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SHAKESPEARE AND CHAUCER: DREAM VISIONS AND DRAMATIC DESIGNS

by

MICHAEL PLUNKETT

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

Shakespeare and Chaucer: Dream Visions and Dramatic Designs

by

Michael Plunkett

Advisor: Richard C. McCoy

This dissertation explores echoes of Chaucer's dream visions in two of Shakespeare's late plays, *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*, and in the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*. Shakespeare turns to Chaucer's dream visions, particularly *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*, not to use them as narrative sources, but to appropriate conventional elements of artistic self-exploration and self-definition in them. Chaucer's dreamers, who are also writers, read classic stories in bed, dream dreams that react to those stories, and then wake up and write new poems that report on what they have read and dreamed. Shakespeare, this dissertation argues, engages these meta-poetic moves from Chaucer's dream visions, working them into his dramatic designs, parodically in *The Taming of the Shrew*, integrally in *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*, and, in so doing, explores and defines his own poetic sensibility in relation to that of Chaucer, his most important literary precursor in English. Shakespeare vies with Chaucer as a rival in the reception and adaptation of classical Roman literature, favoring a darker, more disturbing vision of the influence of the great Augustans, Ovid and Virgil, on the craft of English poetic composition, particularly in the representation of women; he also vies with his rival playwright, Ben Jonson, reputed the rightful heir to Chaucer, as well as the better classicist, as a rival Chaucerian, pitting his creative engagement with the unruly elements of Chaucer's artistic self-portraiture against Jonson's efforts to uphold his great authority.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The classic studies of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare – *Shakespeare's Chaucer*, by Ann Thompson, and *The Swan at the Well*, by E. Talbot Donaldson – primarily explore Shakespeare's use of two of Chaucer's greatest literary works – The Knight's Tale and the epic romance *Troilus and Criseyde* – as narrative sources. Shakespeare wrote a direct dramatic adaptation of each of these works, putting Chaucer's medieval stories on the early modern stage: He adapted *Troilus and Criseyde* into his nasty, irreverent tragicomedy *Troilus and Cressida*, and, in collaboration with John Fletcher, he adapted The Knight's Tale into *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, a fascinating late-career effort. In addition, Shakespeare used these same principal texts out of Chaucer as subsidiary narrative sources, reimagining the world of The Knight's Tale in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – even the title sounds like 'Knight's Dream,' as though the play were an answer, in a lighter strain, to the epic tale – and relying on various aspects of Chaucer's romantic tragedy, *Troilus and Criseyde*, for his own, *Romeo and Juliet*. Thompson and Donaldson demonstrate that Shakespeare read Chaucer's poetry with care and attention, and that he had different methods of adapting his predecessor's narrative poetry into plays for the English Renaissance stage.

If there is a common theme between the landmark studies by Thompson and Donaldson, it is the theme of Chaucer's darkness. The central thesis of Thompson's book is that Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists thought of Chaucer as a "serious, romantic" writer, and were less invested in his "comic naturalism" than readers today might imagine (58). For his part,

Donaldson's arresting third chapter explores Shakespeare's preoccupation, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, with the "pessimism," and even the "horrors" of *The Knight's Tale*, rather than its depiction of chivalric nobility or its investigation of medieval philosophical ideas, as readers might expect (53, 56). In this stage version of *The Knight's Tale*, Donaldson argues, Shakespeare picks up on the darkest aspects of his source and intensifies them, raising the dramatic stakes of the medieval story. Where most readers today, when they think of Chaucer, would think of the bawdier parts of *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Miller's Tale*, for instance, or *The Wife of Bath's Prologue*, it seems that Shakespeare and his contemporary poet-playwrights would have sooner thought of his most serious poetry, particularly *The Knight's Tale* and *Troilus and Criseyde*, and, in Shakespeare's case, would have seen them through a dark lens. Certainly, *Troilus and Cressida*, one of Shakespeare's most disturbing plays, intensifies the darkness of a serious, romantic Chaucerian narrative source.

My sense is that, after the Knight, the most significant figure from *The Canterbury Tales*, in connection to Shakespeare, is the Wife of Bath. First, Donaldson demonstrates the Wife's influence on Shakespeare's conception of Falstaff in the final chapter of *The Swan at the Well*. Building on Donaldson's discussion, in the chapter devoted to Chaucer in *The Western Canon*, Harold Bloom loads this famous female figure with enormous significance, setting Chaucer's contribution to Western literature second only to Shakespeare's, which, he says, it prefigures, with the Wife of Bath at the center of that contribution. For Bloom, Chaucer "anticipates" Shakespeare's artistic breakthroughs in the representation of "inwardness," "self-consciousness," and psychological depth in literary characterization with his two "most inward and individual" characters, the Pardoner and the Wife of Bath, the latter Chaucer's "great vitalist," just like "her only child," Falstaff (112). In Bloom's terms, as influential as they are notorious, Chaucer lays

the groundwork for Shakespeare's invention of the human: Before there could be an Iago or an Edmund, there had to be a Pardoner, and before there could be Bloom's cherished, life-drunk John Falstaff, there had to be a Wife of Bath; in this reading, the most significant aspect of Shakespeare's Chaucerian inheritance is, not direct or indirect narrative sources, but a literary form of proto-modern self-consciousness.

In a collection Donaldson co-edited while he was working on *The Swan at the Well, Chaucerian Shakespeare: Adaptation and Transformation*, the Wife of Bath assumes a subtler significance. In one chapter, Frances Gussenhoven argues that *The Taming of the Shrew*, a play the classic studies do not take up, is Shakespeare's composite dramatic adaptation of The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale, appropriating aspects of both the framing narrative, involving Alison's marriages and her bracing perspectives on life and love, and of the tale itself (69-79); meanwhile, Judith J. Kollmann makes *the same claim* about a different play, likewise neglected in this connection – *The Merry Wives of Windsor* – while, at the same time, demonstrating that play's structural congruity with *The Canterbury Tales* as a whole and pointing out many shared thematic concerns between the two texts, such as issues related to marriage and the values of the middle class (47-48, 50-61). These early essays on Shakespeare's integral, divergent adaptations of Chaucer's wife stories strike me as the most significant supplements to what Thompson and Donaldson establish in the classic studies of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare. That these essays show Shakespeare reworking Chaucer's framing device in *The Canterbury Tales*, and, at the same time, a story within that framing device, in more than one play, distinct from the ones traditionally associated with this question, suggests an extraordinary level of creative attention to Chaucer's works on Shakespeare's part. I also want to acknowledge them here because, when they speak of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare, scholars tend to gravitate back to The

Knight's Tale, the *Troilus*, and the Shakespeare plays that adapt them, to the neglect of these alternative, integral adaptations.¹

These days, scholars are increasingly interested in transcending traditional forms of comparative criticism and exploring what Helen Cooper calls "imaginative inspiration" in the Chaucer-Shakespeare connection (*Medieval World* 209-10). How, in other words, can we get beyond traditional methods of source work and listen in on what Sherron Knopp calls the "profound creative conversation" between these two great literary artists (338)? Among promising recent developments of this kind, I would highlight two dissertations: Scott Hollifield's *Shakespeare Adapting Chaucer* is notable for its unique focus on Shakespeare's non-dramatic poetry and its commitment to the idea of Chaucer's poetic "mentorship" of Shakespeare, beyond narrative source material (122). Of interest is Hollifield's sense of Shakespeare's Lucrece, who, after she is raped, performs an extraordinary, multi-media reading of a tapestry depicting the fall of Troy, as a figure representing the literary artist's task of adapting classical sources, one that Shakespeare uses as a medium to reflect on the influence of Chaucer on his own burgeoning, imitative, meta-theatrical style (ch. 2).

In *Shakespeare's Chaucerian Entertainers*, Jacob Alden Hughes argues that it is through the medium of characters who are themselves entertainers – fools, clowns, magicians, etc. – that Shakespeare reflects on his Chaucerian artistic inheritance. In addition to an original and useful thesis, the most interesting discussions in Hughes's study concern – of all people – Aaron from *Titus Andronicus*, in connection with *The House of Fame*, and, more convincingly, Feste's use of Sir Thopas as an authorial mask in *Twelfth Night* (ch. 3, ch. 5). Hollifield and Hughes have

¹ For a recent collection of essays on the *Troilus* and *Troilus and Cressida*, see Johnston et al. For recent work on Chaucer and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, see Teramura and Snell. Cooper explores *MND*, *Tro.*, and *TNK*, "[Shakespeare's] three plays that could not have been written without Chaucer" (209), in *Shakespeare and the Medieval World*, chapter 7.

brought texts by Chaucer and Shakespeare into the discussion that are usually left out, and they have set their sights on imaginative inspiration. The purpose of my own study is to explore that same, elusive level of influence, and my focus is on the ways Shakespeare transforms aspects of Chaucer's dream visions into dramatic designs for the stage.

For my sense of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare, particularly where imaginative inspiration is concerned, the most significant poems by Chaucer are the early dream visions, particularly *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*. Chaucer's dream visions are extraordinary poems, concerned as much with reading and creative writing as they are with their nominal subject of dreams. Chaucer's dreamers are readers – arguably not very good ones – of classical literature, as well as poets, or, at least, wannabe poets, themselves, who read classic stories in bed, dream dreams that react to those stories, and then wake up and resolve to write new poems about the wonders they have read and dreamed about. The composite fiction of the dream vision includes a retelling of the bedtime story, with the dreamer's creative alterations, as well as an account of the dream itself, in his own answerable style. The dream visions are, in other words, poems about literary influence and imaginative inspiration; their heroes journey into stories, and into the origins and the effects of stories, and then come out on the other side of their adventures better readers and writers than when they began.²

² For *The House of Fame* as *ars poetica*, see Shook and chapter 2 in Jordan. Of particular interest is Shook's account of the medieval conflation, following the example of Ovid, of lover and poet, which accounts for the correlation of lovers' tidings and creative writing in the poem (see 417). For a great, more recent take on the topic that includes *The Book of the Duchess* and emphasizes how Chaucer's dream visions seem to invite readers to emulate their participatory aesthetic in new creative writing projects, see Miller.

In *The Book of the Duchess*, a poem which Shakespeare would have also known by its more apt alternate title, *The Dream of Chaucer*,³ the dreamer is cured of his debilitating insomnia by an Ovidian bedtime story and then journeys, in a dream, into – if I may borrow a phrase from John Keats – an untrodden region of his mind. After a visit with a mysterious dark knight in which he is treated to several interpolated lyric poems of love and lamentation and given a crash course in grief and loss, the dreamer wakes up and resolves to write a poem about his extraordinary reading and dreaming experience. In other words, the drama of *The Book of the Duchess* is, in some ways, the drama of literary reception and its relationship to new creative writing, its theme the restorative, productive effects that read and written stories can have on the psyche.

In *The House of Fame*, the literary theme is even more pronounced. This time, the dreamer is explicitly a writer named Geoffrey who resembles, in caricature, the author we know as Geoffrey Chaucer. Geoffrey's dream quest takes him directly into a book, an abridged, twisted translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and then on a flight through space in the clutches of a talking celestial eagle with strong opinions about the creative writing process, particularly the proper sources of inspiration and the raw materials of effective love poetry, and then on to a space station where the stuff of right poetry is collected and made available to the initiated. It is striking that, despite the explicitly literary themes of these two poems, and the desire among

³ William Thynne's 1532 edition of Chaucer's poetry calls the poem we know as *The Book of the Duchess* by the name *The Dream of Chaucer*. In his edition of 1598, Thomas Speght changed the name of that poem to *The Book of the Duchess* and labeled another poem, which Chaucer did not write and which we know today as *The Isle of Ladies*, with the name *Chaucer's Dream*. See Chaucer, *Works*, 1532 (no page numbers).

scholars to move beyond traditional kinds of comparative criticism in the Chaucer-Shakespeare connection, that the dream visions remain, for the most part, left out of the discussion.⁴

Shakespeare does not rely on Chaucer's dream visions as narrative sources, the way he does *The Knight's Tale* and the *Troilus*. He never wrote a play about an insomniac writer at the end of his rope the way he did write one about a disastrous love affair during the Trojan War. I have found, however, that Shakespeare alludes heavily to Chaucer's dream visions in two of his late plays, *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*, and, earlier in his literary career, in the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, appropriating dream vision conventions and incorporating them into his dramatic designs. Rather than narrative elements, what Shakespeare takes from *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame* are conventional elements of artistic self-exploration and self-definition, meta-poetic dream vision moves such as bedtime reading, bedchamber *ekphrases*, nightly (and knightly) visitations, as well as creative adaptations of classical stories. By working these moves into the designs of his plays, Shakespeare transforms aspects of Chaucer's portraits of the artist as a young man, altered, to suit his taste, into the stuff of drama and, I suggest, in so doing, implicitly explores and defines his own poetic sensibility in relation to that of Chaucer.

