dedicated an ode to him, and sympathisers with the Greek cause throughout Europe sent him subsidies. The result was that when Greece was at last liberated from the Turks, Hadgi Stavros returned to his old trade with a large capital, and a genius for organisation which enabled him to revolutionise the business of brigandage. He entered into arrangements with army officers and politicians, and saw to it that his allies were entrusted with the government of his free, enlightened and progressive country. For the sake of his only daughter, he is investing all his wealth in foreign stocks and shares, instead of using it to extend his business. Do you think it is worth getting captured for the sake of meeting her? Like nine out of ten Athenian girls, she had plain features. Her teeth were white and even, and her hair was beautiful; but that was all. Happily, in this world of ours, the ugliest little goose generally finds some honest gander to admire her. She was, it appeared, the daughter of one of his old companions-in-arms, Colonel John. Colonel John was apparently a man of means, for Photini was very fashionably dressed, and she was being educated at the best boarding-school in Athens. Her father had asked his old friend to allow Photini to come and chat with us, and improve Her knowledge of French and German. The girl, however, was too timid to enter into conversation, and, to judge by the direction of her glances, it was not French or German that she would have liked to speak if she could, but English. John Harris, I admit, is a very good-looking man; but the way Photini began to devour him with her eyes, astonished me. I was sitting next to her at table; but she did not utter a word till the end of the meal. Then she asked if he were married. During the meal, Dimitri came running in with a newspaper, and looking far from happy. I was still more surprised when I turned to Photini, and saw that her face was wet with tears. There I came upon Dimitri and two ladies. I chose this excursion in the hope of meeting you. But whatever is the matter with the women? I looked in the same direction, and perceived half a dozen gun-barrels gleaming among the leaves. Then eight ruffians appeared; and I saw that the only difference between devils and brigands is that devils are less black than is said, and brigands much dirtier than is supposed. The King of the Mountains was sitting, cross-legged, on a square carpet beneath a pine-tree, a little way from his noisy, crowded camp. Four secretaries were writing on their knees to his dictation. He was undoubtedly a man of majestic appearance. The only indications of old age were his long white hair and long white moustaches. A jeweled belt was the only costly thing he wore. He raised his head at our approach. Having put us at our ease, the king went on with his correspondence. Let all the world come and listen if they want to. Now, take this down. Please invest half of this sum in 3 per cent. Consols and half in bearer bonds before the coupons are detached. I shall be obliged if you will sell my shares in the Bank of England, and put the proceeds in London omnibuses. That will be a safe investment and, I think, a profitable one. Oblige me by sending a hundred guineas to Messrs. Ralli Brothers as my subscription towards the Hellenic School at Liverpool. Simons, who, like her daughter, did not speak Greek, leaned towards me. Schultz, is he dictating the terms of our ransom? Simons turned to the box of Turkish delight. It was extraordinarily interesting. It is, I know, the lowest dividend we have paid since the company was formed fourteen years ago. But the shareholders must consider the difficulties we have had to struggle against. Our business is so closely connected with the interests of the country that it can only flourish in times of general prosperity. From those who have nothing we can take nothing, or very little. The tourist season, however, has opened very favourably, and the affairs of the company will, I think, soon improve. I will send you a detailed statement in the course of a few days. I am too busy now. Then, with royal courtesy, instead of having us brought before him on the carpet, he came and sat down by our side. Simons at once began to talk at him in English. I offered to act as interpreter with a view to protecting her from herself. The king, however, thanked me coldly, and called to one of his brigands who knew English. As I had foreseen, Mrs. Simons spoke very largely about her great wealth and her high position. The result was that the king fixed her ransom and that of Mary Ann at L4, I was determined that he should not over-estimate my resources. I want to go botanising. You are a man of science! Who sent you here to collect our plants? You now see the value of a sound, scientific education. He rose up and departed; and one of his secretaries led us to a plot of green sward, where a meal had been laid for us. Everything they took will be returned to you. You have thirty days in which to pay your ransom. Write to your friends without delay, as the king never grants an extension of time. I did not know what to do. I knew nobody with L, much less L Then I thought of John Harris. If he will not intercede for me, I leave myself, dear

friend, in your hands. I know you are a man of courage and imagination. You will find a way to get me out of this fix. Here you have an opportunity of winning a charming wife and an immense fortune.

Chapter 6 : Full text of "Aucassin and Nicolette"

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Chapter 7 : C'est d'Aucassin et de Nicolette: A Medieval Chant Fable

Who would list a pleasant lay, Pastime of the old and grey? Of two lovers, children yet, Aucassin and Nicolette; Of the sorrows he went through, Of the great things he did do.

Chapter 8 : Aucassin & Nicolette and Other Mediaeval Romances and Legends by Eugene Mason | Library

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Chapter 9 : best Arthurian Legends images on Pinterest in | King arthur, Drawings and Legends

'tis an ancient tale I sing Of two young folk who could do no wrong Chantefable d'Aucassin et Nicolette (Arr. by David Warin Solomons for Voice and Guitar) Licensed to YouTube by.