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### Introduction

Therese Decker has in her part of our introduction to this edition described various kinds of "translation" involved in making the literature of an earlier age accessible to a modern audience. In my part of our introduction I want to describe the course at Baylor University in which my graduate students studied *Boss for Three Days*, performed it, and then wrote a series of papers, or critical "translations," for presentation at a medieval conference. Those papers were early drafts of the six papers presented at the end of this volume. I also want to discuss certain decisions that my students and I made in adapting *Boss for Three Days* for an actual performance in modern English.

**A course and a conference.** While serving as the Robert Foster Cherry Distinguished Teaching Professor at Baylor University during the 1995-96 academic year, I had the opportunity to teach a graduate seminar in medieval drama. Most of the plays we read were English morality plays (such as *Everyman*) and biblical dramas (such as *Noah* and *The Second Shepherds' Play*), but I also wanted to give my students some sense both that there was a Continental tradition in medieval drama and that there was some secular drama even in the fourteenth century. At that time the translations of the plays in the Hulthem manuscript had not yet been made available in the separate editions of Theresia De Vroom or Johanna Prins, but I was fortunate enough, thanks to the generous cooperation of Therese Decker, to give my students translations of a couple of the *abele spelen* and the short farces.

For my students these plays were in some ways the high point of the course. They liked these plays partly because they were so refreshingly

secular in an age dominated by plays designed to teach a proper Christian message, and partly because we had a sense that we were among the first modern audiences to have a chance to read these plays.

We were so delighted with the short farce about a man who barter for three days of lordship over his wife that we decided to share the play in a short readers' theater production for members of the English department at Baylor. The actors asked whether they could write one of their course papers on the play, and of course I encouraged them to do so.

Later, with my students' encouragement, I offered to sponsor a readers' theater production of the play at the fall 1996 joint meeting of the Southeast Medieval Association and the Texas Medieval Association. Part of the program would also include versions of my students' papers, revised for oral delivery, as well as an introductory paper by Therese Decker giving certain background information about this Middle Dutch play and the problems she encountered in translating it.

The SEMA/TEMA program committee accepted our offer. By then I was back at my home university in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, but with the help of e-mail suggestions by me and creative on-site direction by Amanda Bunt, one of my graduate students in that class, the play went off delightfully. Therese Decker and I arrived the day of the performance, but enjoyed basking in the warm afterglow of a spirited performance, with Richard Garrett as the Messenger, Kevin Cole as the henpecked husband Jan, Kirsten Escobar as his wife Bette, Stephen Cooper as the neighbor

Imbrecht, and Amy Bawcom as his wife Lijsbet. Another student, Warren Edminster, and I served as the hecklers-from-the-audience, hurling disgusting noises, insults and other inappropriate comments on the action of the play. All in all, it made a delightful evening's entertainment.

**Acting version of *Boss for Three Days*.** In preparing for that entertainment, our first task was to devise an acting version. Therese Decker's literal translation provided a basis for our own understanding of the play and for the interpretations and quotations in the students' papers, but was a bit stiff and stilted for a dramatic production in front of an audience unfamiliar with the play. We suggested ways to loosen and modernize the language and checked our changes with Therese Decker to make sure we were keeping close at least to the spirit of the original. She made some additional suggestions herself.

In making decisions about how to produce the play, we had nothing to go on except the manuscript, but that offered no stage directions. All we knew was who said what. The rest--how they said it, who they said it to, where they were when they said it, what they meant when they said it--we had to figure out for ourselves.

Relatively little is known for sure about how secular Dutch drama was performed in the fourteenth century, but there is some evidence in the play itself that this farce was to be performed on a raised platform in a busy marketplace in which many members of the audience would be noisy and inebriated. We noted, for example, that the Messenger has to quiet the audience down, and that in his long opening speech, the neighbor Imbrecht speaks of performing the play "way above your heads" (13). In that line is a likely double reference. First, it seems to refer to the actors' physical presence on a platform raised above the heads of the stand-up audience. Second, it seems to be a direct insult to the audience by hinting that the simple farce that is to follow is too

complicated for the rustics to understand (over their heads).

Although there are no scene divisions provided in the manuscript, the action clearly shifts at several points in the play. The evidence of these shifts is subtle. In line 22, for example, during an altercation with members of the audience, Imbrecht refers to going to the tavern and sitting beside the fire. In line 141 Jan wonders how his wife Bette will react when he comes into the house. In line 203 Jan speaks of leaving home to drink beer--presumably at the same tavern. We have taken such hints and interpolated them into five short scenes culminating in a climactic sixth scene involving all four principal characters:

Scene 1: Messenger and Imbrecht in the marketplace in front of a tavern (ll. 1-51, total 51 lines, including a very brief four-line interlude in which we imagine Jan winding a skein of wool for his wife, and she castigates him for doing it wrong).

Scene 2: Imbrecht and Jan inside the tavern (ll. 52-139, total 88 lines).

Scene 3: Jan and Bette in Jan's house (ll. 140-223, total 84 lines).

Scene 4: Imbrecht and Jan in the tavern again (ll. 224-58, total 35 lines).

Scene 5: Imbrecht and Lijsbet in Imbrecht's house or in the street (ll. 259-79, total 21 lines).

Scene 6: Jan, Bette, Imbrecht, and Lijsbet in Jan's house (ll. 280-405, total 126 lines).

Of these six scenes, the key ones, constituting together more than half the play, are Scenes 3 and 6, both set in Jan's house. In Scene 3 Jan makes a deal with his wife whereby in exchange for certain gifts she agrees to be totally submissive for three days. In Scene 6 Bette, noting her husband's failure to observe the terms of the agreement that no one should know about the arrangement, seizes the reins back from her silly husband and becomes boss again.

The six scenes, of course, are our own devising,

but we found that they helped us to understand how to stage the play. To give our audiences a sense of the scenic division of the play, we had the Messenger, who otherwise has no function in the play after the opening eleven lines, hold up signs at appropriate transitions to indicate where the next scene was to take place.

**The beginning and the ending of *Boss for Three Days*.** Anyone wanting to stage a performance of *Boss for Three Days* has two important questions to answer. First, how are they to make sense of Imbrecht's opening speech and, second, what are they to do with the truncated ending?

In answer to the first question, we found that we could make sense of Imbrecht's opening speech only by assuming some spirited interaction with the audience standing before him in the marketplace. Imbrecht's opening speech simply does not work as the pure soliloquy it seems at first to want to be. If, however, we imagine some jeers or catcalls from the audience, possibly from men and women planted there to shout insults to the actors and demand a different play, then that opening speech suddenly works.

Imbrecht, perhaps half-drunk already, seems to be interacting with the people standing below, noisily gaping up at him. In lines 32-33 he wonders why they are staring up at him, almost as if he were being auctioned off and they were bidders. They apparently heckle him about wanting to see a different play from the one he is in, but in lines 40-41 he tells them that they are going to get this one and no other. In line 50 he asks if they think he is such a scarecrow that they need to stare at him so.

In our own production we planted some noisy commentators in the audience to interrupt Imbrecht and give him something real to react to. We tried to sound drunk as we belched drunkenly and shouted obscenities and catcalls: "Move along, ya drunken sot." "We don't want you, we want a real actor." "You're so ugly you'd scare birds out of my cornfield." "Who wants to see a

play about a man who can't keep quiet?" And when Bette in lines 42-45 complains that her husband does not perform some small task, we muttered comments like, "Hey, stand up to her, ya wimp." None of that is in the manuscript, of course, but we found that it made sense to see Imbrecht's long speech as a series of short replies to specific antagonistic remarks from the audience.

In answering the second question, about the curiously abrupt ending, we found unnecessary one standard interpretation, namely that the ending of the play, perhaps the last page or two, is lost. After discussing the ending in class, we decided that the words may well be all there, and that all that was needed was some raucous action, perhaps to be directed by a troupe leader or to be improvised, with appropriate insults and cries of pain, by the actors. Let us review the final speeches in *Boss for Three Days*.

Just before the play ends, Bette has, on the admonition of Lijsbet, agreed to stop playing the part of the submissive wife and actively resist Jan. Not knowing of her newfound resolve, Jan insists that his wife must make a better pastry than she has already made, even though Imbrecht has said that it is delicious. Imbrecht tells his wife Lijsbet that he will teach her to be a good wife, like Jan's Bette. Lijsbet says, apparently in an aside to the audience, that her husband's plan won't be put into effect. The final words given in the play are Jan's, stating his wish that Bette will be quick about coming back to carry out his orders. And there the play seems to end.