There is, I think, evidence in these texts of a searching engagement with Chaucer's art of poetry on Shakespeare's part, distinct from the customary genuflections by early modern writers to Chaucer's massive literary authority. To take just a few of the most prominent examples of writers paying their respects, Edmund Spenser, a poet so devoted to the medieval master that he

⁴ Attempts to bring *The House of Fame* into conversation with Shakespeare have yielded diverse results. For the connection between the strange figure named William in act 5 of *As You Like It* and Chaucer's naïve dreamer named Geoffrey, see Belsey. For *The House of Fame* and *Titus Andronicus*, see chapter 3 in Hughes. For the connection with "The Phoenix and the Turtle," see Cheney. Cheney views Shakespeare's engagement with Chaucerian and Spenserian poetics in that poem as a way of fashioning himself "an author with a literary career," as opposed to just a man of the theater (124). For sixteenth-century "editorial uneasiness" (41) with the poetic vision of *The House of Fame*, see Martin 41-45.

committed to a notorious (and wonderful) archaic style resembling Chaucer's Middle English in *The Faerie Queene*, praises, in the fourth book of that epic poem, "Dan Chaucer, well of English vndefyled, / On Fames eternall beadroll worthie to be fyled" (canto 2, stanza 32). In *The Golden Age Restored*, Ben Jonson lifts Chaucer up among the great English poets he calls the "far-famed spirits of this happy isle" (line 112), "Phoebus' sons" (114). Shakespeare, in the prologue to *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, proudly acknowledges that Chaucer wrote the story that the play is based on, calling him "noble," "pure" (line 10), "learnèd" (11), "famous" (12), "of all admired" (13), and *The Knight's Tale* "constant to eternity" (14).⁵ Indeed, Helen Cooper has demonstrated that Chaucer's great authority was invoked constantly throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as validation of diverse poetic projects in English and was broad enough to suit the interests of Protestants, Catholics, humanists, and really anyone invested in "the whole process of the writing of England, the construction of nationhood" ("Poetic Fame" 362).

Without doubting their sincerity, I would draw a distinction between these encomiums and Philip Sidney's more searching comment toward the end of *An Apology for Poetry*. He writes:

Chaucer, undoubtedly, did excellently in his *Troilus and Criseyde*; of whom, truly, I know not whether to marvel more, either that he in that misty time could see so clearly, or that we in this clear age walk so stumblingly after him. Yet he had great wants, fit to be forgiven in so reverend antiquity. (196 spelling modernized)

Here, in addition to praise of Chaucer's eminence, I hear a desire to know what makes Chaucer tick as an artist. What is the secret? What does he know that we early moderns do not that allows him to do more even with the disadvantage of a misty medieval time than we can in the light of

⁵ All references to Shakespeare are from the first edition, from 1997, of *The Norton Shakespeare*, general editor Stephen Greenblatt.

the clear blue skies of the Renaissance? Of interest too is Sidney's mention of Chaucer's great wants, and he goes on in the same paragraph to say that the problem with Spenser's poetry, which he admires, is "the framing of his style to an old rustic language" (196 spelling modernized), by which he means of course Spenser's archaic imitation of Chaucer's Middle English. Not only is Chaucer running circles around us Renaissance poets, Sidney says, in other words, but we do not yet know how to follow his lead, artistically speaking; we walk so stumbingly after him. If Spenser's approach is not the answer, what is?

The evidence, I think, that Shakespeare cultivates a searching, dramatic engagement with Chaucer's poetics, and was even competitive about how deep inside, how close to the heart of the mystery, how intimate in creative conversation, he could go, is manifest in his parodic and integral intertexts with the dream visions, Chaucer's most explicit meta-poetry. The simple fact I want to convey is that Shakespeare crafted the designs of some of his most sophisticated, well-known, and beloved plays, plays with long casts of characters and elaborate, distinctive plot structures, out of imitations of short, self-deprecating books that Chaucer wrote about himself *reading in bed and falling asleep*. The dream visions show Chaucer's dreamers reflecting on what they have read, making critical judgements and adjustments as they go, and thinking, consciously and unconsciously, about how they themselves want to write, and what about. By embedding artistic reflections such as these in the dramatic designs of his plays, Shakespeare engages Chaucer, and implicitly responds to him, at the level of poetic vision.

I notice, for instance, that the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, in which the poor drunkard Christopher Sly is kidnapped and tricked into believing he is a wealthy lord, bears a striking, parodic resemblance to the situation in *The Book of the Duchess*. Where the dreamer is afflicted with insomnia, Sly suffers from poverty and a drinking problem; also, his kidnappers

convince him that is afflicted with a lunacy that makes him confused about his own identity. The dreamer reads Ovid in bed and the story cures his insomnia. He dreams about a wonderful room with *The Romance of the Rose* painted on the walls. By contrast, Sly's kidnappers set him up in a fancy bedroom and attempt to "cure" his lunacy with pornographic Ovidian illustrations, which they hang on walls around the room. The dreamer is swept into the main episode of his dream by an emperor's hunting party; Sly's kidnappers, led by a local lord, are returning from a hunt when they scrape him, lying blackout drunk, off the street. At every turn, it seems, Shakespeare travesties the elegant features of Chaucer's poem.

Sly's kidnappers put on a play for him, which he struggles to stay awake through, and which we know as the main action of *The Taming of the Shrew*, the part that takes place in Italy, with Kate and Petruccio in it. In other words, the main action of *The Taming of the Shrew* takes place *in a bedroom* amid a parodic imitation of a Chaucerian dream vision, positioning the main action of the play where, in Chaucer, the dream itself would go. I explore this parodic intertext in chapter 2, mindful of established work on the connection between the play and *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale* as well as my own additional discoveries concerning the connection between the induction and *The Franklin's Tale*. I argue that, in *Taming*, Shakespeare dramatizes his sense of Chaucer's influence on his burgeoning art of dramatic poetry, turning a composite Chaucerian imitation into the stuff of drama, while sending up various aspects of Chaucer's dream visions and tales that he seems to consider soft or sentimental, particularly with respect to women.

Shakespeare revisits this imaginative engagement with *The Book of the Duchess* later in his career, in *Cymbeline*, this time in a manner more integral than parodic. Chaucer's dreamer and Innogen both read Ovid before bed, although the story has changed from a lighter, low-

stakes one, that of Ceyx and Alcyone, about a bereaved queen coming to terms with loss, to a darker, high-stakes one, that of Tereus and Philomela, about a brutal rape and equally brutal female revenge; moreover, Morpheus' visit to Alcyone's bedroom in the dreamer's bedtime story, which sets her mind at ease about her husband's absence, is transformed in Shakespeare's play into Giacomo's treacherous visit to Innogen's bedroom, to case it, while she sleeps, for details that will turn her own missing husband against her. For the wonderful room in the dream with *The Romance of the Rose* painted on the walls, Shakespeare gives us the elaborate design of Innogen's bedroom, which comes alive with stories, while she sleeps, in Giacomo's stunning *ekphrases*, the materials of his treacherous lie. Shakespeare appropriates the dream vision moves that Chaucer heals the dreamer with and uses them to menace Innogen.

The hunt led by Augustus Caesar leads the dreamer to a visit with a dark knight who laments the loss of his lady and struggles to get the depth of his grief across to him, sometimes in lyric poems. Likewise, in *Cymbeline*, Innogen is picked up by a diplomatic party representing Augustus and led away from her own courtly visitation in the wilderness, with the kidnapped princes; it is her death that they lament, though their grief, and their verses, are not as dour as the Black Knight's, and, of course, she is not actually dead. Here, again, the main ordeal of the play stands in for the dream, this time hewing closer, than in *Taming*, to the features of the dream vision. I explore *Cymbeline's* integral allusions to *The Book of the Duchess* in chapter 3, arguing that Shakespeare uses them to dramatize contending literary influences, classical and medieval, and that, in this, he vies with Chaucer as a rival in the creative reception and adaptation of Augustan literature. Nevertheless, at the end of this drama of competing literary influences, latent Chaucerian forces defeat the forces of ancient Rome.

Staying with *Cymbeline*, I also notice, when Giacomo describes the features of Innogen's bedroom to Posthumous, as he tries to convince him that he has slept with his wife, the picture of the room's design that emerges bears a striking resemblance to the temple of Venus where Geoffrey's dream begins in *The House of Fame*; Giacomo even embellishes his ekphrastic flights of description with a distinctly Middle English syntactical flourish – "saw I" (2.4.82) – which Shakespeare almost never uses, and which Chaucer uses repeatedly in Geoffrey's bedtime story, a twisted translation of *The Aeneid*, which bursts off the wall of the temple in his dream, something like the way stories burst off the wall in Innogen's bedroom. With these echoes in mind, I argue in chapter 4 that Shakespeare's allusions, in *Cymbeline*, to *The House of Fame* mediate the intertext between the play and Virgil's *Aeneid*. As rival adapters of Virgil, I suggest, Chaucer and Shakespeare vie in their efforts to champion the female element of their masculine epic source material. Where Chaucer lavishes sympathy on Dido for the mistreatment she suffers, putting her at the center of the story and giving her a long, lamenting speech where she can plead her case, Shakespeare resists this arguably sentimental approach and carves out a space for heroic female agency in his own divergent adaptation of Virgil, embroiling Innogen, the Dido figure in *Cymbeline*, more actively in the dangers and the denouement of the Virgilian fiction. Scholars have explored the intertext between *The Aeneid* and *Cymbeline*, as well the one between the play and *The Franklin's Tale*, but the place of Chaucer's dream visions in the intertext, which helps make sense of both established connections, has been neglected. Remarkably, that last sentence can also be said about *The Tempest*.

Shakespeare works the bedtime stories from *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame* into *The Tempest*, integrating both the Ovidian story that knocks the dreamer out and Virgil's *Aeneid*, the story that gets Geoffrey's dream started, into the play in ways that rival

Chaucer's methods of integration in the dream visions. For Ovid's Morpheus, the god of sleep that Chaucer's dreamer reveres, Shakespeare presents Ariel, a figure who runs Prospero's errands the way Morpheus runs Juno's, reuniting the king and his son – both of whom worry that the other is drowned – in a twist on the way that Morpheus recovers the body of the drowned king Ceyx and presents it to Alcyone, his worried wife. Where, in Chaucer, Morpheus' function is consolation, in Shakespeare, Ariel's is first revenge, then forgiveness and reconciliation. Thus, a figure from one of Chaucer's bedtime stories, who carries the theme of the dream vision in which he appears, is transformed into Ariel, the spirit – in more than one sense – of Shakespeare's rich, strange play.

Scholars have explored the intertext between *The Aeneid* and *The Tempest*, but the mediating voice of Chaucer in this connection has been neglected. Like Geoffrey's *Aeneid*, *The Tempest* questions Virgil's authority as it integrates imitations of various features of his epic into its own fiction, notably by favoring Ovid's approach to the story. Where Chaucer deconstructs Virgil's authority by setting Dido at the center of Geoffrey's version of the epic narrative and foregrounding her perspective as a victim – a quasi-feminist gesture Shakespeare rolls his eyes at in the "widow Dido" exchange in act 2 scene 1 – Shakespeare does it by having Prospero abjure the sources of his great power, the enchanted island and, more to the point in this context, his magic book, and return home with his sworn enemies, rather than defeat them. In place of Dido, the chosen female emblem of the writer at the center of Chaucer's portrait of the artist, Shakespeare has his own artist-hero, Prospero, channel Ovid's Medea, a less sentimental female poetic totem, one whose role in her story ranges from lover to killer, from savior to scourge, and whose abandonment inspires, not the lament of a victim, but the wrath of a powerful black witch. In keeping with his habit of reversing the model he finds in Chaucer, Shakespeare has Prospero

channel Medea as he says goodbye to his art, where Dido's lament marks the start of Geoffrey's burgeoning new style.

In chapter 5, I explore Shakespeare's handling, in *The Tempest*, of the bedtime stories from Chaucer's dream visions, arguing that Shakespeare vies with Chaucer in that play as a rival in the adaptation of Augustan literature in the service of a fictive English *ars poetica*. In addition to their irreverent Virgilian tendencies, *The House of Fame* and *The Tempest* both take the form of aesthetic science fiction, in which the artist-hero journeys to a special place that is, as Caliban says, "full of noises" – a raucous space station in Geoffrey's case, a twangling, enchanted island in Prospero's – where he discovers a new level of artistic power. Setting Prospero's island beside the so-called whirling whicker, the huge, spinning wooden structure in space where Geoffrey inherits the diverse sounds and tidings that his lame attempts at creative writing sorely lack, you can see, I think, Shakespeare answering Chaucer's chaotic representation of a young writer's mind at work, with his own representation of a mature one, favoring the quieter idea of an island in the middle of nowhere, more selective in its curation of sounds and voices, and under more expert control.

My way of listening in on the creative conversation between Shakespeare and Chaucer and charting the imaginative inspiration that the medieval poet had on the early modern poet-playwright is indebted to James Shapiro's idea, put forward in his book *Rival Playwrights*, of parodic intertextuality. In Shapiro's view, Shakespeare and his key contemporaries, Christopher Marlowe and Ben Jonson, have a way of talking shop in their plays and poems by integrating passages that imitate each other's styles into the fabric of their own verse fictions. Parody, in this context, implies, not merely derisive caricature, but a productive process among writers of

distinguishing one's artistic ideas from another's and pushing the creative conversation forward (Shapiro 6). My approach to Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare extends this principle, beyond the conversation among early modern poet-playwrights, to include Chaucer, their most important medieval poetic predecessor.⁶

A clear example of what Shapiro is talking about with respect to Shakespeare's reception of Marlowe is the player's speech in *Hamlet*, act 2 scene 2. For Shapiro, in addition to its function within the action of the play, the Player's speech also momentarily recreates the sound of Marlowe's verse and the striking style he brings to the handling of heroic action. The speech evokes Marlowe's play *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, specifically; it also evokes the memory of Marlowe's style – a little dated, too strident – to contrast it with the more cutting-edge dramatic style of *Hamlet* (Shapiro 126-32). Shapiro argues that Marlowe's transgressive, unruly qualities are what stuck with Shakespeare and that Shakespeare evoked these qualities in his plays in order to contain, explore, and expunge them. I am making a similar claim about Shakespeare's handling, in several plays, of Chaucer's dream visions and the unruly poetics they imply: Chaucer was as far out there in his *ars poetica* as Marlowe in his style and subject matter, and Shakespeare took on both predecessors' daunting legacies, integrating his artistic reflections and responses into fictions through the medium of parodic intertextuality.

