

To Rosamond¹

Madame, ye been of alle beautee shrine
 As fer as cercled is the mapemounde:²
 For as the crystal glorious ye shine,
 And like ruby been youre cheekes rounde.
 5 Therwith ye been so merye and so jocounde
 That at a revel whan that I see you daunce
 It is an oinement unto my wounde,
 Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.³

For though I weepe of teres ful a tine,^o *tub*
 10 Yit may that wo myn herte nat confounde;
 Your semy^o vois, that ye so smale outtwine,⁴ *small*
 Maketh my thought in joye and blis habounde:^o *abound*
 So curteisly I go with love bounde
 That to myself I saye in my penaunce,⁵
 15 "Suffiseth me to love you, Rosemounde,
 Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce."

Was nevere pik walwed in galauntine⁶
 As I in love am walwed and vwounde,
 For which ful ofte I of myself divine
 20 That I am trewe Tristam⁷ the secounde;
 My love may not refreide nor affounde;⁸
 I brenne^o ay in amorous plesaunce: *burn*
 Do what you list, I wol youre thral^o be founde, *slave*
 Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

1. This lyric extends the extravagant images of the stylized courtly-love lyric to outrageous lengths: a lover might well weep a flood of tears but would hardly measure them by the tubful (line 9), and he might be overwhelmed with love—but not like a fish buried in sauce (line 17). The general imperturbability of tone contrasts ironically with the grotesque metaphors.

2. I.e., to the farthest circumference of the map

of the world.

3. I.e., show me no encouragement.

4. That you so delicately spin out.

5. I.e., pangs of unrequited love.

6. Pike rolled in galantine sauce.

7. The famous lover of Isolt (Iselt, Isolde) in medieval legend, renowned for his constancy.

8. Cool nor chill.