But it ends only in words, not necessarily actions. What sort of action? That would presumably be left to the director of the play or perhaps to the actors themselves, but the ending we envision requires no words.

We envision Bette coming back in with a pastry and smashing it, in a gesture of independence, on Jan's head. Her doing so would initiate a free-for-

all in which the wives, as in several of the other farces in the Hulthem manuscript, buffet their husbands and assert absolute control over them. There might be some speech, or at least some grunts and howls of pain, but the scene we envision is sufficiently slapstick in manner that laughter from the audience would drown out any actual words.

We have no proof, of course, that the play would end in this manner, but some ending like this seems to be almost inevitable given the characterizations of Jan and Bette, and given the general movement of the play from women-in-control to men-in-control and back inevitably to women-in-control. Another troupe might devise a somewhat different ending, but ours worked well enough. The uncertainty about the "intended" ending, of course, coupled with the general lack of explicit stage directions in the play, suggests that individual troupes were expected to interpret for their own audiences their own ending for the play.

**Stage directions and props.** Because *Boss for Three Days* gives us no description of the stage on which it is to be acted or any explicit stage directions, we were left with certain decisions about how to produce the play.

For the stage itself we envisioned a raised platform with two main acting areas in "front" corners projecting out into the audience, one for the tavern, the other for Jan and Bette's house. We imagined both equipped with simple furniture--a table and stools, for example. We imagined all four principal characters on stage at all times, with Bette and Jan sitting in "their" part of the stage during the first two scenes, and the four-line interlude of lines 40-45 taking place just before Jan gets up and goes over to the tavern to join Imbrecht. We imagined Imbrecht's brief discussion with his wife before they go together to Jan's house as taking place either in their own house or in the street en route to Jan's house. That scene is so short, however, that it could take place anywhere on the stage.

For our own reader's theater production we kept actual blocking to an absolute minimum and had no furniture except the chairs the actors sat on during portions of the performance. With their scripts in their hands, they could do little in the way of creative interpretation or elaborate blocking of the action.

We did, however, write our own minimal stage directions in the written form of the acting version of the play. We indicated, for example, the start of each of the six scenes. We indicated which wife is speaking. We suggested points at which a member of the audience might interject remarks. We suggested what might be happening on stage during certain speeches and scenes. These stage directions are all bracketed in the acting version of the play below.

One of the most important stage directions we gave was to suggest which portions of the characters' speeches were to be spoken to another character on stage, and which were to be spoken as "asides" directly to the audience. In Bette's speech in lines 142-55, for example, we found that Bette's switching back and fourth from "him" to "you" suggests that she speaks some of her lines directly to the audience ("Wherever he goes, may God curse him"), while some are directed to Jan himself ("Now go, idiot, God curse you!").

The actual words of the play give some hints about costumes and props, but we sensed that the troupe performing this play would not have worn elaborate costumes or bothered with elaborate props. Some sort of fur garment is needed for Jan's bribe to convince his wife to let him be boss for three days. Also helpful would be some drinking cups, a bottle or two of beer, and something to serve as the pastry or jam tart, but that is all. For our own production the actors wore simple matching modern outfits of white shirts and tan pants. We borrowed a mangy fur stole from someone's attic, and we used simple cups and pop tarts for the drinking and eating scenes.

Others producing the play, of course, will want to provide their own stage directions to make up for the absence of such directions in the manuscript. In doing so they will find themselves providing interpretations and actions to suit the words put into the mouths of the characters. No other production will be quite what ours was, but we think that some of the decisions we made may at least offer a starting point for others.

**The six papers.** Six of my students wrote and delivered papers on *Boss for Three Days*. Each of these can be seen as a modern "translation" of the play. In doing these translations they based their readings not on the more informal performance version we had developed, but on the more literal translation that Therese Decker had provided us. Each of the writers considers the play from a unique perspective, made all the more valuable because virtually no critical studies have yet appeared on this play. Warren Edminster, building on the work of Bakhtin, sees *Boss for Three Days* as a carnivalesque overturning of the usual order of things in medieval society. Kirsten Escobar considers that same overturning from a more gender-based orientation, and finds that Bette fully deserves to take control over her alcoholic and irresponsible husband.

Richard Garrett argues that the Dutch playwright portrays Imbrecht in such a way that he is not only

a character in the play, but also serves as a kind of Greek chorus, directing our attention to the meaning of the play. Amy Bawcom pays close attention to Jan's use and abuse of silence in *Boss for Three Days*, and shows that Jan's downfall comes about because his desire for silence from his wife is not matched by his own silence about the deal that had made him boss.

Amanda Bunt reads Bette's yielding the power in marriage to her husband as a form of prostitution. By accepting the fur in exchange for her submission, she is really mirroring the sexual submission that women are too often expected to make to their husbands in exchange for small favors or securities. And Kevin Cole takes a probing look at the language of the play and finds a satirical undertone in the many references to God and the saints. He also suggests that the dinner scene at the end of the play may have alluded satirically to the Communion dinner.

While not all readers will be convinced by all of these "translations," taken together these papers show that *Boss for Three Days*, for all its lighthearted broad-stroked comedy, is worthy of close reading and serious analysis. We hope that readers of this multiple edition-and-translation will want to offer their own translations of the words and actions of a lively Middle Dutch secular farce.

Ic min liefden plecht te sine  
 Ic lieft enen mederen al veranpen  
 Ic liden die sonden die sijn mine  
 Ic bemint quade balsem woude  
 Ic aer om en nenden van my niet wate  
 Ic is selue met groten woude  
 Ic er balsem hde daer mine liden  
 Ic en soude my die daer doen smaken  
 Ic raden liden met bemine  
 Ic helde by dient wel ald' saken  
 Ic liden die sonde die sijn mine  
 Ic ch god here of ic sachte  
 Ic me hant hantefche ghewade  
 Ic alichte hant minne ontfine machte  
 Ic nfer my en soude het wane te spade  
 Ic wane nfer my met quade wade  
 Ic dacht my troesten sachte minde  
 Ic en soude si en dacht niet en dade  
 Ic liden die sonde die sijn mine  
 Ic of ic enest sachte en hant  
 Ic sijn ontfide dat lachten en  
 Ic sal haer claghen my misbare  
 Ic sal ic sal my sal machten  
 Ic wane en berden en may  
 Ic helde den sijn in sijnne schijn  
 Ic ape en enest daer bemint van  
 Ic liden die sonde die sijn mine  
 Ic aer nachten seker liden  
 Ic sacht bespreken wach of spade  
 Ic ochten en god van daer hem hant  
 Ic m al die werelt en niet en dade  
 Ic ander hope troest en ghewade  
 Ic uchtic sacht sacht my lachten te sine  
 Ic sacht moet my god beraden  
 Ic aer die sonde die sijn mine  
 Ic y god ontfide die ghele minne  
 Ic is sacht die liden daer  
 Ic achte nach wach min minne min  
 Ic in my mine ghele in wach ghele  
 Ic de wane en die liden may  
 Ic in al liden wach liden  
 Ic in die van wach niet liden ghewade  
 Ic ad here ontfide minne ghele in wach

Amey . liden .

Ic me sachte boerde en en  
 Ic ad sachte boerde

55 . no .

Ic sachte

Ic sachte ghe hant en sachte sachte  
 Ic en sachte ghe hant niet sachte  
 Ic wane en quade wach en ghele  
 Ic y dacht en sachte niet sachte  
 Ic aer me sachte met ghele dacht  
 Ic y machte en ghe wach ghele  
 Ic y sachte hant wach met sachte  
 Ic aer sachte en alken sachte en ghele  
 Ic com exempel van dacht sachte  
 Ic sachte en hant my ghele  
 Ic en sal hant sachte sachte sachte

Ic sachte

Ic en sal hant sachte en sachte  
 Ic onen wach op sachte  
 Ic ad ghele en sachte en sachte  
 Ic aer sachte wach en sachte wach  
 Ic c wach wel si hant wach sachte  
 Ic ar si machte wach sal sachte  
 Ic u sachte si machte hant sachte  
 Ic y sachte si niet sachte sachte  
 Ic en sachte hant sachte en sachte  
 Ic y al met sachte quade sachte  
 Ic c wach sachte sachte sachte  
 Ic y sachte en sachte hant sachte  
 Ic apt my sachte wach sachte  
 Ic apt al sachte hant sachte  
 Ic ad ghele hant wach die sachte  
 Ic c sal sachte sachte sachte  
 Ic en al ic sachte machte  
 Ic aer sachte sachte niet en  
 Ic et niet wel si sachte sachte  
 Ic y al sachte wach sachte sachte  
 Ic aer hant die sachte en sachte  
 Ic machte met hant wach en sachte  
 Ic sachte en sachte met sachte sachte  
 Ic y sachte te wach al sachte mette