I want to extend the discussion of artistic rivalries and parodic intertextuality among early modern poet-playwrights that Shapiro broaches to include the case of Shakespeare's engagement with Chaucer as a literary rival. But I also want to take things a step further and extend our sense of rivalry itself as a theme in the discussion of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare. True,

⁶ The central passage in Shakespeare for parodic intertextuality with Chaucer's dreams is arguably Bottom's dream, *MND* 4.1.196-211; see Hale and Lynch for this connection. For a related discussion extending to Mercutio's Chaucerian streak, see Scott.

Shakespeare uses parodic techniques to engage Chaucer one-on-one as a rival poet, but that is only one form of rivalry in the Chaucer-Shakespeare connection. Shakespeare also takes up the intertextual poetics of the storytelling competition in *The Canterbury Tales*, answering certain tales in his plays the way they answer each other in Chaucer, as well as answering his own earlier plays in later ones using a similar strategy. In addition, Shakespeare vies with Chaucer as a rival adapter of classical sources, presenting, for example, a very different sort of Ovid – a darker, more sadistic one, particularly with respect to the representation of women – in the storybook rooms of *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Cymbeline* than the one he found in the dreamy chambers of *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*.

Finally, Shakespeare vies with his rival poet-playwrights, among other contemporaries,⁷ as a rival adapter of Chaucer: Where Ben Jonson, who was, at the start of the seventeenth century, set up like a latter-day laureate Chaucer for the new Scottish king, sets his witchy *Masque of Queens* in Chaucer's House of Fame, but mutes the literary arguments of the poem of that name, Shakespeare answers with his own play involving witches, *The Tempest*, with a conspicuously uncharacteristic masque in it, as well as a more authentic creative intertextual engagement with Chaucer's unruly *ars poetica* in *The House of Fame* than Jonson put forward in his masque. I explore the intertext between *The Masque of Queens* and *The Tempest* in a brief final chapter, arguing that Shakespeare was out to show in that play that he could bring a creative answer to Chaucer's poem *The House of Fame* to early modern audiences in a more searching form of aesthetic fantasy than Jonson had done. Everyone knows about Jonson's credibility as a classicist, and his allegation that Shakespeare had only small Latin and less Greek. Fewer people

⁷ In an intriguing early study, Ord suggests that Shakespeare was provoked into new forms of Chaucerian adaptation by the heavy editorial hand of Thomas Speght, the editor of the 1598 and 1602 editions of Chaucer's works; see Ord 38-51.

know that Jonson was seen as the rightful early modern heir to Chaucer's literary legacy as well. In *The Tempest*, I think, Shakespeare pushes back against this arrangement and stakes his own claim to that position, foregrounding his command of Chaucer's unruly poetics, rather than upholding his great literary authority, in his own creative adaptation of *The House of Fame*.

It may be objected that by focusing on plays from the beginning and end of Shakespeare's career, my study of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare leaves the bulk of his major achievement out of the discussion. If the dream visions are so important, in other words, we should be able to discern the presence of their influence in the major tragedies like *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *Lear*. I have some sympathy with this objection: In focusing on the three plays that are the subject of this study, I am by no means ruling out the possibility that the dream visions do influence those major midcareer masterworks. In fact, two of the best sources that I discovered in my research explore Chaucer's influence on *Hamlet*, a play that does not figure in the classic studies or in mine, and one of these studies involves a dream vision, *The Book of the Duchess*. In "'The Dread of Something after Death:' The Relationship between Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and some Medieval Dream Visions and Ghost Stories," Andrzej Wicher argues, with needless tentativeness, that the Black Knight who struggles to get through to Chaucer's dreamer in *The Book of the Duchess* informs Shakespeare's portrait of the ghost of Hamlet's father as well as the prince's antic disposition in the play. Something Wicher's study has going for it, which he mistakenly seems to consider a reason to doubt his thesis, is that where Chaucer's Black Knight relieves a crisis, Hamlet's Ghost makes one worse. In fact, Shakespeare's habit, per Thompson and Donaldson, is to darken his Chaucerian source materials; moreover, I have often found that he turns something helpful and productive from one of Chaucer's poems into an impediment in a

play, something that characters have to grapple with, as when the healing dream in *The Book of the Duchess* influences the lord's mischievous prank in *The Taming of Shrew* and Giacomo's slanderous lie in *Cymbeline*. What seems like a problem about his argument to Wicher, in my view lends credence to it. The other great essay on *Hamlet* is a master's thesis from 2016 in which Kayla Shearer demonstrates that *Hamlet* relies for its Theban resonances on, not only Sophocles, as is commonly understood, but on Chaucer, framing the contention between Hamlet and Laertes as an adaptation of the one between Palamon and Arcite in *The Knight's Tale*. I mention this not only to hold these inspiring recent studies up, but also to point out that there is still much left to learn about Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare, particularly in the case of the dream visions; it is remarkable that a blended adaptation of Chaucer in Shakespeare's most famous play has escaped the attention of readers and scholars until very recently.

In a way, this objection has been there from the beginning. Ann Thompson raises it, in a different form, in her pioneering book on the Chaucer-Shakespeare connection. As I mentioned, Thompson's book has a chapter on *Troilus and Cressida*, one on *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, as well as discussions, in a chapter on Shakespeare's use of Chaucerian material outside of those two plays, of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet*. It is interesting, however, to notice what plays and poems Thompson chooses not to explore in her study, and the reasons she gives for not including them. She writes, "Certainly the atmosphere and ideas of courtly romance as epitomized by *The Romaunt of the Rose*, Chaucer's dream visions and more artificial romances are more evident in Shakespeare's earlier plays (from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* to *Romeo and Juliet*) and in the late Romances than they are in the plays of the middle period" (82). Thompson concedes that there are conventional connections between the dream visions and the early and late plays, but implies that they are incidental, and not the right place to look if you

want to explore Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare. *Shakespeare's Chaucer* takes up the dream visions only passingly; the book also leaves out the late Romances, except to mention, without further comment, a link between *The Franklin's Tale* and *The Tempest* that has since been the occasion for articles by Sherron Knopp and others. In my view, the dream visions are crucial to the Chaucer-Shakespeare connection not because of their conventional representations of courtly love, but because of their representations of the reading and writing mind at work. Traces of their influence are discernable in the early plays and late Romances not only 'atmospherically,' but in clear instances of parodic and integral artistic intertextuality that can be isolated and unpacked. While Thompson and Donaldson laid the groundwork for exploring Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare, their neglect of the dream visions is an important aspect of the scholarly tradition surrounding this question, one that leaves room for more and different kinds of studies of this important literary issue.

CHAPTER 2: CHAUCER AND *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*

The argument of this chapter is that, in the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, Shakespeare parodies conventional aspects of Chaucer's dream visions, particularly *The Book of the Duchess*, as well as the Franklin's Tale magic show (lines 1189-1208),¹ vying with Chaucer in the realm of self-deprecating poetic self-portraiture. Where the ordeal faced down by Katherine and Petruccio in the main action of the play has been shown to rely on The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale as a source for aspects of narrative and character, this chapter will argue that the bizarre, prior ordeal, described in the induction, of the drunkard Christopher Sly and the nameless, mischievous lord who scrapes him off the street, relies on key meta-poetic passages in Chaucer for its *artistic* source materials, establishing a parodic intertextual connection between the poet and the poet-playwright where Shakespeare can explore his own burgeoning artistic sensibility in relation to that of his medieval poetic precursor and mentor. Among the many issues related to poetics that Shakespeare's echoes of Chaucer's dream visions and Franklin's Tale magic show put on the table – the use and abuse of illusion, the relationship between old stories and new poems, between dreams and waking reality, the vagaries of literary influence itself – the most striking area of contention between the two writers that emerges from Shakespeare's composite imitation of Chaucer in *The Taming of the Shrew* is the representation of women. The echoes of Chaucer's dream visions and magic show in *The Taming of the Shrew*

¹ All references to Chaucer are from the third edition, from 1987, of *The Riverside Chaucer*, general editor Larry Benson.

introduce an important theme in the Chaucer-Shakespeare connection: Shakespeare's dark requital of various pro-feminine impulses in Chaucer's poetry.

There are established connections between *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*. As David Bergeron demonstrates, Shakespeare's play resembles the *Wife of Bath's* parts in *The Canterbury Tales* in many ways, while at the same time reversing the marriage situations they describe. He suggests that the *Wife of Bath* herself is a prototype not for the play's feisty female lead, Katherine, but for Petruccio, her rough suitor: both Alison and Petruccio go on marriage quests, for example, and they use some of the same methods to establish dominance over their difficult mates. Then, in *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, the transformation of the loathly lady from an ugly old woman into a desirable young wife prefigures Kate's transformation from a so-called shrew into a properly obedient partner. While acknowledging the ambiguity of the play's final scene and speech, Bergeron lays out the basic correlation like this: in Chaucer, it is woman who gains sovereignty in marriage – Alison over her husbands and, until she yields her power willingly, the loathly lady over the disgraced and penitent knight – while the reverse is true in Shakespeare: in *The Taming of the Shrew*, it is man who comes to rule in the end (Bergeron 279-86).

Building on Bergeron's argument, Frances Gussenhoven points out many other resemblances between Shakespeare's play and *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*. As they fight for marital mastery, she says, Alison and Petruccio use many of the same tropes: to mention only a few examples, they both use the word "shrew" to describe their mates, they both use falconry as an analogy for the sexual-marital dynamic, and they both exploit the diverse powers and possibilities of clothing as a tool for achieving their domestic ends (69-79). For both Gussenhoven and Bergeron, the speeches that conclude both *The Wife of Bath's Tale* and *The*

Taming of the Shrew, which seem to endorse wives' submission and obedience to their husbands, carry with them, when weighed against their respective fictions on the whole, subtlety and ambiguity that would trouble any reading that would reduce the tale or play to simple male supremacy. For these scholars, the ostensibly traditional speeches may evince the formation of authentic new partnerships. Indeed, this concluding irony is itself part of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare's play (Gussenhoven 77-79).²

While both of these scholars hesitate to claim direct influence of Chaucer's wife stories on Shakespeare's play, when considered together, Bergeron and Gussenhoven make a strong case that Shakespeare based much of the composition of *The Taming of the Shrew* on The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale, reversing Chaucer's schematic design and lifting many of the features he chose to include. Simply put, in this light, Petruccio is Shakespeare's version of the Wife of Bath, and *The Taming of the Shrew* is his composite version of her life story and the story she tells on the road to Canterbury. This is a significant intertextual connection, and one that has, unfortunately, not really taken hold in the succeeding scholarship, but what Bergeron and Gussenhoven say rings true: *The Taming of the Shrew* is like a latter-day Canterbury tale in attitude and situation, and its focus on marriage as an institution – rather than something that merely happens at the happy ending of a story which is mostly about other themes – puts it right in line with the so-called 'marriage group' within *The Canterbury Tales*, a traditional category that includes The Wife of Bath's Tale, which figures in these established arguments, and The Franklin's Tale, which figures in my own. In this, we can say that *The Taming of the Shrew* does

² Goddard and others hold that it is not Katherine but Petruccio that is tamed in the end (Goddard, ch. 10). Bloom disagrees; for his discussion of the issue see *Invention of the Human* 28-29. Useful accounts of different views on the taming plot and Kate's final speech can be found in Rackin, especially 51-62, and Hodgdon 118-31.

more than simply rely on Chaucer as an indirect or subsidiary source: the play also joins in an intertextual conversation about marriage that was started in *The Canterbury Tales*.

The really striking thing about Bergeron and Gussenhoven's arguments, though, is that they show how Shakespeare transforms Chaucer's greatest female creation, regarded as a great step forward in Western literature in the full, well-rounded representation of women,³ into a man, and, for many, not a very likeable one, in many readers' minds an abuser of women.⁴ In this light, Shakespeare's handling of the Wife of Bath materials and his transformation of them into the character of Petruccio and the problematic fiction of *The Taming of the Shrew* is touchy, even potentially offensive. How could Shakespeare turn Chaucer's immortal emblem of full-blooded feminine power into a shrew-taming mercenary male lover? One who starves his wife and deprives her of sleep in her own home? One who, at least arguably, has worn down a free-spirited woman and sucked the life out her by the end of the play?

