

## LENVOY DE CHAUCER A SCOGAN

Tobroken been the statutz hye in hevене  
That creat were eternally to dure,  
Syth that I see the bryghte goddis sevене  
Mowe wepe and wayle, and passioun endure,  
As may in erthe a mortal creature. 5  
Alas, fro whennes may thys thing procede,  
Of which errour I deye almost for drede?

By word eterne whilom was it shape  
That fro the fyfte sercle, in no manere,  
Ne myght a drope of teeres doun escape. 10  
But now so wepith Venus in hir spere  
That with hir teeres she wol drenche us here.  
Allas! Scogan, this is for thyn offence;  
Thow causest this diluge of pestilence.

Hastow not seyde, in blaspheme of the goddis, 15  
Thurgh pride, or through thy grete rekelnesse,  
Swich thing as in the lawe of love forbode is,  
That, for thy lady sawgh nat thy distresse,  
Therefore thow yave hir up at Michelmesse?  
Allas! Scogan, of olde folk ne yonge 20  
Was never erst Scogan blamed for his tonge.

Thow drowe in skorn Cupide eke to record  
Of thilke rebel word that thow hast spoken,  
For which he wol no lenger be thy lord.  
And, Scogan, though his bowe be nat broken,  
He wol nat with his arwes been ywroken 26  
On the, ne me, ne noon of oure figure;  
We shul of him have neyther hurt ne cure.

Now certes, frend, I drede of thyn unhap, 29  
Lest for thy gilt the wreche of Love procede  
On alle hem that ben hoot and rounde of shap,  
That ben so lykly folk in love to spede.  
Than shal we for oure labour have no mede;  
But wel I wot, thow wolt answeere and saye,  
“Lo, olde Grisel lyst to ryme and playe!” 35

Nay, Scogan, say not so, for I m'excuse —  
God helpe me so! — in no rym, dowteles,  
Ne thynke I never of slep to wake my muse,  
That rusteth in my shethe stille in pees.  
While I was yong, I put hir forth in prees; 40  
But al shal passe that men prose or ryme;  
Take every man hys turn, as for his tyme.

[*Envoy*]

Scogan, that knelest at the stremes bed  
Of grace, of alle honour and worthynesse,  
In th'ende of which strem I am dul as ded, 45  
Forgete in solytarie wildernesse —  
Yet, Scogan, thenke on Tullius kyndenesse;  
Mynne thy frend, there it may fructyfye!  
Far-wel, and loke thow never eft Love dyffye.

1 **statutz**: edicts, laws

2 **creat**: created

3 **goddis sevene**: the seven planets

4 **passioun**: suffering

7 **erroure**: confusion

9 **fyfte sercle**: fifth sphere, that of Venus, counting from the outside inward

14 **diluge of pestilence**: pestilential deluge

16 **rechelesnesse**: rashness

19 **Michelmesse** September 29, the beginning of the fall business and court term

21 **erst**: before

22 **to record**: as a witness

27 **of oure figure**: shaped like us

30 **wreche**: vengeance

31 **hoot and rounde of shap**: gray and chubby

32 **so lykly**: such likely (i.e., so unlikely)

35 **olde Grisel**: the old grey horse (?); see n.

40 **in prees**: in public

43 **stremes bed**: the head of the Thames (Windsor castle)

45 **th'ende of which strem**: the mouth of the Thames (Greenwich)

48 **Mynne**: remember **there it may fructyfye**: where it (remembrance of your friend) can bear fruit, be of help

49 **dyffye**: defy, repudiate

Source: *The Riverside Chaucer, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.*, ed. Larry D. Benson et al.  
Boston: Houghton, 1987. Page 655.