I n siet dese groenheit die dat siet  
 I en soude meer lof doen daer misse  
 I e meer drincken ander tusschen  
 I aa. Wat drincker o maghet wel  
 I hinc siet hier hedmeer and' spel  
 I en sander reden dat gheper stant

**Tuif**

I ar daniel heldi hier ghemact  
 I hie hebt ghemact een and' happe  
 I e sal o op den halle kappen  
 I ant dat ghe dier hiet altes o

**Tuif**

I y remeur van o allen gaet  
 I n hiet elken een cussen and' sijn waer  
 I ma moede in maghet soet  
 I n trouwe ghinc hebt ghe seide  
 I e siet in dat dierbe o en so  
 I n vander en dat niet ghebaert

**Tuif**

I hebuer ghe sijn h' d' se' ghevoert  
 I e d' n' dat o kessen gheert

**Tuif**

I n siet hier die kale voer stant  
 I n gheert op my i n' gheleert  
 I n siet dat niet lide in sacht  
 I n' ghebuert beset beset

**Tuif**

I hebuer ghebuert o anders niet  
 I hebuer so en claghe o niet sere  
 I ant bi onsen heere here  
 I hebuer ghe claghe al o gemabe  
 I ant hadde al selbe wif ghinc gelant  
 I n' w' d' d' wille in der mien  
 I n' siet d' hied' hied' wel o gheert  
 I n' gheert op siet siet stant  
 I n' ghebuert ghebuert ghebuert

I n' siet hoe s' sijn  
 I n' hebbe no ch' na pour no ghet  
 I n' altes ghinc om o' wif ghinc  
 I n' ghebuert wel asse o' ellende  
 I n' nide asse o' vander hiet

**Tuif**

I hebuer no siet in alle gheselle  
 I ar o ghebuert vander vander

**Tuif**

I hebuer wille dat in dier  
 I e hebbe een o' wif alle o' wif  
 I n' my altes sacht en o  
 I n' sacht in sacht wel. sijn. vander  
 I n' sere in dierbe d' o' sal sere  
 I n' vander in al s' in sacht  
 I n' dierbe o' meer sere al ghet  
 I n' sere sere sere sere ghet  
 I hebuer d' o' mach al een o' sacht  
 I n' o' o' mach d' o' mach d' o'  
 I n' mach in mijn heere sere  
 I n' o' een o' d' sacht o' d'

I n' sacht gheleert s' in d' o' d' o'  
 I n' mach een o' wif sijn s' o'  
 I hebuer ghe wif al in sacht

I n' drincke sere in d' o' sere  
 I n' o' sere in sacht gheleert

I n' d' in sacht in sere vander  
 I n' o' sere in sere in sere

I n' hie hie hie hie hie hie  
 I n' gheert in sere in sere

I n' dierbe d' in d' vander o' d' o'  
 I n' wif wel s' hie in sere ghemabe

I n' dierbe in sere in d' o' d' o'  
 I n' sacht s' sere o' wif sere

I n' d' in sere altes al s' sacht d' o'  
 I n' sacht s' in o' al sacht d' o'

I n' sacht s' o' o' al o' gheleert  
 I n' al s' o' o' o' gheleert

I n' sacht d' o' sacht in sere  
 I n' o' sacht s' in sere sere d' o'

I hebuer hie vander in o' d' o'  
 I n' o' gheleert een sere hie



I aer u ginc met machie gheerighen  
 I at iese met eenen machie den gheerighen  
 I c wane een here alle mine daghe  
 I dacht ginc dat u haer ganc  
 I ne pelt of een goet roe laken  
 I i soude mi machien i peise laren  
 I ocker peise helden drie daghe  
 I aefchen het sande h' sac behaghen  
 I er sande duere. Gij. moent of seuen  
 I n machien oer al ons leuen  
 I c foute foute an hare gheleue  
 I c foute foute an hare gheleue

I ftebuer

I iene Jan dat es mi leet  
 I at ghe hebt omgheuen onpers  
 I c ftebuer G Jan bi sente sebbi  
 I en maet verdraghe om berent wille  
 I i som tijt stighen al stille  
 I l est dat enen heghen gheet  
 I aer seker G daghen es mi leet  
 I i wille ghesmeek sijn som die velle  
 I elt wille met gheue sijn ghesoude  
 I ne selbe wille sijn ghesoude  
 I en de selbe al h' hie ghesoude  
 I et goeden staken auer h' bel  
 I ochten en duen si nemmeer wel  
 I at bliuen alder eenen quier  
 I et dunt mi sijn die leste raet  
 I c ftebuer met ghele of ghele ont  
 I pmet vriendelike in al d' stont  
 I i macher h' ghele wel laren  
 I et sijn d' wille die niet en saken  
 I ftebuer dat die her dunt mi ghet

I Jan

I gheue gheleu meeter spaet  
 I die G. gheleu is meeter ganc  
 I G laet sijn haer si mi sal ontfacen  
 I elc si mi in hant siet comen

I ftebue

I aer ons velle maet G. dunt  
 I aer hi comt dunt god sande  
 I ne mi dunt soe ghele allende  
 I er sijn dunt maet en dunt  
 I c maet wel wesen G. G. G. G.  
 I at iese met gheerighen te manne  
 I G ghet kypen god gheue G. sande  
 I ftebue wane en haet G. ftebue  
 I ftebue op G. bel  
 I er dunt arden G. sal wille  
 I at ghe mi met ftebue en wille  
 I G. G. G. dunt hant com ghele  
 I p sijn dunt G. dunt  
 I act wel velle G. dunt mi ghet

I Jan

I iene Ghele Loe G. ghele  
 I eber is en dunt noch dunt

I Ghele

I h' leet al sande mi G. dunt  
 I wane. dat iese niet en ghele  
 I h' stant en dunt al en ghele  
 I aer en dunt dat is G. hant  
 I ftebue G. selben ftebue  
 I at G. craken sijn die wille

I Jan

I iene Ghele nu laet G. ftebue  
 I ochter dunt vriendschap comen  
 I i gode het sande ons G. dunt  
 I wane mi laren wesen here  
 I iene daghe lant en dunt nemme  
 I en onsen hant al ghele  
 I c sande G. ghele sel ftebue  
 I G. G. G. dunt d' ftebue  
 I mi sande dunt met peise laren  
 I arny man al dunt dunt  
 I ne sijn pelt dunt G. dunt  
 I elc dunt dunt ghele  
 I G. G. G. mi dunt dunt



I se seldē hebben wils my laten  
wie daghe here sijn en al met mate  
al dāse hebben sē segghet my

Terste

I se den ysten efi  
I se helpe gheacht ene and tripe  
I alle die sijn my verkenen  
I e wens behaef dat se gheacht mag

Man

I se minne hets al ghesdwan  
I emtse en daer dat is e rade

Terste

I e sal want het mochte my senden  
I aefse ene and hoere dan my  
I an u mochte wel segghet efi  
I se yement dat is my scope al dā  
I an mochte out af en ghesub  
I e wils niemant te kinnen gane

Man

I e se moete met ene hene  
I e salder af stighen al puer stille

Terste

I e dat day al udden wille  
I an sijn meeste en here  
I se daghe lene en nemere  
I ochean sacht my wel lene dallen

Man

I e y al hene dach he day allen  
I an mine lube gant stammale sture  
I an sijn dese bofferen u. my gelure  
I e wils is sal u dat drincken  
I aghioer eueghē is seldse drincke  
I an u wel drincken gane vande lene  
I e saken u te horey here

I e happe spullen die el kettijfe  
I an dore niet drincken om ha wisse  
I se seldē en verporen  
I an wisse mochte hane linnen grobe  
I eide he hene en si dat dade  
I an u sijnse alse bignade  
I an sijnse he and castien bi  
I se den cocture he hene efi  
I an hene he wisse dus dringhe lene  
I eide u sijn wel hene gheen hane  
I e wel gane drincke sonder sijnse  
I an al en sijn niet hane morgh  
I an wisse die sante wel sijn ghespon  
I e sijnse si sijnse si sijnse si want  
I an dat hane orbare linnen sijnse  
I an sijnse seldē dan ene minge  
I an dat dene dat si mach  
I e wens want mone best. wisse en sacht  
I e wille gane drincken al sijnse