These are valid questions. I make no excuse for Shakespeare or Petruccio. It is useful, however, to remember that *The Canterbury Tales* is built around a storytelling competition, one in which tales are expected not only to be better than earlier ones – to deliver the "best sentence and moost solaas" (line 798) – but to provide a literary answer, a kind of counterweight, to one or more of them; after The Knight tells the first tale, Harry Bailey, the host and makeshift editor of the competition, asks The Monk, "Somwhat to quite with the Knyghtes tale" (3119), that is, to tell a tale that gives a different perspective on the last story. As everyone knows, The Monk does not get the chance to go second and answer The Knight; The Miller interrupts and tells a

³ This is not to suggest that the Wife of Bath is an uncomplicated figure. Benson writes, "though most of her characteristics can be traced in anti-feminine satire and she herself embodies almost all the faults traditionally imputed to women...her frankness, vigor, and good humor render her a zestful and engaging defender of life itself" (*Riverside Chaucer* 11).

⁴ For compelling feminist readings of the play concerned with the mistreatment of women see Boose and Newman.

lowbrow parody of *The Knight's Tale* that turns his epic story and noble love triangle into a dirty fabliau. My sense, then, of what Shakespeare is up to when he turns Chaucer's great female character into a problematic male figure and inverts the conclusion of *The Wife of Bath's Tale* by restoring male dominance at the end of *The Taming of the Shrew*, is participating in Chaucer's Canterbury storytelling project and requiting *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale* the way the Miller does the *Knight's*. It seems to me that Shakespeare was not so much disagreeing with Chaucer about the role of women in society as archly repurposing aspects of the literary model he provided for representing them. When Shakespeare adapts Chaucer in this way, I have found, his habit is to send up Chaucer's representation of women. Petruccio is one example of this habit; several others feature in the induction.

The basic idea of this chapter is that Shakespeare parodies aspects of Chaucer's dream visions, particularly from *The Book of the Duchess*, in the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*. If the main action of *The Taming of the Shrew* answers *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*, the induction sends up Chaucer's dreams, which makes the whole play an elaborate, composite imitation Chaucer's poetry. When we meet him in the opening lines of *The Book of the Duchess*, the dreamer is tormented by serious personal issues. As he tells it, an extraordinary case of insomnia that has lasted eight years has left him depressed and in despair. It is a wonder, he says, that he is even alive (lines 1-2). His sleepless mind is troubled by "so many an ydel thocht" that nothing matters to him anymore (4, 6-10). Bewildered, like "a mased thyng," in thrall to his "sorwful ymagynacioun," he has "lost al lustyhede" (12, 14, 27). There is, the dreamer says, one thing that could heal him, one 'physician,' but he has lost it forever: "For there is phisicien but oon / That may me hele, but that is don" (39-40). This one missing thing could simply be sleep. It could also be a lost beloved woman, of course, which would be in keeping with the poem's

occasion, the untimely death of John of Gaunt's wife, as well as the sad love story told later in the poem by the Black Knight, but the way Chaucer leaves it unspecified makes the one thing the dreamer has lost sound like a more existential concern, perhaps spiritual privation. Perhaps the dreamer wishes for death. In any case, *The Book of the Duchess* begins with the dreamer in a dark, hopeless condition, one that his bedtime story and wonderful dream will deliver him from.

Shakespeare parodies this situation in the one facing Christopher Sly in the *Taming of the Shrew* induction. For the dreamer's insomnia and depression, Shakespeare gives us Sly's poverty and his drunk and disorderly tendencies. The play begins with the hostess of a tavern chasing Sly out of the bar and into the street and threatening to put him in the stocks (1.2); he owes money for breaking glasses and refuses to pay (6-7). When the hostess says that she is going to call the police, Sly dismisses the threat, lies down right on the street, and passes out (9-11). Where, in *The Book of the Duchess*, the dreamer reports that, after finishing his bedtime story, suddenly, "Such a lust anon me took / To slepe that ryght upon my book / Y fil aslepe" (273-75), Sly falls asleep right on the street, rather than right on his book. Compounding the impression that Shakespeare is playing around with dream vision features is the strange way that Sly claps back at the hostess, telling her to "Go to thy cold bed and warm thee" (7-8), the mention of beds out of left field. There is also, perhaps, a faint echo of the one lost 'physician' that could have healed the dreamer in the way the hostess threatens to call the police – "I know my remedy" (9), she says. Although the term is too common in Shakespeare to press the point, there is something attractive about the idea that Chaucer left the one thing that could cure the dreamer tantalizingly vague, whereas, in Sly's case, someone needs to call the cops, plain and simple. The main thing, though, is that Sly falls asleep on the street in a degenerate condition, sending up the dreamer's basic situation, where he falls asleep on a book in a depressed one.

Later in the induction, Shakespeare parodies the dreamer's personal issues again. As they try to convince him that he is a noble lord, rather than himself, the men that kidnap Sly tell him that his sense of his real identity is nothing but a "strange lunacy," "a dream" that has lasted – for no clear reason – for fifteen years (2.27, 77). Where the dreamer's eight-year bout of insomnia has plagued him with 'so many an idle thought,' Sly's captors implore him to, "Call home thy ancient thoughts from banishment / And banish hence these abject lowly dreams" (lines 29-30). Shakespeare transforms the existential angst of Chaucer's dreamer into the manic mistaken identity issues of the induction, turning the dreamer's depression into Sly's strange lunacy, nearly doubling the already absurd and inscrutable eight bad years into fifteen, and even having the captors refer to the condition as a dream, as though to solidify the dream vision connection. Where a bedtime story snaps the dreamer out of his "melancolye" (23), Sly is told that, because "melancholy is the nurse of frenzy," the doctors – again, remember, the dreamer's 'physician but one' – say that he should see a play performed (128, 129). The dreamer's personal issues are resolved by a touching story that leads into a salutary dream; in Shakespeare's sendup of this situation, Sly's existing personal issues are highlighted and mocked and a new one is invented, all for his captors' entertainment, and a play put on in a bedroom to nurse him out of his frenzy takes the place of the dream.

The various confusions that Sly experiences in the induction call back to the confusions faced by Chaucer's dreamers, in both *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*. These characters are mixed up to begin with and, in some ways, their grip on things deteriorates from there. In *The Book of the Duchess*, the dreamer's inability to sleep has left him in a "mased," or amazed, condition. As we will see in a moment, the dreamer then misses the point of his bedtime story, ignoring its central theme of loss and consolation, which resonates with his own situation,

and fixating instead on a supporting character. The Black Knight in his dream has to spell out his sad story for the dreamer after he fails to follow the allegory. Repeatedly, he tells him that he does not understand the depth of his loss, returning to the refrain, "I have lost more than thou weneest" (744 first time). For Geoffrey, the dreamer in *The House of Fame*, ignorance and confusion are defining qualities. The poem opens with a long passage in which Geoffrey openly admits that dreams baffle him and that he has no idea how to distinguish between the different kinds of dreams, which ones come true and which ones do not (1-58). It is all he can do to wish for the best: "Turne us every drem to goode!" (58). Later, the eagle outs Geoffrey as a bad reader and writer who stares at books every night after work until he is dazed and confused: "Thou sittest at another book / Tyl fully daswed ys thy look" (624-40, 657-58). On their flight through space, when the heavenly eagle offers to teach him about the stars, Geoffrey declines – not interested (991-1018). Chaucer's dreamers do learn and grow as their dream visions unfold, but their default mode is out of their depth.

Shakespeare intensifies these conventional confusions in the figure of Christopher Sly. When we first meet him, he is so drunk and disorderly that the tavern hostess has to call the police; when he speaks, he butchers foreign phrases, misquotes *The Spanish Tragedy* twice, and gets his historical figures mixed up, all in the space of a few lines (1.4-7). When he wakes up in the lord's bed, it doesn't take long to convince Sly that his entire humble existence has been a delusion and that he is actually a rich, married man; after some brief protestations, Sly slips from prose into pentameters and describes the great changing of his mind and perspective in bewildered terms: "Am I a lord? And have a such a lady? / Or do I dream? Or have I dreamed till now?" (2.66-67).

After the first scene of the main, Italian part of *The Taming of the Shrew*, there is a brief interlude where a servant complains that Sly is nodding off and not paying attention to the play (1.1.242-47). The moment recalls the moments in the dream visions when the dreamer and Geoffrey fail as students of the lesson of the dream, how the dreamer fails to understand the Black Knight's story and Geoffrey does not want to eagle to tell him the mysteries of the stars. Denying that he was asleep, Sly, impatient, wants to know if the play is almost over – "Comes there any more of it?" – and then, right after saying he likes it, he says he wishes that it was finished – "'Tis a very excellent piece of work, madam lady. Would 'twere done" (243-44, 246-47). In short, Sly, like Chaucer's dreamers before him, is a little dim under regular circumstances and, more importantly, when thrust into the dreamlike situation of the lord's practical joke, he is not a good reader of the text and spectacle he is made to witness.

The dreamer's insomnia is cured by a bedtime story, the story of Ceyx and Alcyone, from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In the story, which the dreamer calls "a wonder thing" (61), Juno has Morpheus, the god of sleep, appear to Alcyone in a dream to let her know that her husband has drowned at sea, so that she can stop worrying and begin to grieve. As readers, we remember that the dreamer has lost the one thing that he believes can heal him and we understand that the theme of his bedtime story – loss and consolation – touches him on a deep level and resonates with his own sad situation. Consciously, however, the dreamer misses the point of the story and fixates on the figure of Morpheus. If there is a god of sleep, he reasons, understandably, given his insomnia, he ought to worship it. Resolving to make Morpheus a shrine out of an elaborate bedroom set – "a fether-bed, / Rayed with gold," and so on (251-52) – and to pay tribute to Juno as well, the dreamer falls asleep, as he puts it, "ryght upon my book" (274). The dreamer's conversion to Morpheus worship notwithstanding, it is the experience of reading about another's grief that

begins to relieve the pain of his own; reading Ovid before bed allows him to sleep at last and unlocks his dream adventure.

When his dream begins, the dreamer finds himself in a sensational bedchamber. It is dawn, on a fine morning in May, and the chamber is as bright and full of life as his own bedroom was lifeless and depressing. Birds are singing in harmony, the chamber ringing with their song: "For al my chambre gan to ryng / Thurgh syngynge of her armonye," he says, "For instrument nor melodye / Was nowhere herd yet half so swete" (312-13, 314-15). In addition to the birds singing sweetly, the dreamy bedchamber is a storybook room: The whole story of Troy is wrought into the windows and *The Romance of the Rose* is painted on the walls (321-31, 332-40). Sunlight suffuses the sensational room, as though to illuminate its storybook features and project them onto the figure of the dreamer: "And through the glas the sonne shon / Upon my bed with bryghte bemes, / With many glade gilde streames" (336-38). From this bright base station ringing with birdsong and elaborately decorated with lit stories by the sun, the dreamer rides off into his dream adventure.

Shakespeare sends up both the dreamer's bedtime story and the storybook room in which his dream begins in the practical joke Sly's kidnappers play on him. When, in the first scene of the induction, he sends the huntsmen home to get his house ready for the prank, the lord tells them, among other preparations, to "hang it round with all my wanton pictures," and, "Procure me music ready when he wakes / To make a dulcet and a heavenly sound" (43, 46-47). In the second scene, when Sly wakes up, they ply him with the heavenly music the lord called for: "Wilt thou have music? Hark, Apollo plays, / And twenty caged nightingales do sing" (33-34). The harmonious birdsong that the dreamer enjoyed in his bedchamber in a dream, waking into wonder, is here turned into part of Sly's rude awakening at the hands of his captors, part of the

gear meant to trick him into believing that he is not himself. Both the dreamer and Sly find themselves, at the beginning of their adventures, unexpectedly in bed; in Sly's case though, the wonderful features of the bedroom in a dream are meant to beguile him, rather than to help him begin the healing process.

The wanton pictures that the lord instructs the huntsmen to hang around the room turn out to be pornographic literary illustrations depicting rape scenes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the book the dreamer reads before bed. "Dost thou love pictures?" the lord's servants ask Sly (47), offering him a menu of Ovidian rape scenes to enjoy: Venus and Adonis (47-51), Io and Jupiter (52-53), and Apollo and Daphne (55-58). Disturbingly, the servants encourage Sly to enjoy these pictures by emphasizing how vividly they render the scene, even the act, of rape: As Venus hides in the sedges waiting to strike, "they seem to move and wanton with her breath" (50); Io appears "As lively painted as the deed was done" (54); the blood on Daphne's legs from fleeing Apollo through a thorny wood is so vivid that "one shall swear she bleeds" for real (56). Where the dreamer reads a touching story out of Ovid about a loving couple that cures his insomnia and is comforted by the elaborate literary designs on the walls and windows of the bedroom in his dream, Shakespeare has the kidnappers hang nasty Ovidian illustrations around the fancy bedroom they set Sly up in to deceive him, pretending that they will help cure his melancholy frenzy and remind him of his real identity.

