

The Friar who Mocked a Statue of the Virgin

*True is the faith of one who believes what he does not see;
but the faithless will see and will not believe.*

On this I ask you to hear a fine miracle
and once you understand it, you will learn to believe
in God and in his Mother, so that you may earn their love
which is denied to anyone who does not truly *believe* in them

And so we should believe that God is all goodness
and that the Saints have goodness through him, by which they give health
to those who are believers, and so, as God is my strength
blind in his understanding is the man who cannot see this

And as his great goodness is ready in this way
to help in such things as are seen to be minded
to receive it, it is a truth fully proven
that he who *believes* will find goodness in holy images.

For as a living thing receives goodness by hope
as long as it believes in it, so by its likeness
does the image speedily receive goodness
from what it represents, even though you cannot see it.

And so it was that a King once carried with him
a most beautiful image of the Virgin Mary
through which God performed many miracles every day
but it was challenged by a faithless friar who did not *believe* in God

and who said "I hold most truly that only a fool
believes that there is goodness in carved wood
which neither speaks nor moves – such a man is clearly deranged
and anyone who cannot see this is blind indeed.

When he spoke these words he was standing close to the King
who listened to all the wild things he said
moreover he turned to another friar who was with him,
and said "This is a King who *believes* in idols".

When the friar said all this, the King was very angry
and said to those who were in his presence "This friar
is bold and foolish, and there is no hope for him
for he sees not with his eyes but out of the back of his head.

And so he will never go forward in his career
but will always go backwards and have bad fortune
the Glorious Virgin will not wish him to thrive
for what he has said, as he does not *believe* in her."

And so it was, for things always went ill
for that faithless friar, who from that day on
was utterly mad, and God made an example of him
both for his and his mother's sake, as a man who does not *believe*.

[F 41](#), [E 297](#)