

- How poore he was, ne eek of what degree.]°  
 What sholde I seye, but at the monthes ende  
 This joly clerk, Jankyn, that was so hende,  
 Hath wedded me with greet solempnitee,  
 630 And to him yaf I all the lond and feo  
 That evere was me yiven therbifore.  
 "But afterward repented me ful sore.  
 He nolde suffre nothing of my list.°  
 By God, he smoot me ones on the lyst,  
 635 For that I rente out of his book a leef,  
 That of the strook mine ere wax all deef.  
 Stibourne I was as is a leonesse,  
 And of my tonge a verray jangleresse,  
 And walke I wolde, as I had doon biforn,  
 640 From hous to hous, although he had it sworn.  
 "For which he often times wolde preche,  
 And me of olde Romayn geestes teche.  
 How he Simplicius Gallus left his wif,  
 And her forsook for terme of all his lif,  
 645 Noght but for open-heveded he her say  
 Lokinge out at his dore upon a day.°  
 Another Romayn° tolde he me by name  
 That for his wif was at a someres game°  
 Withouten his witing, he forsook her eke.  
 650 "And thanne wolde he upon his Bible seke  
 That ilke proverbe of Ecclesiaste  
 Where he comandeth and forbedeth faste  
 Man shall not suffre his wif go roule aboute.°  
 "Thanne wolde he seye right thus, withouten doute:  
 655 "Whoso that buildeth his hous all of salwes,  
 And priketh his blinde hors over the falwes,  
 And suffreth his wif to go seken halwes,°
- of what rank*  
*close at hand*  
*solemnness*  
*gave all the land and property*
- struck me once / ear*  
*because I tore / leaf*  
*the blow my ear became*  
*Stubborn*  
*chatterbox*
- forbidden*  
*stories*
- bareheaded/saw*
- his knowledge*  
*in his Bible search*  
*very same*  
*absolutely*  
*roam about*
- willow twigs*  
*new-plowed field*

619–26. **Yet have . . . degree:** See note to lines 575–84. Absent from some of the most reliable manuscripts, these lines portray Alisoun as sexually promiscuous, eager to make love with virtually any man who liked her.

633. **He nolde . . . list:** He paid no attention to what I wanted.

643–46. **How he . . . day:** How Simplicius Gallus left his wife because of no other offense than that he saw her look outside with her head uncovered. This story and the next one are from Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 6:3.

647. **Another Romayn:** Sempronius Sophus, referred to in Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 6:3.

648. **someres game:** A midsummer rural picnic involving, by some accounts, potentially indecent sports and dancing.

650–53. **And thanne . . . aboute:** The reference is to Ecclesiasticus 25:34–35.

657. **to go . . . halwes:** To travel to seek holy shrines (to go on pilgrimages).

- Is worthy to been hanged on the galwes.°  
 But all for noght. I sette noght an hawe  
 660 Of his proverbe n'of his olde sawe,  
 Ne I wolde not of him corrected be.  
 I hate him that my vices telleth me,  
 And so doon mo, God woot, of us than I.  
 This made him with me wood all outrely.  
 665 I nolde noght forbere him in no cas.  
 "Now wol I seye you sooth, by Seint Thomas,  
 Why that I rente out of his book a leef,  
 For which he smoot me so that I was deef.  
 He hadde a book that gladly, night and day,  
 670 For his desport he wolde rede alway.  
 He cleped it Valerie and Theofraste,°  
 At which book he lough alway ful faste.  
 And eek there was somtime a clerk at Rome,  
 A cardinal, that highte Seint Jerome,  
 675 That made a book agayn Jovinian.°  
 In which book eek there was Tertulan,  
 Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowis,°  
 That was abbese not fer fro Paris.  
 And eek the parables of Salomon,°  
 680 Ovides Art,° and bookes many on.  
 And alle these were bound in o volume,  
 And every night and day was his custume,  
 Whan he hadde leyser and vacacioun  
 From oother worldly occupacioun,
- gallows*  
*fruit of the hawthorne*  
*For / saying*  
*by him*
- more . . . of us*  
*openly angry with me*  
*tolerate him at all*  
*honestly*  
*Why I tore*  
*struck me*
- own entertainment*
- laughed out loud*
- was named*
- many other books*  
*one*  
*it was his habit*  
*leisure*

655–58. **Whoso that . . . galwes:** This four-line proverb may predate Chaucer, but this is the first recording of it. The point is that for a man to let his wife go on a pilgrimage is as stupid as building a house out of flimsy materials or galloping a blind horse across a freshly furrowed field.

671. **Valerie and Theofraste:** These are two authors whose works were apparently included, along with other antifeminist works, in Jankyn's book of wicked wives, referred to in line 685. "Valerie" was *The Advice of Valerius to Rufinus the Philosopher Not to Marry*, sometimes attributed to the ancient Roman Valerius Maximus but actually written by Walter Map, archdeacon at Oxford in the twelfth century. "Theofraste" was *The Little Golden Book of Theophrastus on Marriage*, preserved only in summary in Jerome's *Adversus Jovinianum* I, 47.

674–75. **Seint Jerome . . . Jovinian:** Jerome's letter *Adversus Jovinianum*. See note to lines 10–13.

676–77. **Tertulan . . . Helowis:** Four writers known or thought to have written antifeminist or antimatrimonial letters or treatises. Tertulan and Chrissipus are identified by Jerome as having written such pieces. Trotula was a female gynecologist said to have written a treatise about the diseases of women. Eloise was a nun who wrote letters to Abelard stating why she should not marry him.

679. **parables of Salomon:** See, for example, Proverbs 7:5–27.

680. **Ovides Art:** Ovid's *Ars amatoria*.