Here we have two representations of the male literary mind: one comforting, the other disturbing. In Chaucer's model, reading a touching story out of classical literature leads productively to a chamber in a dream, warmed and brightened by sunbeams and ringing with birdsong, in which literary influences – the story of Troy and *The Romance of the Rose* – adorn the walls and windows. When he wakes from the dream that follows these pleasant things, the

dreamer resolves to write a poem about his wonderful experience, "to put this sweven in ryme" (1332). In Shakespeare, by contrast, the bedroom is a crime scene, the dreamer (Sly) a hostage, and the classical stories have been reduced to illustrations of the most prurient parts of Ovid's poem. As in Chaucer's dream, Shakespeare's own literary influences – Ovid and Chaucer – furnish the storybook bedroom of *The Taming of the Shrew*, but instead of sunshine through the windows and birdsong ringing the walls to animate them, we get assurances that they are as vivid visually as rape itself – "As lively painted as the deed was done" – and that they even "seem to move." Finally, amid this dark parody of Chaucer's dream and a perverse curation of Ovidian stories, a conspicuously Chaucerian play breaks out in a storybook bedroom, providing the nasty model of male writing mind with its own vivid "dream." What Shakespeare's parodic move here suggests, I think, is, not, of course, that he skims through his copy of Ovid searching for the rape scenes, but that he considers Chaucer's representation of Ovid in *The Book of the Duchess* misleadingly sentimental. There is a graphically violent, even a sadistic dimension in Ovid that Chaucer's leaves out; this too, Shakespeare seems to say, is part of Ovid's influence on the writing mind.

In the dream visions, Ovid's influence has various salutary qualities, notably creative inspiration and even a kind of feminism. We have seen how reading an Ovidian bedtime story helps the dreamer in *The Book of the Duchess* get some sleep; then, when he wakes up, he resolves to write. Along with the dream that his story inspires, Ovid takes the dreamer from manic depression to upbeat and well-rested, with a healthy hobby, in no time. In *The House of Fame*, Geoffrey dreams about an English version of *The Aeneid*, but, as I describe in more detail in chapters 4 and 5 of this study, it is more Ovid's *Aeneid* than Virgil's. As readers of Chaucer know, Geoffrey's version of *The Aeneid* favors Dido's perspective over that of Aeneas and

features a list of false lovers, adjustments straight out of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides*. For Chaucer, then, allowing Ovid's perspective to hijack his version of *The Aeneid* means that the stoic epic masculinity of the original must make room for the disruptive feminine. Second, reading Virgil's epic as Ovid would have it catalyzes his own sense of authorship. He adds a long pro-feminine speech, Dido's lament, and claims it as his own, announcing, "Non other auctour allege I" (316). Thus, Chaucer's dreamy revision, via Ovid, of Virgil's *Aeneid* in *House of Fame* Book 1 is part of an education in poetic composition that will continue when Geoffrey meets the eagle in Book 2 and creative writing becomes the explicit theme. The main thing is that, in Geoffrey's *Aeneid*, new authorship springs from a critical revisionary attitude toward an established text and that, for Chaucer's naïve dreamer, Ovid catalyzes this process and provides it with its pro-feminine angle.

In this light, the wanton Ovidian illustrations Shakespeare has the lord and his servants hang around the room for Christopher Sly send up Chaucer's salutary representation of the influence of Ovid in the dream visions. Chaucer's Ovid is an agent of creative inspiration, one that puts a grieving wife at the center of one moving story and a jilted heroine at the center of another, loading their brand of inspiration with pro-feminine sentiment. Shakespeare's graphic illustrations from *The Metamorphoses*, by contrast, have no productive function for Sly and present women as rape victims, as well as, in one case, rapists. In addition to mocking the sentimentality of Chaucer's presentation, I think the point of this sendup is demonstrate the range of Ovid's mythological world, to provide a kind of counterweight to the misleadingly positive and productive vision of Ovid's influence that comes across in Chaucer. The illustrations are one aspect of Shakespeare's dark requital of Chaucer's pro-feminine impulses in the play, turning a parodic reaction to an aspect of Chaucer's literary style into the stuff of drama.

The dreamer from *The Book of the Duchess* and Christopher Sly are both swept into their dream adventures by a hunting party passing by. When he finds Sly passed out on the street and decides to prank him, the lord of *The Taming of the Shrew* induction is just returning from the hunt. After he and the huntsmen that attend him find Sly sleeping in the street and determine that he is a rascal, rather than a corpse, their conversation abruptly turns from their day's sport to a new and different one: By setting Sly up in the lord's bed and treating him in every way like a nobleman, they will make him "forget himself" (1.37) and believe he is who and what they say he is. The lord explicitly likens the experience he wants the prank to convey to a dream ("even as a flattering dream" 40), compounding the sense that Chaucer's influence is at work.

Shakespeare borrows this move from *The Book of the Duchess*. In that poem, the hero is also swept into his dream adventure by a hunting party. Just lying around, like Sly, as his dream begins, the narrator hears a hunting horn and springs into action, somehow immediately taking up a horse and riding right out of the bedchamber he inhabits in the dream and into the field (344-59). When he catches up to the hunting party we learn that it is led by the Roman emperor Octavian, who we never meet, and that his hounds have lost the scent they were after (360-86). The narrator is then led through an earthly paradise and toward his fateful interaction with the Black Knight by another dog: the famous whelp, or puppy, our hero's own personal white rabbit (387-415). In a phrase that prefigures the attempts by poor Sly's captors to make him "forget himself," Chaucer describes the landscape that the dreamer is led through as having 'forgotten the poverty' of winter: "Hyt had forgete the poverttee / That wynter, thorgh hys colde morwes, / Had mad hyt suffre, and his sorwes" (410-13). The main thing, though, is the hunt that gets the dream adventure going.

In connection with the hunt, Shakespeare seems to have altered Chaucer's dream fiction formula in at least two ways: he makes the "hero" more ridiculous while at the same time increasing the competence of the hunting party that launches his adventure. Where the *Duchess* narrator, despite his considerable problems, among them debilitating insomnia and ennui, can get himself out of bed and onto a horse, and even overtake the emperor's hunting party, Christopher Sly is completely at the mercy of his captors: He has to be carried offstage from off of the ground and, when the prankish performance begins, he is reduced to the position of a mere spectator, an inattentive one at that. However naïve we might consider him, Chaucer's dreamer is a hysteric on the mend, a figure with some semblance of agency; Shakespeare makes this figure more ridiculous by reimagining him as a clueless, drunken beggar.

Shakespeare's hunting party is like Chaucer's, only more competent, particularly when it comes to the hounds involved, and more particularly when it comes to those hounds' noses. In *The Book of the Duchess*, the dreamer joins Octavian's hunt just as the huntsmen are admitting defeat. The problem, it turns out, is that the hounds, notably the "lymeres" (362), or "hounds trained to track by scent" (334n362), have overshot their mark and lost the scent of the deer they are after ("The houndes had overshote hym alle, / And were on a defaute yfalle" 383-84). It is only then, after the hunting dogs have failed, that a humble puppy leads our narrator somewhat randomly away and into the main episode of the dream. What was actively hunted for, in other words, gives way to something found unexpectedly.

In contrast to this, the lord of Shakespeare's induction has hounds with great noses. When, returning from a successful hunt, they find Sly and begin to conspire against him, he and his men can't seem to decide which of several worthy candidates from among their hounds is the best at detecting hard-to-get scents. A dog named Silver, the lord argues, "made it good" (15) even "in

the coldest fault" (16); that is, he was able to detect even the faintest scent. One of the lord's huntsmen sticks up for another dog, named Belman, who he claims, again, "picked up the dullest scent" (20); the lord disagrees, preferring a dog called Echo, who, he says, could sniff out scents better than Belman if only he were not so slow (22-23). Where Chaucer's hounds lost the scent they were after, leaving his narrator to wander with the whelp, Shakespeare's hounds are special forces by comparison, able even to find what seemed surely lost. Furthermore, when considered in the context of literary adaptation and influence, the names of these dogs, Echo and Belman – strange both in themselves and in the mere fact that they are mentioned – are suggestive: Shakespeare draws attention to his literary "echo" of, among other texts, Chaucerian dream visions, and seems to ask the audience, "does this ring a bell?"

This exchange among the hunters about their hounds, which perhaps prefigures the play's famous final scene, in which husbands debate which of their wives is the most obedient, might seem a little random or out of place on its own. Harold Goddard makes sense of it by interpreting the hunters' praise as advice to the audience to pay attention to even small-seeming details, an interpretation that elevates seemingly offhand comments to the level of keys to the whole play (73). I would supplement Goddard's position by broadening its scope to include texts outside the play: it is intertextual 'echoes,' in my view, rather than small internal details, that Shakespeare advises the audience to pay close attention to.⁵ This seemingly extraneous conversation about which hunting dog had the best day with respect to faint scent detection is best understood as an intertext with the hunting episode in *The Book of the Duchess*. The hard-to-get scents refer, in this light, not to small details Shakespeare includes, but to his references to relatively esoteric passages in Chaucer's works. That Chaucer's hounds' noses would fail them, leaving the naïve

⁵ Hughes, in passing, makes a similar point (6-7). The lord of the induction would make a great addition to his stable of Shakespeare's Chaucerian entertainers.

dreamer to chance whelp-wanderings, where Shakespeare's hounds excel and the hunting party they belong to is able to take full control of the prankish "dream" they have in store for Christopher Sly, would suggest that Shakespeare has more interest in proactive, competent, collaborative invention – the players and the practical joke — than passive inspiration – the dream. It is as though a director (the lord) and a theatrical company (the huntsmen, servants, and players) invade the somewhat solipsistic world of Chaucerian dream and reinvent it as a competent and collaborative theatrical experience.

Shakespeare refigures more than just dream vision conventions in the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*. Remarkably, the practical joke the lord plays on Christopher Sly also features one of Shakespeare's versions of the set piece I will refer to as the Franklin's Tale magic show (lines 1189-1208). While it may seem unlikely that in just two short scenes Shakespeare refigures aspects of two very distinct works by Chaucer – *The Book of the Duchess* and *The Franklin's Tale* – and does so *at the same time*, bear in mind that the dream visions and the magic show relate to each other in an important sense: they both push at their own boundaries as fictions and present the figure of an artist. In this light, Shakespeare's induction is a composite sendup of several works in which Chaucer playfully represents himself and the art of poetry inside his stories.

In *The Franklin's Tale*, a young man who desperately desires a married woman hires a mercenary magician to help him get what he wants from her. When they meet for the first time, the magician takes the young man to his home and impresses him with a magic show, a kind of tryout before they sign their treacherous contract. In the show, he conjures a series of images.

The first is of a great hunt, the second falconers hawking, the third jousting knights. The fourth image is the wished-for lady herself, so convincing an illusion that the young man is swept up in it and thinks he himself dances with her, that the magician's illusion and his reality are as one, as though the lady is really in the room or his existence is really an illusion. At this point, the magician claps his hands and the illusion disappears; eager and understandably impressed, the young man gives him the job. The Franklin's Tale magic show is one of the great set pieces in Chaucer, one Shakespeare knew and adapted in his own work, most famously in *The Tempest* (see 4.1.142-63). Here is the text of the magic show:

He shewed hym, er he wente to sopeer,
Forestes, parkes ful of wilde deer;
Ther saugh he hertes with hir hornes hye,
The gretteste that evere were seyn with ye.
He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with houndes,
And somme with arwes blede of bittre woundes.
He saugh, whan voyded were thise wilde deer,
Thise fauconers upon a fair ryver,
That with hir haukes han the heron slayn.
Tho saugh he knyghtes justyng in a playn;
And after this he dide hym swich plesaunce
That he hym shewed his lady on a daunce,
On which hymself he daunced, as hym thoughte.
And whan this maister that this magyk wroughte

Saugh it was tyme, he clapte his handes two,
And farewel! Al oure revel was ago. (1189-1205)

The most obvious and remarkable quality in the passage is its ambiguity. Chaucer doesn't tell the reader how the magician manages to show the young man these things, only that he does. Readers are left to imagine whether he has a crystal ball, hallucinogenic drugs, illustrated manuscripts, hypnotic techniques, or some other way of creating such convincing images, which come across like holograms or a short video in Chaucer's spare, ambiguous presentation; he may even have real magical powers. Furthermore, the illusion moves progressively closer to home, not only showing the lady, who the magician has never met, but also seeming to draw the young man in, blurring the line between the magician's illusion and Chaucer's fiction. This blurring effect is compounded by the striking pronoun "oure" (1205), which jars a little with the established third person omniscient perspective, suggesting that we – Chaucer and his readers, not only the characters in the room – are witnesses to the magic show. It's *our* revel that ends, not only *theirs*. In this way, readers experience something like what the young man does. Chaucer suggests that by casting the stunning imagery of the Franklin's Tale magic show on the mind's eye of his readers, he does to them what the magician does to the young man, rupturing his sense of the distinction between what is real and what is not through the suggestive power of poetry.

Shakespeare appropriates the features of the Franklin's Tale magic show in the practical joke played on Christopher Sly. Where Chaucer's magician seduces the lusty young man with images of "wilde deer," "hertes," "houndes," and "haukes," Shakespeare's lord and his prankish co-conspirators go to work on Christopher Sly in much the same way, in much the same terms. When the plan is still developing, the lord instructs his men to "tell him [Sly] of his hounds and horse" (1.57). When Sly awakes in the lord's bed and resists the idea that he is not himself, the

lord and his men ply him aggressively with the images from the Franklin's Tale magic show: more horses, hawks, hounds, and deer.

LORD. ...wilt thou ride? Thy horses shall be trapped,
Their harness studded all with gold and pearl.
Dost thou love hawking? Thou hast hawks will soar
Above the morning lark. Or wilt thou hunt?
Thy hounds will make the welkin answer them
And fetch shrill echoes from the hollow earth.

