

135 The Marriage Ordained by the Virgin

Those who the Virgin takes under her wing will be safe from ill, you can be sure.

On this I will tell you a miracle as I heard it, which will give you great pleasure when you learn what the Virgin did and made known in the province of

Brittany, for two who were much in love and desirous of living virtuously, in which the mother of God whose kingdom is in heaven played her part.

The lovers of whom I speak, as I heard, were a young man and a girl who, as I learned, were brought up together and pledged their love where they were living, and made a vow,

my friends, by the Mother of God, and became her servants. And when they had agreed this, their wicked parents, who did not believe in the Lord who died for us, separated them against their will.

For the youth's father made him go away and leave her, and a wealthy nobleman asked for the girl's hand in marriage. And any who thinks on how sorrowful and tearful was their parting,

will feel great pain for them. But this couple, who loved each other more than anything, agreed that if anyone spoke of marriage to them, in no way would they consent.

But the girl's father took her and married her to another man, who had riches and a great estate. And the girl told him what had happened to her, and when he had heard her out

he said, "My dear, this is what I will do: tomorrow you I will set off and I will make such a search for the man who was betrothed to you, that I will find him and then I will give you to him, to do the will of God."

The very next day, without ado, they set off, and there in a valley appears the nobleman who had expected to marry her and bore her father great ill will. And he showed his anger

for he took both of them captive and threw the rich man into a dungeon, and when night fell he thought to have his way with the girl, but he was not successful, as he fell asleep instantly. And he slept until sunrise

and opened his eyes, and the girl told him in no uncertain terms, "It is a very great mistake to force yourself on me, for I gave my body as an offering to the Virgin, a long time ago.

And so no man will have me save she gives me to him and so refrain now from going against her command. and take me to where the man who will be my husband and my beloved will be found."

When he heard this he replied. "In faith I will go to where that man is, and I will release the man who lies here in chains." And he arose and said, "Here I stand, ready

to go thither." And to one of his men he said, "Fool, go and take off the man's chains, as it is my will to release him, and be sure not to keep a pennyworth of his belongings, for if you do, you will pay dearly for it."

The next day before daybreak, riding an Arab horse from Sus, which can outrun even an ostrich, he set off saying, "O God who died on the cross, bring us without delay to where that lucky man

lies, so that he can have his wish and take this girl as his wife." And as soon as they arrived in Montpellier and found where he was, they told him that he needed to dress in his finery

to marry Dona Lis, for it was Holy Mary's wish. And they assured him that he would never more be troubled by them, and he went to buy furs and grey and scarlet clothing.

And, as runs the tale which we have now recounted, once they had told Felix the whole story, they gave many and hearty thanks to the Empress of Heaven, and I wrote this song.

And then with speed and eagerness they celebrated their marriage splendidly and in harmony, and once they had dined the bridegroom and the bride took the pleasure that is their due, and so the story ends.