Terste

I e hene hene drincke sijn my hane  
I e hene hane hene ghespon

Man

I e sacht e segghen al sijn sijn  
I an u moete omme tuerste drincken

Terste

I an den croch is sal e sijnse  
I an u al de hene daer hene

Themen

I an my god die bichte my hane  
I an u hane hane my al min hane

Terste

I e hene u sijn my dat sijn hane  
I an u sijn my wane hane te hane

Man

En hebbe in secht o sechsen plan  
 Ghe sijn mijn vriende die veroren  
 En in der noy hebbe veroren  
 Al die ghe moech seiden wel selt leere  
 Ghe moet met mi comen eten  
 I c bidde o en o weerdinne  
 Ghe selt hare hee te mi minne  
 I cve gande huse ben lide en sille  
 I c mach nu drincken gae als ic wille  
 I coud' seldde van minen wine  
 I cben ghehele wel .xx. jaer en gine  
 G ar ic daer binne wort wast en gewich  
 G ar ic o dach daer ic sekerich  
 I coud' op den eijc gay nu  
 G ar ic d' ame se bidde o  
 G ar ghe mi my wilt comen eten  
 I c rappaen en d'ic niet ghehele  
 G out ic ben nu gae en d'ic  
 G eest. Gande huse alline  
 I c out hasehele seld' leeren

Lehebuer

G ar en daer die tafel seiden  
 I c sal come in secht niet leeren

May

I c sal gae die tafel maken  
 G alche mi rappaen en brinck leere

Lehebuer

I c he me ghehele in sal niet leeren  
 I yster byster ghe moech gae mede  
 I c out ghehele hase out ghehele  
 G ar en met hem comen eten  
 I c out ghe hee hem d'ic veroren  
 I c ar he wort binne sijn hie  
 I c wel en wat met sijn wine  
 I c nu op den dach van seiden  
 G ar sijn hee waer sijn gade  
 I c die daghe lanc en sijn vspijer  
 I c aschijn met war vspier

I yster ghe moech. o we ghehele

May

I c mbeche hee he mi gae ghehele  
 I c welte rappaen mede gae  
 I c d'ic daer he nu lange en sal seiden  
 I c d'ic mi gae en mi rappaen  
 I c en en sal out wte seiden te mede leere  
 I c d'ic seiden te weiden en  
 I c gae al mbeche seld' meere  
 I c out her d'ic mi hie d'ic

Lehebuer

I c gae hasehele mede. gae  
 I c en sal out seiden seiden gae

May

I c seiden nu maect out alde sijn  
 I c seiden al ghehele en seiden te gae  
 I c seiden sal comen daer ic wane  
 I c nu ghehele en sijn weerdinne

Lehebuer

I c seiden daer en gae d'ic  
 I c hee hee daer ghe gae hee  
 I c out hee en en anders nu da d'ic  
 I c gae ic ben ghehele daer comen  
 I c out manie ghe hee sijn d'ic  
 I c ar ghe hee sijn gade sijn  
 I c seiden maect out wel sijn comen  
 I c adu d'ic d'ic comen maet

May

I c seiden dese reden maect lanc  
 I c out out ghehele die sijn hie

Lehebuer

I c d'ic seiden maect

④ Oct Given my wife Carey Stacey



Wille come ghebruer gaet d'waer  
 in daer en is weerdinne huer  
 en is sal sieten meken t'fien  
 derde liet huer saet en groet  
 en al dat teken en kleine en groet  
 aet ons wijen en brinck ons nappe  
 en die herberghe daer de ruppe  
 ar liet die lippe landt poort

Teeth

**T**er heer uwer moeder saet  
gheveelt my n' lange alre dachdrin

Lehmann

11 haer-2 nant dem 2de Wine  
 12 nant al d' Wel dat geselt  
 13 s' Wel men daer hote en ghet  
 14 n mach s'ent en s'wischen stalle  
 15 i daer altoch s'rien wille  
 16 achom s'et nu nu s'ent d'inghe  
 17 n mach nu 2de Wine d'inghe  
 18 wine g'hebuer haer mach d' s'ri

*T. Burke*

TP & Dr. inst. few feet over St. John

F. Gebauer

Will come as gift for her drink

Ther.

**F**i. Gude ghe en danst my nu in sinclen  
**M**ide elc wt dar laet my weeten  
 Wat ic der mach comen eten  
 Als sijnghet my en comen af

Thay

D erke hert noch meer een auf  
 d is meer ons composit groen ghevide  
 d n de een en de scheiden  
 d g om en dactene flichte te buere  
 d y en maken d mier duere  
 d er maet sijn dat segge d

Terre

Ich habde keinen Kram und  
am 11. 12. 1941

77

Ja o gaeft en fije niet fce raeme  
 ar ofhijc laet. Want funder hofhen  
 in fonder fteeds meer funder blighe  
 in trent o argh den ander grote

7. Gerke

The Bible never says it is good to  
 love the world. It is evil.

IT

T f n prebte nu niet als een man  
 d en heeft ghesen oec aen linc  
 d n dacht gheen een souden bedwanc  
 n o een en dinct mijn hene ghebanc  
 n sal huer die pisse maken n suene  
 d ende dar is haer gebede gheschene  
 d n dar is my peise souden deney  
 n nie daghe en hene besey

Dehner

Da her es geschicket mit dem  
 ley Wais her Gedener el

T. Burke

¶ O zwerf ghenoechli o wel  
 ¶. Ducht in herde wel ghemact

Day



I h i en co niet hi co meftraet  
 I i co a Sinne wldi my kien  
 I o me compst sal biseren  
 I ait en doeren weder aier  
 I ont ghe dinct my al berfamen  
 I est gort compst wat fegder af

I ghebuer

I i dinct dat icken wel mach  
 I e fir beflabert roen aen

I am

I i cher ghebuer soe moeti boeren  
 I n dan wtd selde dincten  
 I n dan selde my stappant fienke  
 I e rante le bueray

I ghebuer

I i ghebuer ghe fuit al berde gey  
 I er fient ghe fuit en b'ert wale

I am

I n dinctet b' niet en mine tale  
 I ar is min al wel com d'inghen  
 I e felle daen daer treepden springe  
 I er ghe dan her fcheden fely

I wif

I i gebaden hoe fide dus bepele  
 I de hebde b' fide dus beracht  
 I er ghe me dat me hest gheficht  
 I ar d'ar b' man oer dinct my in  
 I me wif wif hoe meest fien va b'  
 I ande my d'ey felle bende  
 I n blyt hi meest te d'ey fonde  
 I i felen d'ay d'aghe her sal ons fienke  
 I gebader is fwee b' de celt ghe  
 I er is om ene pelfe d'inghe  
 I e hadd huer dar icken fleghe  
 I ar hi b'wet fpu de die kuyf

I i fout p'ienfey onfality wif  
 I i b' felle of vor ghebract  
 I est dat ghe talle wtd fienke p'act  
 I ar felle gellen dat ghe wlt  
 I i fient wel fappant alle felle  
 I ar fide meftraet al te bary  
 I n mach hi d'ey comen te bary  
 I n mach hi felen ouderlinghe  
 I ar wif al d'ey wille d'ey wille  
 I n en co broude b'ine d'ey ftray  
 I ach hi b'et ghe meest felen  
 I ier huer te wtd om alle wille

I wif

I i wif ghebader al fide al felle  
 I i ach felle soe en felle oer  
 I e f'inghen my kien nide oer  
 I n d'ar oer ghe en ene mude  
 I i god gheue d'ey pelfe fende  
 I ar is my felen nide oer ghe

I am

I i in wif die hest al wel d'ey d'nef  
 I e felle ghe compst hie ghebract  
 I e felle felen om clampe trecken  
 I ar meere f'elme en faghe me

I ghebuer

I i iene I am ghebract me  
 I ier en felle b'one f'ile  
 I e d'ey felle b' kien f'ile  
 I ier mantrijt l'ep en r'one

I wif

I i god d'ey fende niet wtd aen d'nef  
 I ar en fal hi oer dar wtd wtd

I am

I i alle dar f' wtd f'el  
 I e d'nef dar is h'ar b'nef

## TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION

Ene sotte boerde ende ene goede sotternie

Messagier

- Nu hoert ghi heren ende swighet stille  
 Men seet hine heeft niet sinen wille  
 Die aen een quaet wijf es ghehuut  
 Sijn doghen esser met vernuut  
 5 Want men seet met ghenen dinghen  
 En mach men een quaet wijf ghedwinghen  
 Ende seker hets waer men saelt u toghen  
 Hier voor u allen voer u oghen  
 Scone exempel van desen saken  
 10 Nu swijcht ende hout met ghemaken  
 Men sal hier spelen slechts ter stont

Ghebuer

- Men sal hier spelen enen stront  
 Boven toverst op u hoot  
 God gheve u scande ende lachter groot  
 15 Gaet thuisweert ende onderwinnes uus  
 Ic wene wel hi heeft wat thuus  
 Dat hi morghen vroeck sal vinden  
 Die keytijf hi moeste hem onderwinnen  
 En conste hi niet gheswighen stille  
 20 Men speelt hier hedemeer om sinen wille  
 Ende al met sinen quaden clappe  
 Ic wil gaen sitten voer den tappe  
 Ende drincken een goet hoet biden viere  
 Tapt in tapt uut vanden biere  
 25 Tapt al vol haest u ter vaert  
 God gheve hem ramp die hemer spaert  
 Ic sal drincken sonder sorghe  
 Levic nu ic sterve morghen  
 Laet sien canicker niet an  
 30 Het riet wel bi sente Jan  
 Ende nu wetic wel hoet smaect  
 Siet hoe dit volc nu steet ende gaept  
 Saechdi noit liede wildi mi copen  
 Mi dunct en derf niet verre lopen  
 35 Om sotte te vane al sonder nette

A Crazy Peasant Play and a Good Crazy Play

Messenger.