FIRST SERVINGMAN. Say thou wilt course? Thy greyhounds are as swift
As breathèd stags, ay, fleeter than the roe. (2.41-48)

Worth noting is the drastic alteration in tone. The passage in Chaucer is remarkable, indeed famous, for its coolness and simplicity. The magician simply 'shows' his illusion with no pretense of frenzy or trance. In contrast, Shakespeare's pranksters badger Sly with an aggressive and sycophantic line of questioning, charging right through his repeated objections to their claims and attention. Where the illusionist makes it look easy, the lord's prankish henchmen prefer the hard sell.

In addition to these hunting and hawking echoes, in both passages the illusion's final image is of a lady who is not only the finishing touch, but also the most vivid aspect of the illusion. Chaucer's dancing lady is so vivid to the young man's senses he thinks himself dancing with her: "hymself he daunced, as hym thoughte" (1201). In Shakespeare's version, the enticements of hunting and hawking give way to the lifelike depictions of rapists and rape victims expecting or even experiencing their assaults; in this light, Shakespeare travesties the

wish-fulfillment fantasy afforded the young man in *The Franklin's Tale* by refiguring the convincing illusion of a dance with a nonconsenting woman into images of all out rape. Then, Shakespeare does Chaucer one better when the wife the pranksters describe to Sly physically appears in the form of a page, Bartholomew, disguised as a lady; apparently convinced, Sly immediately tries to clear the room and sleep with her (2.112-13).

In short, both *The Franklin's Tale* and the *Taming of the Shrew* induction feature an illusionist with no name and provide access to the mystery man's private house, a venue where wonders are seen and characters' lives reimagined. In both texts, the man and illusionist meet on the street and go together to the house where the illusion will be made. Furthermore, both texts feature illusions in which aristocratic thrills like hunting give way to a more intense thrill in the figure of a lady, and, again in both cases, the lady is not only the illusion's finishing touch, but also the its most vivid aspect, so much so that the illusion seems to come alive. In this light, as is often the case, Shakespeare seems to fixate on and amplify the implicit and explicit darkness of what he finds in Chaucer, turning a willing encounter into a kidnapping, a magic show into a manipulative prank, a dance into images of rape, and so on.

While he may ultimately prove mysterious enough to ultimately elude our understanding, the *Franklin's Tale* magician is clearly more than just another character. He is somehow beyond the surface of the narrative, part proxy for the author, part his rival. Prospero quotes him in *The Tempest*, if that gives you some idea. In the book *Telling Images*, V. A. Kolve, while stopping short of aligning Chaucer and the magician, nevertheless sees him as a figure capable of changing the story he is in, not by way of choices he makes as a character, but rather by design. When he shows the young man a vision of his lady dancing and the young man seems to join, Kolve detects a hand on the very story he is a part of, drafting and redrafting it from within (193).

For Kolve the magic shows in *The Franklin's Tale* are Chaucer's way of setting his own literary art over lesser arts of entertainment (192-98). In "Poetry as Conjuring Act," her article on the connection between *The Franklin's Tale* and *The Tempest*, Sherron Knopp goes further, aligning Chaucer's idea of the poet with the magician and turning *The Franklin's Tale* into a kind of defense of poesy with the magician's potent art at odds with the Franklin's own distaste for magic, which is like the distaste for poetry, and which must be proven wrong and overcome (337-54). That Shakespeare saw the Franklin's Tale magician as a kind of artist is undeniable given his influence on Prospero; by refiguring him in the figure of the lord of the induction he prefigured Prospero while at the same time involving Chaucer's magician figure in a densely imitative fiction made of Shakespeare's parody of his sense of Chaucer's influence on him as a poet.

There are actually two set piece illusions in *The Franklin's Tale*. The magic show is preceded by the description of another, earlier illusion, and it is this description that inspires the young man to seek the magician out. The young man's brother tells him he has heard of illusionists ("tregetours" 1143) that are able to fill great halls with so much water barges can row around in them; they can also produce lions, flowers and vines, and castles, and can dismiss these wonders in an instant (1142-51). As scholars have pointed out, Kolve notably, this illusion seems more like a court entertainment, perhaps carried off after dinner with the use of automatons, than does the "real" magic of the magic show, where the specific lady the young man is after is somehow conjured in recognizable form (Kolve 188-98). That said, the magic show has hints of physical performance as well. For instance, the illusionist dismisses the illusion not whenever he feels like it, but rather 'when he saw that it was time' (lines 1202-3), as though he were working on a schedule; in addition to that, immediately after voiding the magic

show, he gets into it with a servant about whether dinner is ready yet, again seemingly trying to stay on some mysterious schedule (1209-17). This would suggest that the magic show is a kind of more authentic upgrade over the first illusion. Since the first illusion may be a description of an after-dinner court entertainment, complete with automata and models a la Inigo Jones at Whitehall, the magic show at the magician's house, which also includes a meal and requires no apparatus, is an upgrade suggesting real powers of illusion.⁶

In this light, the scene at the lord's house in *The Taming of the Shrew* induction would again suggest Shakespeare travesty, caricaturing what he finds in Chaucer. Shakespeare goes out of his way in his depiction of the lord's prank to show us everything Chaucer's illusions keep hidden or only hintingly reveal. Where the description of the first illusion, of water and castle in the hall, hints at a court entertainment rendered in physical objects which the young man and his brother do not fully understand, and the magic show itself hints at deeper, more authentic powers of illusion in its cool ambiguity and its ability to body forth the image of the wished-for lady and the young man himself, Shakespeare seems determined to establish that it takes a village to really do an illusion right. In order to pull off the practical joke against Christopher Sly, he requires the assistance not only an entire household of servants, to whom he issues extensive, explicit instructions, but also a conspicuously well-met company of actors. The maintenance, or, to use the lord's own, more resonant word, the *husbandry* of the prank requires an elaborate operation. Not to put too fine a point on it, but it also requires a significant diminishment of the intelligence of the person witnessing the illusion: the young man in *The Franklin's Tale* is awful, but he is not

⁶ Here, again, Kolve is particularly helpful. He distinguishes between the illusions that Aurelius's brother has heard about (see lines 1138-1151), but does not know are really dinner pageants involving actors and automata, and the *real* magic show, whose richness cannot be explained away like that, and which reminds him (Kolve) of Chaucer's dream visions, particularly *The House of Fame* (188-91). According to Kolve, Chaucer uses the magic show, "as a means of assessing the mystery and grandeur of his own craft, the making of fictional poems" (191).

as bumbling as Christopher Sly. The lord is not even above using mundane props to get the desired effect, like when he instructs the players to cut an onion if the boy who is to play Sly's fake wife has troubling crying on command (1.120-24). In this way, Shakespeare's theatrical style of illusion-making subsumes aspects of Chaucer's poetic one.

In addition to James Shapiro's notion of parodic intertextuality, discussed in the introduction to this study, Jacob Hughes's idea that Shakespeare reflects on Chaucer's influence at various stages in his poetic and dramatic career using characters who are in some way also entertainers as the medium of that reflection is perfectly suited to my sense of what is going on in the *Taming of the Shrew* induction. The lord is an entertainer in his own household, at once master of revels and the player-coach of a company of actors. In this capacity he draws on the conventions of Chaucerian dream while also, like a proto-Prospero, taking on the mantle of the artist as magician by drawing on the methods and tropes of the Franklin's Tale illusionist. While the dreamlike, meta-dramatic dimension of the *Taming of the Shrew* induction has been treated by scholars before, notably by Alvin Kernan in *The Playwright as Magician* and Marjorie Garber in her book *Dream in Shakespeare*, the connection to Chaucer has not been taken into account; while Jacob Hughes does not take up *The Taming of the Shrew* in his dissertation, his sense of the Shakespearean entertainer as the site of reflection on Chaucer's influence is a crucial missing piece in our understanding of the meaning and significance of the induction.⁷

Shakespeare sends up The Franklin's Tale in the main part of *The Taming of the Shrew* as well. Part of the so-called marriage group in *The Canterbury Tales*, The Franklin's Tale begins with a striking conversation between a man and his wife in which he promises that he will never assert mastery over her against her will, except when appearances demand it. In other words,

⁷ See Hughes 1-16 for his elaboration of this useful idea.

theirs will be an equal partnership except when they need to play their proper parts in public. He swears to “take no maistrie / Agayn hir wyl” (747-48), even putting her in charge (“hire obeye” 749), leaving himself only nominally the dominant spouse (“Save that the name of soveraynetee” 751) and in cases where it might cause public shame (752). A progressive arrangement, privately settled, it seems. Arguably, this arrangement is what brings disaster to the lives of the couple at the center of *The Franklin's Tale*, but setting interpretations aside, it is certainly one of the memorable aspects of the story.

Shakespeare sends up this ostensibly progressive marriage arrangement in Chaucer when he has Petruccio assure Kate's father and Bianca's eager suitors that while Kate seems not to consent to his advances – indeed, she seems to find him repulsive – that she is only pretending to hate him for the sake of “policy” and that she has in fact consented to marry him in private with the understanding that she is still going to act like a shrew in public (2.1.284). “’Tis bargained ‘twixt us twain, being alone,” he says, “That she shall still be curst in company” (303-04). In *The Franklin's Tale*, a man and woman strike a deal to be equal partners except when the custom of the world around them imposes itself on them; in *Petruccio*, Shakespeare twists this idea into a lie designed to sidestep the issue of Katherine's consent. Once again, Shakespeare parodies progressive, pro-feminine impulses in Chaucer's poetry, making a nasty joke out of the hopeful premise of *The Franklin's Tale*, another dimension of his dark requital of Chaucer's quasi-feminist touches.

It is well established that the composite structure of *The Taming of the Shrew* brings together two great folk themes: the induction's "beggar transformed" theme has several models,

including the section of the *One Thousand and One Nights* often referred to as "The Sleeper and the Waker," and the shrew-taming aspect of the main part of the play has many analogues across various cultures. Jonathan Burton explores this alternative connection in a recent article entitled "Christopher Sly's Arabian Night." The point of the present chapter is to demonstrate that, remarkably, the play's composite structure reaches out to, not only *The Arabian Nights*, but also two different strains within Chaucer's poetry: the main part of the play refigures The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale, as Bergeron and Gussenhoven demonstrate, and the induction refigures aspects of Chaucer's dream visions and the crafty magic of his Franklin's Tale illusionist, this second set of texts rich, in its various meta-poetic moves, in insight into Chaucer's art of poetry. In this light, *The Taming of the Shrew* begins to look differently, like a play made out of imitations of different elements in Chaucer's poetry. In my view, *The Taming of the Shrew* is a text in which Shakespeare dramatizes his own sense of Chaucer's influence on his burgeoning art of dramatic poetry, while demonstrating his awareness of, and sometimes his distaste for, Chaucerian literary strategies through disruptive reversal, dark parody, and caricature.

An important aspect of the induction is its non-closure. As everyone knows, Christopher Sly never returns after his brief appearance at the end of act 1 scene 1, where he is encouraged to stay awake and pay attention to the show. What seemed like a framing device, then, dissolves into the main part of the play. We never learn what Sly thinks of the shrew-taming play he is compelled to take in or whether he learns anything from it. Indeed, Shakespeare seems to steer clear of any form of moral didacticism in the induction: While the lord is initially disgusted by the sight of Sly lying in the street, saying, "O monstrous beast! How like a swine he lies" (1.30), his thoughts quickly turn to simply having fun; resolving to "practise" on Sly, that is, play a trick

on him, he thinks only of how confusing the experience will be for him, not about teaching him a lesson, asking, "Would not the beggar then forget himself?" (32, 37). Not only does Sly forget himself, falling for, at least partly, the lord's elaborate jest, the play seems to forget him too, leaving his storyline and any potential arc for his character as loose ends.

It is tempting to say that what accounts for the non-closure of Shakespeare's densely Chaucerian induction is Chaucer's own predilection for the form of the unfinished. In *Chaucer's Open Books*, Rosemarie McGerr mentions, though only in passing, that she thinks the *Shrew* induction parodies the dream vision tradition and that the inconclusiveness it takes on when Sly does not return makes sense when considered as an analogue to the unfinished forms in Chaucer, like that of *The House of Fame*, which ends mid-sentence, or *The Canterbury Tales*, which ends mid-journey (157). In this way, McGerr would draw the design of Shakespeare's play under the jurisdiction of her notion of resistance to closure in medieval discourse. This idea is more than reasonable, but I would suggest that the reason Sly does not come back is that, in the composite Chaucerian imitation of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Shakespeare dramatizes aspects of Chaucer's meta-poetry in the induction and his poetry in the play. I want to press the point I began with when elaborating the arguments of Bergeron and Gussenhoven, that, unlike, for instance, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, which is a direct adaptation, by Shakespeare, of one of the *Canterbury Tales*, the main action of *The Taming of the Shrew*, the part with Kate and Petruccio in it, is a *Canterbury Tale by Shakespeare* in the sense that it requites *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale* the way *The Miller's Tale* requites the *Knight's*, offering an irreverent sendup of the precursor text that looks at key shared themes, in this case issues related to marriage and the battle of the sexes, from a different perspective and in a different tone. In the induction, Shakespeare subjects key meta-poetic passages in Chaucer, parts of the dream visions as well as

the Franklin's Tale magic show, to a similar treatment, attaching a parodic adaptation of Chaucer's portraits of the artist to a Canterbury-style intertextual answer to a tale.

