

# The Harrowing of Hell

*By Unknown*

circa mid-13<sup>th</sup> Century

thenne spak ihesu, the king:  
"Still be thou, lording,  
that ich here greden there;  
Ich rede that thou ne speke na more,  
thou might well witen bi mi play  
that ich wile hauen mine away;  
Wost thou neuere wat ich am?  
More then 30 vinter hit is agon  
that thou hauest fonded me  
fforto witen wat I be;  
Sunne ne foundest thou neuer non  
In me as in another mon;  
thou might well witen the bi thon  
that ich more then ani mon;  
thou salt well witen the to-day  
that ich wyle hauen mine away;  
thenne thou letest the alone,  
thenne thou might grunten and grone."  
thenne spak him satanas,  
Maister-fend in hell he was:  
"Par ma fey! ich holde mine  
all tho that here ben hine;  
With reisoun willy tellen the,  
ther aghein ne might thou nout be;  
Adam the hountrie com me to,  
Mani redes he gan me do;  
ffor on apple that ich ghaf him  
He is min and al is cun."  
"Satanas, hit was min,  
the apple that thou gheue him,  
the apple and the appletre,  
Bothen veren maked thoru me;  
Hou mightest thou in eni cunnes wyse  
Of other monnes thing maken marchaundise?  
Seththen thou boundest him with min,  
With reisoun wil ich hauen him."  
"Ihesu, welcomen thou be,  
that full sore reweth me;  
thou art loued ouer al,  
thou hauest that thou habbe shal;

Heuene and erthe weldest thou the,  
the soules in hell let thou be;  
that ich haue let me helde,  
that thou hauest well mote thou welde."  
"Still, still, satanas!  
the is fallen aunbesas.

## Dame Sirith

*By Unknown*

circa mid-1272/1283

**WILEKIN:** Certes, dame, thou sayist as hend,  
And I shall setten spell on end,  
And tellen thee all,  
What I would, and why I come;  
Ne can I say no falsedom,  
Ne none I ne shall.

I have i-loved thee many year,  
Though I have not been here  
My love to show.  
While thy lord is in town,  
Ne may no man with thee holden roun [d]  
With no thewe. [courtesy]

Yesterday I heard say,  
As I wend by the way,  
Of your sire;  
I heard me that he was gone  
To the fair of Botolfstone  
In Lincolnshire.

And for I weste that he was out,  
Therefore I am i-gone about  
To speak with thee.  
He has reason to liken well his life,  
That might wield such a wife  
In privity.

Dame, if it is thy will,  
Both discretely and still,  
I will thee love.

**MARGERY:** That would I do for nothing,  
By our Lord, heaven king,  
That us is above!

I have my lover, that is my spouse,  
That maiden brought me to house  
With honour i-now;  
He loveth me and I him well,  
Our love is also true as steel,  
Withoutten woe.

Though he be from home on his errand,  
I were unseli, if I learned

To be an whore,  
That ne shall never be  
That I shall do such falsity,  
On bed ne on floor,  
    Nevermore his life-wile,  
Though he were an hundred mile  
Beyond Rome,  
For nothing ne should I take  
Someone on earth to be my mate,  
Ere his home come.

# Interludium de Clerico et Puella

*By Unknown*

circa 1300/1325

**CLERICUS:** Damsel, rest well.

**PUELLA:** Sir, welcome, by Saint Michael.

**CLERICUS:** Where is thy sire, where is thy dame?

**PUELLA:** By God, is neither here at hame. [home]

**CLERICUS:** Well were such a man to life  
That such a maid might have to wife.

**PUELLA:** Do way, by Christ and Leonard,  
No will I love a clerk fail-ard, [failure]  
Nor keep I harbouring clerk, in house, nor i-floor,  
But his arse lie withouten door.  
Go forth thy way, good sire,  
For here hast thou lost all thy hire. [wile]

**CLERICUS:** No, no, by Christ and by Saint John -  
In all this land ne wis I none, [know]  
Maiden, that I love more than thee,  
If me might ever the blessed be.  
For thee I sorrow night and day,  
I may say - "Hey wellaway!"  
I love thee more than my life,  
Thou hates me more than goat does knife.  
That is ought for mys guilt, [misdeeds]  
Certhes, for thy love am I spilt.  
Ah, sweet maiden, rue of me, [pity me]  
That is thy love, and ay shall be, [and always shall be]  
For the love of the mother of heaven,  
Thou mend thy mood and hear my steven!

**PUELLA:** By Christ of heaven and Saint John,  
Clerk of school ne keep I none -  
For many good woman have they done shame -  
By Christ, thou mights have be at hame! [home]

**CLERICUS:** Since it neither gat may be,  
Jesu Christ beseech I thee,  
And send new-lic but therein, [remedy/release]  
That I be leased of all my pine.

**PUELLA:** Go now, truant, go now, go,  
For mickle you canst of sorrow and woe!