- Now listen, you gentlemen, and be quiet.  
 It is said that he does not get his will,  
 who is married to a bad woman,  
 his suffering is renewed with it,  
 5 because it is said, that there is no way  
 to overcome a bad wife.  
 And it is surely true. We shall show you  
 here before you all in front of your eyes,  
 beautiful examples about these matters.  
 10 Now be quiet and be peaceful,  
 we shall play here immediately.

Neighbor.

- We shall play here a piece of shit  
 way above your heads.  
 God grant you shame and great laughter!  
 15 Go home and get mixed up in a mess like this.  
 I really think, he has something at home,  
 which he shall find tomorrow morning.  
 The idiot, he had to interfere!  
 And couldn't he keep quiet?  
 20 We play here today for his sake,  
 and with him always babbling away!  
 I'll go and sit in front of the pub  
 and drink a good cup by the fire.  
 Pour in, pour out the beer!  
 25 Pour it full, hurry up!  
 God punish him, who always holds back!  
 I shall drink without worry.  
 If I live now, I die tomorrow.  
 Let's see, can't I reach it?  
 30 It smells good, by St. John!  
 And now I know all right, how it tastes.  
 Look, how these people stand there and gape!  
 Have you never seen people? Do you want to  
 buy me?  
 I think I don't need to run far  
 35 in order to catch fools.

- Ay siet dese gapaerts bi Coels sette  
 Men soude meer liede vaen dan musschen  
 Ic moet drincken onder tusschen  
 Baa wat duncket u maghiet wel  
 40 Ghine siet hier hedemeer ander spel  
 Hets sonder reden dat ghi hier staet

Wijf

- Wat duvel hebdi hier ghemaect  
 Ghi hebt ghemaect een onderhaspe  
 Ic sal u op den velle tasten  
 45 Want wat ghi doet hets altoes quaet

Ghebuer

- Ay jement van u allen gaet  
 Ende hael elken een cussen onder sine voete  
  
 Maria moeder ende maghet soete  
 Entrouwen ghine hebt gheen scande in u  
 50 Besiet mi wel dunckic u een scu  
 Dit wonder en was noit ghehoert

Hennen [Jan]\*

Ghebuer ghi schijnt harde sere ghestoert  
 Hebdi iet dat u jeghen gheet

Ghebuer

- En siedi niet dit volc hoet steet  
  
 55 Ende gaep op mi in mijn ghelach  
 Het scijnt dat noit lide en sach  
 Lieve ghebuer besiet besiet

Hennen [Jan]

- Ghebuer ghebrect u anders niet  
 Ghebuer soe en clagic u niet sere  
 60 Want bi onsen lieven here  
 Ghebuer ghi claegt al van gemake  
 Want haddi al selken wijf thuis gelaten  
 Als ic dies willic mi vermeten  
 Ghi sout der lieden herde wel vergheten  
 65 Daer ghi nu op sijt soe stuer  
 Ay ghebuer ghebuer ghebuer  
 Wijstijt hoe si sijn bestelt  
 Dien hebben no cleder no pant no gelt

- Ah, look at those gapers, by St. Nick's behind!  
 We will catch more people than sparrows.  
 In the meantime, I must drink.  
 Bah! What do you think; may I?  
 40 You'll not see here a different play today.  
 It's no use standing around here waiting.

Wife.

- What devil did you do here?  
 You have mixed everything up.  
 I shall polish your hide  
 45 because what you are doing is all wrong.

Neighbor.

- Ah, let one of you go  
 and fetch for everyone a pillow for under his  
 feet!  
 Mary, mother and sweet virgin,  
 in truth, you have no shame in you.  
 50 Look at me well! Do you think me a scarecrow?  
 You never heard of such wonders.

Jan.

Neighbor, you seem very much disturbed.  
 do you have something bothering you?

Neighbor.

- Don't you see these people, how they stand  
 around  
 55 and gape at me to my disgrace?  
 It seems, that they never saw people,  
 Dear neighbor, look, look!

Jan.

- Neighbor, if nothing else is the matter with you,  
 neighbor, then I don't feel very sorry for you.  
 60 Because, by our dear Lord,  
 neighbor, you complain in comfort,  
 because if you had left at home a wife  
 such as mine, I dare say  
 you would soon forget about the people  
 65 you are now so angry about.  
 Oh, neighbor, neighbor, neighbor,  
 if only you knew, how those manage,  
 who have no clothes, no property, no money,



- Ende altoes thuus een quaet wijf venden  
 70 Si hebben wel alsoe groot ellenden  
 Als inden afgront vander hellen

Ghebuer

Ghebuer nu secht mi als gheselle  
 Wat u ghebracht want ics begheert

Hennen [Jan]

- Ghebuer wetti wat mi deert  
 75 Ic hebbe een quaet wijf als ghi wel wet  
 Die mi altoes sceelt ende et  
 Si sceelt mi tsnachts wel seven werven  
 Soe sere mi dunct dat ic sal sterven  
 Ende weerdic mi als si mi slaet  
 80 Si doets te meer soe eest al quaet  
 Ende smekicse sine houter niet af  
 Ghebuer dit es noch al een caf  
 Want en es noch dach noch ure  
 Sine maect mi mijn leven tsuren  
 85 Dit es een ordeel sonder ende  
 Hoe soudic gheleven in dit ellende  
 Hoe mach enech wijf sijn soe quaet  
 Ghebuer ghi wet al minen staet  
 Ic drincke gerne in die taverne  
 90 Dan comt si op mi scelden gherne  
 Ende dan en steet mi niet tonberne  
 Ic en moet met scoppe ende met scherne  
 Met hare haesteleec thuus wert gaen  
 Dan gheet si mi boken ende slaen  
 95 Mi dunct dat mi die rebben craken  
 Ic weet wel si liet mi met ghemake  
 Woudicse met mi leiden drincken  
 Si soude haer selven oec wel scinken  
 Ende drincken altoes als haer sal dorsten  
 100 Dan hout si niet op al soudse borsten  
 Sine heeft den croes al uut ghelect  
 Ende als haer anden croes ghebreect  
 Dan setsi den pot an haren mont  
 Soe en hout si niet op sine siet den gront  
 105 Ghebuer hier werdic met onteert  
 Constic ghevinden eneghen keer  
 Daer ic peis net mochte ghecrighen  
 Dat icse met eeren mochte doen swighen  
 Ic ware een here alle mine daghe  
 110 Mi dochte goet dat ic haer gave  
 Ene pels of een goet roc laken

- and even find a bad wife at home!  
 70 They have as great a sorrow  
 as they will have in the abyss of hell.

Neighbor.

Neighbor, now tell me as a friend  
 what is the matter with you, because I want to  
 know.

Jan.