In an additional connection, one of the truly fascinating things you notice when delving into the complex intertext between Chaucer and *The Taming of the Shrew* is that the companion play of unknown authorship, entitled *The Taming of a Shrew*, with an "a," not a "the" in the title, in which Christopher Sly *does* return in the end, for all its subordination, in terms of renown and readership, to the play we know that Shakespeare wrote, *also* finds a satisfying way to bring the play to a conclusion in conversation with Chaucerian dream. In this version of the play, Sly is returned, in the final scene, to the spot where he was abducted and a tapster from the tavern where the trouble started wakes him up in fear that he will freeze to death sleeping on the street. But Sly wakes up in a state of wonder: "I have had / The bravest dream tonight that ever thou / Heardst in all thy life," he tells the tapster (Additional passages E.11-13). In this, we hear the unmistakable tone of Chaucer's dreamers. Compare Geoffrey in *The House of Fame*:

For never sith that I was born,
Ne no man elles me befor,
Mette, I trowe stedfastly,
So wonderful a drem as I ... (59-62)

Furthermore, as they walk off together in the dawn – "Now that the darksome night is overpast / And dawning day appears in crystal sky, / Now must I haste abroad," go the tapster's lovely Shakespearean knockoff lines (1-3) – Sly is turned into a storyteller, like the naïve dreamers in Chaucer's poems. At first, his instinct is to use what he has learned in the play-within-a-play to discipline his own wife: "I know now how to tame a shrew," he says, and, "I'll to my / Wife

presently and tame her too, / An if she anger me" (16, 19-21). But just when *The Taming of a Shrew* seems to have missed the elegant avoidance of learning lessons in Shakespeare's play, and it looks like Sly has proven himself a fool after all by taking a patently dubious lesson home with him from his wonderful experience, the tapster turns him from his threat and offers fellowship instead: "Nay, Tarry, Sly, for I'll go home with thee / And hear the rest that thou hast dreamt tonight" (23-24). In the play's final lines, then, it is decided that Sly will tell the story of his dream. In this, we hear an echo of the closing lines of *The Book of the Duchess*, where, as with Sly, praise of the extraordinary dream leads to a resolution of writing it down: "so queynt" was the dreamer's dream that he resolves "to put this sweven in ryme" (1330, 1332). The complex questions about intertext and authorship that hang over the two shrew plays will have to take Chaucer's early poetry into account, it seems.⁸

In my reading, the most significant dimension of the parodic intertextuality Shakespeare establishes with Chaucer's dream visions and magic show in *The Taming of the Shrew* is his reflection on Chaucer's handling of the feminine. Bergeron and Gussenhoven show how Shakespeare turns Chaucer's great female creation The Wife of Bath into a male marital opportunist and restores male rule in the face of the feminine reign of Chaucer's wife stories. Mindful of their too often overlooked contributions, I have tried to demonstrate how the *Taming of the Shrew* induction meddles with some of the pro-feminine forces at work in *The Book of the Duchess*, *The House of Fame* and *The Franklin's Tale*, replacing Ovid's sympathy with jilted women with gratuitous illustrations of his rape scenes, for instance, and lampooning the progressive arrangement of the Franklin's Tale marriage in the scene in which Petruccio woos Kate. I do not, of course, interpret this to mean that Shakespeare wishes Chaucer were more of a

⁸ For the intertext between the two shrew plays and the value of reading them together, see Marcus.

misogynist; I would suggest, however, that Shakespeare's mode of adaptation here amounts to his requital, in the Chaucerian sense of that word, the sense of an artistic answer and counterweight like the one The Miller's Tale provides The Knight's, to both The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale in the Italian part of the play, and that this requital, along with the parodic impressions of the dream visions and The Franklin's Tale in the induction, includes turning Chaucer's "feminism" inside out. To this I would add that there is so much Chaucer in *The Taming of the Shrew* that I believe we can conceive of taming in the play not only as something that happens to Kate but also, on another level, to the influence of Chaucer on Shakespeare. This is not to say that Shakespeare emerges or even could emerge victorious from this *agon*. The ambiguity and the potential for a deeper, more mutual partnership Bergeron and Gussenhoven find in The Wife of Bath's Tale and *The Taming of the Shrew* here becomes an analogue for the influence of Chaucer on the young poet-playwright.

CHAPTER 3: *CYMBELINE'S ANSWER TO THE BOOK OF THE DUCHESS*

Between Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* there are, certainly, more differences than similarities. Chaucer's first major poem is about a strange, nameless man who, in despair over his debilitating insomnia, finds consolation and a renewed sense of purpose in a bedtime story and the extraordinary dream that story inspires. In Shakespeare's late play, on the other hand, war breaks out between ancient Britain and Rome over the issue of unpaid tribute while an independently-minded princess struggles to reunite with her wayward husband, a man who endures banishment and the treachery of a crafty international rival. The two texts would seem to have little or nothing in common.

I notice, however, that there is an array of striking echoes to *The Book of the Duchess* in *Cymbeline*. Below, I provide a brief record of the four most important of them, which this chapter will explore. Notice that the common thread among them is the literary theme: Each echo is concerned with reading, writing, or responding, in a variety of ways, to classical, and particularly Augustan, influence and authority. In dream visions like *The Book of the Duchess*, the literary theme is conventional and explicit; the protagonists of these poems are in the habit of reading remarkable stories, often classical ones, before bed, having wonderful dream adventures that relate somehow to those bedtime stories, and then reporting back to us about their experiences reading and deeply dreaming, often reporting back as creative writers, or would-be creative writers. Shakespeare works these conventional dream vision features into the design of his play, turning a story about a single man reading in his home alone, falling asleep on his book,

and deeply dreaming into one about an international love affair and a great war; *Cymbeline* appropriates aspects of the man's own situation, like his condition of privation and his reading of classical literature in bed, as well as aspects of the classical story he reads and the dream that story inspires. In this way, the action of the play responds, implicitly, to Chaucer's presentation of literary subjects in the dream vision – subjects ranging from the nature of classical influence to the representation of women – working them out in his own way as the drama that they are embedded in unfolds.

As a corollary to the literary theme, the other common thread among the echoes of *The Book of the Duchess* in *Cymbeline* is that of Shakespeare's twisting around of whatever he borrows from Chaucer: Whatever move Chaucer uses in relation to the literary theme, it seems, Shakespeare finds a way, or ways, to turn it on its head.

1. In both texts, the protagonist has a surreal adventure after reading a bedtime story out of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The dreamer reads the story of Ceyx and Alcyone, Innogen that of Tereus, Procne, and Philomela. In both bedtime stories, female characters are preeminent, but where, in Chaucer's, a lamenting wife finds consolation after the loss of her beloved husband, in Shakespeare's, the situation is darker and more dangerous: After Tereus rapes and mutilates Philomela, his wife Procne's sister, Procne takes revenge on him by murdering their son. Where, in Chaucer's poem, the story is retold at length and its most disturbing elements are omitted, in Shakespeare the opposite is true: The bedtime story is dispensed with in a few short words and reduced to its central act of sexual violence.
2. Both texts feature a base station for the protagonist's surreal adventure in the form of a storybook bedroom. Chaucer's wonderful dream begins in a bedroom with the story of

Troy wrought into the windows and *The Romance of the Rose* painted on the walls. In Innogen's bedroom, Antony and Cleopatra meet in "the story" of a tapestry, while Diana bathes on the mantelpiece of the chimney. Both rooms put their author's literary influences on display. But where, in Chaucer's poem, the storybook bedroom looks forward to poem he will go on to write, namely the *Troilus*, Shakespeare's storybook bedroom does the opposite: In addition to Ovid, a key predecessor, it looks back on older plays of Shakespeare's own career, notably *Macbeth* and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

3. In both texts, the protagonist's surreal adventure involves a courtly visitation in the wilderness; furthermore, in both cases, the courtly figure that the protagonist meets in the wilderness mourns the death of a loved one with poems that are described as songs without melodies. Chaucer's dreamer meets the Black Knight and hears his tuneless lament for his lost lady. Innogen meets a courtly trio in the mountain wilderness of Wales; their spoken songs of mourning are for her. Where, in Chaucer, the Black Knight's lamentation is prolonged, grim, and focused on what he himself has lost, in Shakespeare the opposite is true: Arviragus and Guiderius make it a point not to overdo it when they bury their beloved, and their bright songs are focused on the peace and comfort the dead find when they pass away. While it is true that Arviragus and Guiderius do not know they are noble, which might seem to strain the connection I am making between them and the Black Knight, it is, as Belarius says, "hard to hide the sparks of nature" in them (3.3.79). Moreover, I am going to argue that the mislaid princes represent a latent form of Chaucerian influence in the play, which I hope will account for the lack of awareness of their courtly origin as well as the fact that there are two of them, not only one.

4. Finally, in both texts, the protagonist gets tangled up in a party connected to Augustus Caesar. In *The Book of the Duchess*, the dreamer rides along with a hunting party led by "th'emperour Octovyen." In *Cymbeline*, Innogen gets recruited into the service of Caius Lucius, a general in Augustus' colonial force and his ambassador to Cymbeline in Britain. Where, in Chaucer's poem, the dreamer wanders out of the emperor's hunt and into his audience with the Black Knight, again, Shakespeare flips the script: Innogen stumbles into Caius Lucius' service after her sojourn among the nobles hidden in the mountains of Wales.

What these echoes suggest is that, in *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare engages with Chaucer not only as a narrative source, but as a poet, vying with him, that is, as an English poet exploring his sense of his own literary aesthetic within the fiction he writes. One dimension of this aesthetic exploration is the relationship between the new English vernacular poet and the influence and authority of Augustan literary models; thus, Shakespeare vies with Chaucer not only as a rival poet, but as a rival imitator of Ovid and, as I argue in chapter 4, Virgil, answering the ways that, in *The Book of the Duchess*, the dreamer runs into and responds to the Augustan aspects of his story with his own versions of those encounters, adjusted for the purposes of his experimental late play.¹

The difference, in this regard, between *The Book of the Duchess* and *Cymbeline*, is that, where Chaucer's poem is an early work, in which the literary gestures are tentative and, at times, naïve, Shakespeare's late play is more assured. This, I would argue, is the macro-level reversal that houses the four reverse echoes elaborated above: In *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare answers

¹ For Shakespeare and Ovid, see Bate and chapter 3 in Burrow. For Shakespeare and Virgil, see Burrow chapter 2.

Chaucer's portrait of the artist as a young man with a portrait of the artist feeling out his late style. The most significant takeaway from exploring the intertext between Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play is that, where Chaucer depicts the influence of Augustan literature as directing the burgeoning English poet in uncertain ways that are beyond his conscious understanding, Shakespeare is more authoritative in subordinating classical influence to his own style, while also bringing the influence of Augustan literature on his poetic sensibility into conversation with the influence of Chaucer, ultimately subordinating classical literary influence and authority to that of his native medieval England, with Chaucer at the center. Finally, however, in the play's paradoxical final scene, he arranges a productive *détente* between them.

When you look at *Cymbeline* in the light of the intertext with *The Book of the Duchess*, a few things jump out right away. First, Shakespeare views Chaucer's representation of Ovid's writings and influence as soft, particularly when it comes to the representation of women. Where Chaucer chooses an unobjectionable section of the *Metamorphoses* for the dreamer's bedtime story and lavishes sympathetic attention on the grieving widow at its center, Shakespeare reminds us that, in another section of the book, Ovid revels in the graphic description of violence against women as well as the graphic description of violence done by women. As, in Gavin Douglas's influential phrase, "all womanis frend" (qtd in *The Riverside Chaucer* 980n240-382), Chaucer deploys Ovid's female-driven story as a kind of balm for the dreamer's troubled mind, removing disturbing details from it and, by focusing with great sympathy on Alcyone's grief, crafting a softer, feminine side of the story that inspires the dream. The bedtime story in Shakespeare, by contrast, foregrounds a sexual assault against a woman that we know will result in murder committed by another. While I am not suggesting that this alteration dims Innogen's

virtue in any way, I do think evinces Shakespeare's desire to engage Ovid as a model in a fuller way than he thought Chaucer achieved, taking the terrible along with the touching.

More broadly, I would argue that *Cymbeline* is a drama of, not only competing strains within Renaissance culture, but competing literary influences.² On the intertext between the play and Virgil's *Aeneid*, Patricia Parker points out that Shakespeare arranges "two parallel gestures of submission" in the final scene: Cymbeline submits Britain to Roman authority while Giacomo, who represents Renaissance Italian culture, submits to Posthumous, who represents the epic dimension in Britain's origins (204). The figures that come out on top, though, are the two princes, Guiderius and Arviragus. I suggest that the princes, in the playful similarities between them and Chaucer's Palamon and Arcite, and their analogous position in the drama to that of the Black Knight in *The Book of the Duchess*, represent the Chaucerian strain of influence in Shakespeare's literary consciousness. As, in Parker's reading, Britain submits to Rome and Renaissance Italian culture to that of England, in mine, Guiderius and Arviragus, Shakespeare's latent Chaucerian emblems, come to rule in England, victors in the war against Rome, though willingly subordinated to it in the end; in the drama of competing literary influences, then, latent Chaucerian forces defeat the forces of Rome and come finally to a productive *détente*.

Bedtime stories. When *The Book of the Duchess* begins, the unnamed narrator and protagonist, who I will simply refer to as the dreamer, has been unable to sleep for so long that he has fallen into a state of depression and despair. On top of his debilitating insomnia, the dreamer says that he has lost the one thing – he does not specify what it is – that might cure him:

² For a classic discussion of the play along these lines, see chapter 4 in Knight.