- Neighbor, do you know what hurts me?  
 75 I have a bad wife, as you know well,  
 who always scolds me and orders me around.  
 She scolds me at night about seven times  
 as much, so I think that I shall die.  
 And if I defend myself when she hits me,  
 80 she does it even more. Thus all is bad,  
 and if I flatter her, she does not stop.  
 And, neighbor, this is not even the worst,  
 because there is neither day nor hour  
 when she doesn't make my life sour.  
 85 This is an ordeal without end.  
 How could I live in this misery!  
 How can any wife be so bad!  
 Neighbor, you know my whole situation.  
 I like to drink in the tavern, but  
 90 then she likes to come and scold me  
 and then I can't escape.  
 I must amid ridicule and shame  
 hurry home with her.  
 Then she cuffs and hits me, until  
 95 I think that my ribs crack.  
 I know that she would leave me in peace,  
 if I would take her to drink with me.  
 She would pour for herself, too,  
 and drink as much as her thirst demands.  
 100 Then she doesn't stop even if she should burst,  
 until she has licked up the last drop from the  
 drinking cup. And if she doesn't have a cup,  
 then she puts the pot to her mouth.  
 Thus she doesn't stop until she sees the bottom.  
 105 Neighbor, with all this I am dishonored.  
 If I could find any way  
 to get peace,  
 so that I could honorably make her keep quiet,  
 I would be lord all my days.  
 110 I thought it good if I gave her a  
 petticoat or a good piece of material for a skirt.

Si soude mi macschien in peise laten  
 Mocht ic peis hebben drie daghe  
 Macschien het soude haer soe behaghen  
 115 Het soude dueren ses maent of seven  
 Ende macschien oec al ons leven  
 Ic salse smeken om hare quaetheit

Ghebuer

Lieve Jan dat es mi liet  
 Dat ghi hebt eneghen onpeis  
 120 Ic swere u Jan bi sente Cleis  
 Men moet verdraghen om beters wille  
 Ende somtijts swighen al stille  
 Al eest dat enen tje hengheet  
 Maer seker u doghen es mi leet  
 125 Si willen ghesmect sijn som die vrouwen  
 Selc wilt met ghevene sijn ghehouwen  
 Die selken willen sijn bescouwen  
 Ende die selken al haer lijf gheblouwen  
 Met goeden stocken over haer vel  
 130 Nochtan en doen si nemmermeer wel  
 Ende bliven altoes even quaet  
 Het dunct mi sijn die beste raet  
 Versmeecse met giften of ghi cont  
 Sprect vriendelike in alder stont  
 135 Si mochte haer quaetheit wel laten  
 Het sijn quade wive die niet en saten  
 Ghebuer doet dit het dunct mi goet

Jan

Gherne ghebuer metter spoet  
 Adieu ghebuer ic moet gaen  
 140 Nu laet sien hoe si mi sal ontfaen  
 Als si mi in huus siet comen

Bette

Siet ons vrouwe moeten verdoemen  
 Waer hi comt datten god scende  
 Die mi doet soe groten ellende  
 145 Met sinen drincken nacht ende dach  
 Ic mach wel roepen "o wi o wach"  
 Dat icken noit ghecreech te manne  
 Nu gaet keytijf god gheve u scande  
 Ende haelt water ende haest u snel  
 150 Of ic sal op u vel  
 Met voeten terden U sal rouwen  
 Dat ghi mi noit saecht entrouwen

Then perhaps she would leave me in peace.  
 If I could have three days of peace,  
 perhaps she would like it so much  
 115 that it could last six months or seven,  
 and perhaps even all our life.  
 I shall flatter her because of her badness.

Neighbor.

Dear Jan, I am sorry  
 that you have so much strife.  
 120 I swear to you, Jan, by St. Nick,  
 one must bear for the sake of the better  
 and sometimes keep completely quiet,  
 even if one dislikes it.  
 But, truly, I am sorry for your suffering.  
 125 They want to be smacked, some women,  
 some want to be kept with gifts,  
 some want to be scolded,  
 and some want to be beaten over the whole body  
 with good sticks on her pelt.  
 130 Even so, they never do well,  
 and remain equally bad.  
 This seems to me the best advice:  
 Flatter her with gifts, if you can,  
 speak in a friendly manner at all times,  
 135 perhaps she will quit being bad.  
 They are bad wives, who can't be peaceful.  
 Neighbor, do that, it seems good to me.

Jan.

Gladly, neighbor, immediately!  
 Goodbye, neighbor, I must go.  
 140 Now let's see, how she will receive me,  
 when she sees me come into the house.

Bette.

Look, Our Lady curse him!  
 Wherever he goes, may God curse him  
 who makes me suffer so much  
 145 with his drinking night and day!  
 I may well shout "Oh me, oh my,"  
 that I ever got him for a husband.  
 Now go, idiot, God curse you!  
 And fetch water and hurry up,  
 150 or I'll stomp on  
 your hide with my feet. You shall regret  
 that you ever saw me, indeed!

Hi es soe druncken hine can ghestaen  
Op sine voete vul corliaen  
155 Gaet wel vollec van voer mijn oghen

Jan

Lieve Bette laet u ghenoeghen  
Seker ic en dranc noch heden

Bette

Ghi liecht al soude men u ontleden  
Waendi dat ics niet en gerieke  
160 Ghi staet ende daesbolt als een kieken  
Gaet ende doet dat ic u hete  
Of ic gheve u selken smete  
Dat u craken selen die rebben

Jan

Lieve Bette nu laet u segghen  
165 Mochtic tuwer vrienſcap comen  
Bi gode het soude ons beiden vromen  
Woudi mi laten wesen here  
Drie daghe lanc ende dan nemmere  
Van onsen huse al gheheel  
170 Ic soude u gheven selc juweel  
Hen es vrouwe binnen der straten  
Sine souder omme met peise laten  
Haren man al djaer dore  
Enen sconen pels goet ter core  
175 Hebbic jeghen Peteren ghecocht  
Hi heeftse mi uut Inghelant brocht  
Dese seldi hebben wildi mi laten  
Drie daghe here sijn ende al met maten  
Wildise hebben so segghet mi

Bette

180 Tfi der pelsen tfi  
Ghi hebse ghecocht ene ander tripe  
Calle die sout mi verwiten  
Te wies behoef datse ghecocht was

Jan

Lieve minne hets al ghedwas  
185 Nemtse ende doet dat ic u rade

He is so drunk, he can't stand  
on his feet, the dirty no-account!  
155 Just get wholly out of my sight.

Jan.

Dear Bette, let me reassure you!  
For sure, I have not drunk yet today.

Bette.

You would lie, even if it kills you.  
Do you think I don't smell it?  
160 You stand there and rave like a chicken!  
Go and do as I tell you,  
or I'll give you such a beating  
that your ribs will crack.

Jan.

Dear Bette, now let me tell you,  
165 if I could gain your friendship,  
by God, it would be useful to us both.  
If you were to let me be master  
for three days, and then never again  
of our house totally,  
170 I would give such jewelry,  
there would not be a woman on the streets,  
who would leave in peace  
her husband throughout the years because of it.  
I have a beautiful fur of good quality  
175 that I bought from Peter.  
He brought it for me from England.  
That you shall have, if you will let me  
be master for three days with all rights.  
If you want to have them, then tell me.

Bette.

180 Fie on the furs, fie!  
You bought it for another belly.  
Son of a whore, you'll let slip yet  
for whose benefit they were bought.

Jan.

Dear love, it's all a lie.  
185 Take them and do what I advise.

Bette

Ic sal want het mochte mi scaden  
 Gaefdisse ene ander hoeren dan mi  
 Maer ic mochte wel segghen "tfi"  
 Wiste jement dat ic mi vercope aldus  
 190 Maer maecter ons af een ghesus  
 Ende willet niemant te kinnen geven

Jan

Nenic soe moetic met eren leven  
 Ic salder af swighen al puer stille

Bette

Nu doet dan al uwen wille  
 195 Ende sijt meester ende here  
 Drie daghe lanc ende nemmere  
 Nochtan saelt mi wel lanc vallen

Jan

Wey nu benic doch here van allen  
 Hout mine huke gaet scommelen scuren  
 200 Waer sijn dese boffers nu mijn ghebueren  
 Ic wets ic sal nu gaen drincken  
 Saghicker eneghe ic soudse wincken  
 Want ic wil drincken gaen vanden biere  
 Si sitten nu bi haren viere  
 205 Ende haspen spillen die vul keytijfs  
 Sine dorren niet drincken om haer wijfs  
 Diese scelden ende verspreken  
 Mijn wijf mochte haer liever breken  
 Beide haer bene eer si dat dade  
 210 Want ic souse alsoe begaden  
 Daer soude hem ander castien bi  
 Tfi hen cockaerts tfi hen tfi  
 Die hem haer wijfs dus dwinghen laten  
 Seker ic sie wel hiers gheen bate  
 215 Ic wil gaen drincken sonder sorghen  
 Want al en quamic niet voer morghen

Mijn wijf die souts wel sijn ghepait  
 Si scuert si scommelt si spent si nait  
 Ende doet haren orbore binnen huus  
 220 Daer sitsi stilder dan ene muys  
 Ende doet dbeste dat si mach  
 Ic wene noit man beter wijf en sach  
 Nu willic gaen drincken al versmoert

Bette.

I will, because it could hurt me  
 if you gave it to another whore than me.  
 But I might well say "fie"  
 if anyone knows that I sell myself like this.  
 190 But let us agree secretly  
 and let no one know about it.

Jan.

Oh no, upon my honor,  
 I shall be completely quiet about it.

Bette.

Now do your will  
 195 and be master and lord  
 for three days and no more.  
 Yet, it will seem long to me.

Jan.

Wow! Now I am lord of everything after all.  
 Hold my coat tails! Go wash barrels! Scrub!  
 200 Where are those bluffers now, my neighbors?  
 I know this, I shall now go drinking.  
 If I see anyone, I will wink to them,  
 because I am going to go beer drinking.  
 They sit now by the fire  
 205 and wind and spin, the dirty idiots.  
 They dare not drink because of their wives,  
 who scold and berate them.  
 My wife would rather break  
 both her legs than do that,  
 210 because I would fix her in such a way,  
 that others could learn something from it.  
 Fie those cuckolds, fie on them! Fie!  
 who let their wives rule them so!  
 Surely, I see, there is no profit here.  
 215 I shall go drinking without worry  
 because, even if I didn't come back before  
 tomorrow,  
 my wife would be well satisfied.  
 She scrubs, she cleans, she spins, she sews,  
 and does her useful work in the house.  
 220 There she sits more quiet than a mouse  
 and does the best she can.  
 I think, no one ever saw a better wife.  
 Now I want to go drinking, till I am drunk.

Ghebuer

Ghebuer heer drincken segt mi hoert  
 225 Ghebuer hoe hebdi ghevaren

Jan

Ic saelt u segghen al sonder sparen  
 Maer ic moet emmer tiersten drincken

Ghebuer

Nemt den croes ic sal u schincken  
 Drinct al ute hets goet bier

Hennen [Jan]

230 Ay mi god die brachte mi hier  
 Dit bier hulpt mi in al mijn lijf

Ghebuer

Ghebuer nu segt mi wat seit dwijf  
 Want wistict mi waers vele te bat

Jan

Ghebuer ic saelt u segghen plat  
 235 Ghi sijt mijn vrient uutvercoren  
 Mijn vernoy hebbic verloren  
 Als ghi noch heden wel selt weten  
 Ghi moet met mi comen eten  
 Ic bidts u ende u weerdinne  
 240 Ghi selt horen hoe ic met minnen  
 Here vanden huse ben lude ende stille  
 Ic mach nu drincken gaen als ic wille  
 Sonder scelden van minen wive  
 Ic ben ghehuut wel twintich jaer ende vive  
 245 Dat ic daer binnen noit raste en gecreech  
 Wat ic verdroeck wat ic sweech  
 Sonder op den tijt van nu  
 Ende daer omme soe biddic u  
 Dat ghi met mi wilt comen eten  
 250 Stappans ende dies niet en vergheten  
 Want ic ben nu groet ende clene  
 Meester vanden huse allene  
 Comt haestelijc sonder letten

Neighbor.

Neighbor, sir, drinking? Tell me! Listen,  
 225 neighbor, how did you fare?

Jan.

I shall tell you without leaving a word out,  
 but first, in any case, I must drink.

Neighbor.

You take the mug, I shall pour.  
 Drink it all up. It's good beer.

Jan.

230 Ah me, God has brought me here.  
 This beer helps my total well-being.

Neighbor.

Neighbor, tell me now, what did your wife say?  
 Because if I knew, it would help me.

Jan.

Neighbor, I shall tell you straight forward.  
 235 You are my best friend.  
 I have gotten rid of what annoys me,  
 as you shall know even today.  
 You must come and eat with me,  
 I beg you and your lady of the house.  
 240 You shall hear, how I, by using kind treatment,  
 am lord of the house in every way.  
 I now may go drinking, as I want to,  
 without a scolding from my wife.  
 I have been married for twenty years and five,  
 245 in which I never had rest inside that house.  
 What I suffered, how I kept quiet,  
 up till now!  
 And because of that I beg you,  
 that you will go with me to eat  
 250 right now, and do not forget it,  
 because I am now complete  
 master of the house alone.  
 Come quickly, without hesitation.

Ghebuer

Gaet ende doet die tafel setten  
 255 Ic sal comen in saels niet laten

Jan

Ic sal gaen die tafel maken  
 Volcht mi stappans ende brinct Betten

Ghebuer

Gherne ghebuer in sal niet letten  
 Lijsbet Lijsbet ghi moet gaen mede  
 260 Jan ons ghebuer heeft ons ghebeden  
 Dat wi met hem comen eten  
 Want hi heeft hem dies vermeten  
 Dat hi noit binnen sinen live  
 Soe wel en was met sinen wive  
 265 Als nu op den dach van heden  
 Maer hine heeft maer sinen vrede  
 Drie daghe lanc ende sijn respijt  
 Maschien niet toter vespertijt  
 Lijsbet ghi moetter u toe ghereden

Wijf

270 Imbrecht heeft hi mi oec ghebeden  
 Soe willic stappans mede gaen  
 Ic duchte dat hi niet lange en sal staen  
 Aldus in peise ende in rusten  
 Hem en sal ons niet sere te noden lusten  
 275 Begonste Bette te wesen erre  
 Nu gawi Imbrecht sonder merren  
 Want het dunct mi herde goet

Ghebuer

Nu gawi haestelec metter spoet  
 Men sal ons setten biden viere

Jan

280 Bette nu maect ons blide siere  
 Eest al ghereet om eten te gane  
 Hier sal comen dat ic wane  
 Ons ghebuer ende sine weerdinne

Neighbor.

Go and set the table.  
 255 I shall come. I wouldn't miss it.

Jan.

I shall go and set the table.  
 Follow me immediately and bring Bette.

Neighbor.

Gladly neighbor, I'll not tarry.  
 Lijsbet, Lijsbet! You must come along.  
 260 Jan, our neighbor, has invited us  
 to come and eat with him.  
 Because he has accomplished  
 what never in his life before he could do, namely  
 he has never done so well with his wife  
 265 as upon this day, today.  
 But he has his peace  
 and rest for only three days,  
 perhaps not till the evening meal.  
 Lijsbet, you must get ready for it.

Wife.

270 Imbrecht, if he has asked me too,  
 then I will go along right away.  
 I think that he will not remain long  
 thus in peace and quiet.  
 He won't have much desire to invite us,  
 275 when Bette begins to get mad.  
 Now let's go, Imbrecht, without delay,  
 because it seems very good to me.

Neighbor.

Now let's go quickly. Let's hurry.  
 They shall put us by the fire.

Jan.

280 Bette, now make both of us very happy!  
 Is everything ready to eat?  
 Here comes, I think,  
 our neighbor and his lady of the house.



Bette

Seker eten es hier dunne  
 285 Ghi hebt recht dat ghi gaste bit  
 Want hier en es anders niet dan dit  
 Maer ic bens ghepait doetse comen  
 Sente Marie ghi hebt saen vernomen  
 Dat ghi here sijt vanden huus  
 290 Nochtan mochtijcs wel sijn confuus  
 Dadi eneghe dinc boven mate

Jan

Bette dese reden moetti laten  
 Want ons ghebuer die sijn hier

Ghebuer

God ende sente Mechiel  
 295 Moet u hier in peise laten staen

Jan

Willecome ghebuer gaet dwaen  
 Sit daer ende u weerdinne hier  
 Ende ic sal sitten neven tfier  
 Bette lect hier sout ende broet  
 300 Ende al dat teten es cleine ende groet  
 Haelt ons wijn ende brinct ons nappe  
 In die herberghe voer den tappe  
 Dat heet die beste vander poort

Bette

Het hoet uwer moeder soort  
 305 Ghine selt mi niet lange aldus doen driven

Ghebuer

In hoerde noit van quaden wive  
 Die noit aldus wel was bestelt  
 Ic sie wel men doet vele om ghelt  
 Die mach gheven ende swighen stille  
 310 Hi doet altoes sinen wille  
 Nochtan seet men met ghenen dinghen  
 En mach men quade wiven dwinghen  
 Lieve ghebuer hoe mach dit sijn

Bette.

Truly? There is little to eat here!  
 285 You have a right to invite guests,  
 There is nothing else but this.  
 But I am satisfied with it, let them come.  
 By St. Mary, you have found out quickly  
 what it's like to be lord of the house!  
 290 But he might yet feel embarrassed  
 if he went too far.

Jan.

Bette, leave off talking like this,  
 because our neighbors are here.

Neighbor.

God and St. Michael  
 295 keep you in peace here!

Jan.

Welcome, neighbor, go wash your hands,  
 sit there, and your lady of the house here,  
 and I shall sit next to the fire.  
 Bette, put salt and bread here  
 300 and everything which is to eat big and small.  
 Get wine for us and bring us cups,  
 from the inn across from the pub,  
 and that means the best of the city.

Bette.

Let it shake your mother sore,  
 305 You are not pushing me around for long.

Neighbor.

I have never heard of a bad wife  
 who became so well-dispositioned.  
 I can see, people do a lot for money.  
 She can give and keep quiet,  
 310 while he does what he wants.  
 In addition, I can see with what things  
 we can overcome bad wives.  
 Dear neighbor, how can this have happened?

Bette

Nu drinct sere siet hier den wijn

Ghebuer

315 Willecome nu gheeft haer drincken

Bette

Bi gode ghi en dorft om mi niet schincken  
 Wildi els iet dat laet mi weten  
 Dat ic oec mach comen eten  
 Nu segghet mi ende comes af

Jan

320 Bette hets noch maer een caf  
 Ghi moet ons compost gaen ghereiden  
 Die wi eten eer wi scheiden  
 Nu gae ende doetene slechts te viere  
 Ende en makes u niet diere  
 325 Het moet sijn dat seggic u

Bette

Ic hadde liever teten nu  
 Dan iet anders gaen te doene

Jan

Nu gaet ende sijt niet soe coene  
 Dat ghijt laet want sonder lieghen  
 330 Hier souden slechts meer smeten vlieghen  
 Omtrent u oren dan ouder grote

Bette

Ic hebbe liever dat ic ga lopen  
 Ende doe dbeste dat ic can

Jan

En sprekic nu niet als een man  
 335 Men heeft gheseyt oec over lanc  
 "En doeck gheen eers sonder bedwanc"  
 Nu eet ende drinct mijn lieve gheburen  
 Ic sal haer die pelse maken te suere  
 Bi gode dat ic haer hebbe ghegheven

Bette.

Now drink hard! Look here is the wine.

Neighbor.

315 It's welcome, now give her to drink.

Bette.

By God! Don't pour one for me.  
 If you want anything else, let me know,  
 so that I may come and eat too.  
 Now tell me and that will be an end to it.

Jan.

320 Bette, there is one more little thing.  
 You must prepare some pastry for us,  
 which we will eat before we leave.  
 Now go and put it on the fire right away.  
 And don't make such a fuss!  
 325 It has to be, I tell you that.

Bette.

I would rather have something to eat now  
 than something else to do.

Jan.

Now go and don't be so fresh,  
 just stop, because, to tell the truth,  
 330 you'll quickly catch more blows  
 around your ears than good grace.

Bette.

I would rather run  
 and do the best I can.

Jan.

Don't I speak like a man?  
 335 It's been said for a long time:  
 "No arse is any good without discipline."  
 Now eat and drink, my dear neighbors.  
 I shall make her regret the furs,  
 by God, which I gave her

340 Om dat ic in peise soude leven  
Drie daghe ende here wesen

Ghebuer

Jan hier es ghenoech met desen  
Al en ware hier hedemeer el

Bette

Nu proeft ghenoechti u wel  
345 Hi dunct mi herde wel ghemaect

Jan

Hi en es niet hi es mesraect  
Hi es te dunne wildi mi leren  
Hoe men compost sal viseren  
Gaet ende doeten weder over  
350 Want ghi dunct mi al verscoven  
Eest goet compost wat segdier af

Ghebuer

Mi dunct dat icken wel mach  
Ic sit beslabbert toten oren

Jan

Seker ghebuer soe moeti booren  
355 Ende dan Bette seldi drincken  
Ende dan seldi mi stappans scinken  
Et tantos je buveray

Ghebuer

Ghebuer ghi sijt nu herde gay  
Het scijnt ghi sijt een verrot Wale

Jan

360 En duncket u niet an mine tale  
Dat ic mijn wijf nu wel can dwinghen  
Ic salse doen doer treepken springen  
Eer ghi van hier scheden selt

340 in order to be able to live in peace  
for three days and be lord.

Neighbor.

Jan, there is enough food here with these,  
even if there were nothing more served today.

Bette.

Now taste it. Does it please you well?  
345 I think that it is very well made.

Jan.

It is not, it didn't come out right.  
It's too thin. Do you want to teach me  
how to make pastry?  
Go and do it over again,  
350 because it seems to me you are miserable.  
Is it good pastry? What do you think about it?

Neighbor.

I think, that I do like it!  
I sit slobbered to the ears.

Jan.

Surely, neighbor, the pastry must come out this  
way.  
355 And then, Bette, you can drink,  
and then you shall pour quickly for me,  
and then I drink quickly.

Neighbor.

Neighbor, you are now very happy!  
It seems, you are a rotten Welshman.

Jan.

360 And don't you think with regard to my manner of  
speech  
that I can indeed conquer my wife?  
I shall make her jump through a hoop  
before you depart from here.

## Wijf

Ghevader hoe sidi dus bestelt

- 365 Hoe hebdi u selven dus vercocht  
Die vint men dat men heeft ghesocht  
Soe doet u man oec dunct mi nu  
Hine wijst hoe meester sijn van u  
Sonder met desen scalken vonde
- 370 Ende blijft hi meester te desen stonde  
Wi selender om doghen het sal ons smerten  
Ghevader ic swere u bi Coels herten  
Eer ic om enen pelse verdroeghe  
Ic hadde liever dat icken sloeghe
- 375 Dat hi bloet spude die keytijf  
Ghi sout peinsen onsalich wijf  
Als u pelse of roc ghebrect  
Eest dat ghi twee woorde smekeleec sprect  
Soe seldi hebben dat ghi wilt
- 380 Ghi keert wel stappans uwen scilt  
Soe sidi meestersse als te voren  
Ende mach hi des comen te voren  
Die mans die selen onderlinghe  
Haer wijfs aldus willen dwinghen
- 385 Ende en es vrouwe binnen der straten  
Mach hi voert gaen metter saken  
Sine heves te wers om uwen wille

## Bette

Lieve ghevader nu swijt al stille  
Bi Coels passie soe en salic oec

- 390 Ic hinghen mi liever inden roec  
In ons roecgat in ene mande  
Tfi god gheve den pelse scande  
Dat ic mi selven noit overgaf

## Jan

- Mijn wijf die loept nu wel den draef
- 395 Ic sal haer compost leren gherecken  
Of wi selen om tlanxte trecken  
Want meere sottinne en sagic nie

## Ghebuer

Lieve Jan gheloves mie  
Hier es spise boven spise

## Wife.

Aunt, how did you get yourself into this position?

- 365 How did you sell yourself like this?  
We often find what we seek.  
Also, your husband acts like that, it seems to me,  
because he doesn't know how to be your master  
without this smart trick.
- 370 And if he remained master up to this hour,  
we would all suffer for it. It would hurt us all.  
Aunt, I swear to you by the brains of Saint Nick,  
before I submitted for the sake of a fur,  
I would rather beat him
- 375 till he spits blood, the idiot.  
You will regret it, unhappy woman.  
If you lack fur or a coat,  
then you speak two flattering words and  
you will have, what you want.
- 380 You best change your tune immediately,  
then you will be mistress of everything.  
And if he comes out on top,  
the men shall want amongst themselves  
to dominate their wives this way.
- 385 And there is no woman on the street  
who can carry on with her affairs,  
without being worse off because of you.

## Bette.

Dear aunt, now calm down,  
by the passion of Saint Nick, I won't do it any longer.

- 390 I would rather hang him to smoke  
in a basket in our smoke hole.  
Fie! God curse the fur,  
that I ever surrendered myself.

## Jan.

- My wife now runs the chase very well.
- 395 I shall teach her to prepare pastry!  
But we may risk everything.  
But I have never seen a crazier woman.

## Neighbor.

Dear Jan, believe me,  
here is food beyond compare.

400 Aldus salic u leren Lise  
Over maeltijt lopen ende rennen

Wijf

Bi gode daer en soudi niet vele ane winnen  
Soe en sal hi oec dat wetic wel

Jan

Ic wille dat si wese snel  
405 Te doene dat ic haer bevele

400 This is the way I shall teach you, Lise,  
to walk and run during meals.

Wife.

By God, that will not help you much.  
and him not either, I know that well.

Jan.

I wish that she'd be quick  
405 in doing what I order her to do!