"For there is phisicien but oon / That may me hele; but that is don" (39-40). Then one night, as he sits in bed, unable to sleep, the dreamer asks another unnamed someone, a servant perhaps, to bring him a book to read, hoping only that it will "drive the night away" (49). But the book he reads that night, "A romaunce," namely Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (n48), provides him with much more than just a distraction: After reading Ovid's tale of Ceyx and Alcyone, taking note, especially, of the sections involving Morpheus, the god of sleep, the dreamer is finally able to get some rest. When he finishes his bedtime story, which he calls "a wonder thing" (61), he falls asleep 'right on his book' (274) and has the dream of his life.

Innogen goes through something similar in the trunk scene (*Cymbeline* 2.2). Lying in bed, Innogen says that she has "read three hours," so long that her "eyes are weak" (3) and that "Sleep hath seized" her "wholly" (7). After ten short lines, she is out cold. We learn later that, like the dreamer, Innogen was reading Ovid before bed. She bookmarked her page at Tereus' rape of Philomela; "She hath been reading late," Giacomo says, "The tale of Tereus. Here the leaf's turned down / Where Philomel gave up" (44, 45-46). In addition to the choice of reading material, Innogen's experience in the trunk scene is like the dreamer's at the beginning of *The Book of the Duchess* in that both figures are bereaved and in distress when they read themselves to sleep: The dreamer has lost his mysterious 'one thing' that might heal him; Innogen has lost Posthumous, her husband. The dreamer's distress over his insomnia has taken him to the edge of despair; on top of her husband's banishment, Innogen has endured the further distress of her houseguest's slanders against him and indecent proposal toward her. Finally, it is striking that, where the dreamer asks someone, probably a servant, to bring him the book that will "drive the night away," Innogen discusses her deep bedtime reading and desire to sleep with the conspicuously

out-of-place waiting woman Helen, a figure who says nothing and appears nowhere else in the text, and then has her take the book away.

The trunk scene is extraordinary in Shakespeare for its intimate setting in a young woman's bedroom after hours and for its depiction of a young woman reading in that intimate space. Just as striking is its insistence on the intensity of Innogen's reading. She says that she has been reading for three hours and can barely keep her eyes open. Apparently, Innogen has worn herself out wandering the realms of Ovid's mythological world. As she drifts off to sleep, it follows, her mind is steeped in tales of transformation, and her dreams will bear the influence of those stories. Because this is not a medieval dream vision, however, but rather a play incorporating dream vision conventions, Innogen's wonderful 'dream' will be, not a journey inward, as in *The Book of the Duchess*, but the more rough- and-tumble adventure of her ordeals in the action of the play: the invasion, by Giacomo, of the intimate, private space, her sojourn in the mountains, her part in the war between Rome and old Britain, and the restoration of her broken family. In other words, aspects of Chaucer's wonderful dream inform the action of Shakespeare's play and, in their new forms, menace the heroine at its center. In this way, Innogen will have to work through, not only her own considerable family and relationship issues, but the literary issues broached in *The Book of the Duchess* as well. In the case of the borrowed bedtime reading convention, that issue is the influence and reception of Ovid.

The most basic idea in the scholarly discussion of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare is that of Chaucer's darkness. In the classic studies of the subject, Ann Thompson's *Shakespeare's Chaucer* and E. Talbot Donaldson's *The Swan at the Well*, Chaucer's darkness is the common thread: Thompson's central thesis is that Shakespeare and other early modern dramatists thought of their medieval predecessor as a "serious romantic writer," rather than a comic, naturalistic one

(216). In his chapter on *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Donaldson explores Shakespeare's fixation and amplification of the "pessimism" and even the "horrors" of *The Knight's Tale* in that play (53, 56). The same principle, I want to suggest, applies to Shakespeare's adaptation, in *Cymbeline*, of the bedtime reading move he encountered in *The Book of the Duchess*: In several ways, Shakespeare intensifies the darkness and danger of the situation Chaucer describes as he modifies it to suit the vision of his play. The added complication here is that, where, for example, in the case of the literary adaptation of *Troilus and Criseyde* into *Troilus and Cressida*, only two writers, Chaucer and Shakespeare, are involved, and Shakespeare may be said to intensify the dark aspects of a single literary source by a single literary predecessor, adapting the *Book of the Duchess* bedtime story means bringing a third writer, Ovid, into the mix. In other words, in the trunk scene and in what falls out from it, Shakespeare darkens, as he adapts, not only Chaucer's poem *The Book of the Duchess*, but Chaucer's representation in that poem of what it is like to read Ovid and to be influenced by him, both in terms of the effect on one's psyche and on one's written fictions.

First, Shakespeare replaces the bedtime story out of Ovid that he found in *The Book of the Duchess* with a more disturbing one. The story that delivers Chaucer's dreamer from his insomnia and catalyzes his wonderful dream is the story, from *Metamorphoses* 11, of Ceyx and Alcyone. In the story, King Ceyx dies at sea and Alcyone, his wife, prays to Juno that she will reveal what has become of him to her in a dream. Juno tasks Morpheus with recovering Ceyx's body and reanimating it to give Alcyone the peace of mind she needs. This done, Alcyone laments and, in Ovid's version, attempts to commit suicide but is instead, at the last moment, transformed into a bird; in the version recounted by Chaucer's dreamer, the attempted suicide and the transformation are omitted, and Alcyone simply dies. Indeed, a reader who got the story from

Chaucer might be misled by this omission into a sentimental understanding of what happens, where Alcyone cannot live without her husband and dies of a broken heart. In any event, the theme of the sad story, of coming to terms with loss, is, particularly in Chaucer's rendering, appropriate for the dreamer's bereaved condition and for the consolation of Chaucer's patron, John of Gaunt, for whom the poem is said to be written, on the occasion of the untimely loss of his wife Blanche.

For Innogen's bedtime reading, Shakespeare replaces the Ceyx and Alcyone story with a more disturbing one: that of Tereus, Procne, and Philomela, from *Metamorphoses* 6. While Innogen sleeps, Giacomo tell us, with remarkable specificity and brevity, what she was reading before she closed her eyes: "She hath been reading late / The tale of Tereus. Here the leaf's turned down / Where Philomel gave up" (44-46). In other words, Innogen marked her page and set down her book at the point in the story when Philomela gives in to her attacker.

In Ovid's story, Procne misses her sister Philomela and asks her husband Tereus if she can visit. Tereus grants her request, sailing to Athens to pick Philomela up, but while he is there he is consumed with a burning passion for her; on the return trip, he brutally rapes her. When Philomela swears that she will proclaim what he has done, Tereus cuts out her tongue to keep her silent. A year goes by, and Philomela weaves a record of Tereus' crime into a tapestry and shows it to her sister. Procne, enraged, murders Itys, her son with Tereus, feeds some of his remains to him and throws his severed head right in his face. Tereus gives chase and is about to strike back when all three principal characters are transformed into birds. Ovid's rendering of the story is extremely graphic; Rolfe Humphries, the translator I depend on for this summary, includes it among a list of passages in the *Metamorphoses* he found difficult to translate because of what he terms Ovid's "sadistic streak" (viii).

Thus, Shakespeare replaces a story about female loss, lamentation, and dying for love with one about rape, mutilation, and, in response to those horrors, the female capacity for violent agency and gruesome revenge. In this, Shakespeare resists Chaucer's optimistic, productive representation of reading into Ovid. Borrowing the bedtime reading move from Chaucer, Shakespeare strips it of its tonic influence on the dreamer and amplifies both the danger facing the story's female lead and the level of agency afforded to her; this is true both inside the story, where Alcyone's lamentation turns to Philomela's righteous anger and Procne's rage and revenge, and also outside of it, in that Shakespeare has replaced Chaucer's passive male dreamer with a central female character who, after having the same experience he has in bed, albeit in darkened form, then must face the waking 'dream' of her dangerous ordeals throughout the play. We hear the bedtime story, moreover, not in the wonderstruck voice of the dreamer, as in Chaucer, but in the sinister voice of a dangerous intruder stalking Innogen's chamber as she sleeps.

Chaucer does not only mention the story the dreamer reads, but rather breaks off from the main narration of his poem to allow him to tell the tale of Ceyx and Alcyone in his own voice. For some two hundred lines, the bedtime story takes over for the story of the insomniac dreamer, immersing the reader in his transformative reading experience (lines 62-217). While it is not surprising that Alcyone's story has a profound effect on the dreamer, since they are both bereaved, the part of the story that touches him, at least consciously, is the mere existence of Morpheus. When he finishes the story, the dreamer resolves to make the god of sleep a shrine involving an elaborate bedroom set, and it is to this new form of worship that he attributes the end of his insomnia (245-67). But readers know that, unconsciously, the dreamer has been touched by Alcyone's grief and pitiful death, and that reading Ovid's story has provided him with a form of therapy, which the dream itself will extend and develop. Chaucer chooses a story by

Ovid designed to cure what ails the dreamer and ease his troubled mind. He omits Alcyone's attempted suicide, the story's most disturbing detail; he immerses the reader in the dreamer's literary therapy by retelling the bedtime story at length, ceding the progress of his own narrative to it. In every way, in other words, Chaucer's Ovid is a balm for the dreamer, and, in every way, Shakespeare turns Chaucer's presentation of Ovid on its head.

Where, in Chaucer, the bedtime story by Ovid is retold at length and its most disturbing element is removed, in Shakespeare the opposite is true: Giacomo is decidedly sketchy in the way in which he cases Innogen's room for details he can use against her and her husband, quickly noting "Such and such pictures" (2.2.25), "such and such; and the contents o'th'story" (27), wondering, about a detail on her body, if he should even write it down – "Why should I write this down that's riveted, / Screwed to my memory?" (43-44) – and quickly determining "I have enough" (46) and jumping back in the trunk. This treacherous economy of style extends to Giacomo's revelation of Innogen's bedtime story. He tells us only that she has been reading "The tale of Tereus" and that she marked her page "Where Philomel gave up" (45, 46). The bedtime story move that took up hundreds of lines in Chaucer here is dispensed with in a few short words. Where Chaucer has the dreamer remove the most disturbing detail of his chosen story, Shakespeare has Giacomo take us right to it in his, highlighting not only Philomel's rape but the moment within it when hope of escape is lost.

Here Shakespeare parodies Chaucer's sentimental representation of reading Ovid, reading Ovid on women, and of reading in general. Innogen's bedtime story is frightful, not comforting, and Giacomo's at-a-glance identification of it betrays what nasty lessons some male readers take from their Ovid, focusing on his salacious, sadistic streak, rather than his tender love stories, like that of Alcyone. Innogen's bedtime reading is a cautionary tale, rather than a gesture of empathic

consolation. To her, it says that the potential for male betrayal and sexual violence lurks even within the circle of trust of the family. For Giacomo, the Tereus figure in the analogy, it has something to say about the terrible vengeance women are capable of in the face of that masculine betrayal. As it relates to the rest of *Cymbeline*, 'the tale of Tereus,' has the opposite effect of that of Ceyx and Alcyone in *The Book of the Duchess*, and the short work Giacomo makes of it as he cases Innogen's room only exacerbates the distinction: a sketchy take on a serious story menaces the proceedings, reminding us of the disastrous potential the play's ostensible happy ending forestalls.

Shakespeare gives Innogen a darker bedtime story to read than the one he found in Chaucer, but, remarkably he does not dispense with the Ceyx and Alcyone story. After Innogen answers the dreamer's experience of falling deeply asleep after deeply reading into Ovid before bed, Giacomo's treacherous visit to Innogen's bedroom in the trunk scene answers the central event of the dreamer's bedtime story: Morpheus' visit to Alcyone's bedroom. Again, Shakespeare twists the material he borrows and makes it more disturbing: Where Morpheus visits Alcyone to end the anguish that she is going through, telling her what has become of her missing husband, Giacomo visits Innogen to mislead her about her missing husband – saying that he revels in his banishment and his estrangement from her – and then to use the information he *gathers* in her bedroom to mislead Posthumous about her, saying she succumbed to his seduction. In other words, Morpheus visits Alcyone's bedroom to ease the difficulty of her separation from her husband; Giacomo visits Innogen's bedroom to make Innogen's separation from Posthumous more difficult. The action that resolves the story in Ovid, and in Chaucer, agitates it in Shakespeare.

Andrzej Wicher argues that Shakespeare twists materials he borrowed from *The Book of the Duchess* in a similar way in *Hamlet*. Where Morpheus reanimates the body of the dead king Ceyx to ease Alcyone's grief and give her peace of mind, Hamlet's ghost visits his grieving son to increase his agitation and stir up, rather than resolve, the trouble in the story (138-43). In *Cymbeline*, the echo is even more pronounced because it takes place in the conspicuously atypical bedroom setting. In Chaucer's version of Ovid's story, Morpheus drags Ceyx's corpse from the depths of the ocean to Alcyone's room and stands it up 'right at the foot of her bed' (199), and speaks to her through it, urging her to let go of her sorrowful life because he is indeed dead and gone: "Let be your sorwful lyf" (202), he comforts her, "For, certes, swete, I am but dede" (204). While, as Wicher points out, Morpheus visits Alcyone to set things right, Chaucer does capture the grotesque element of this episode from Ovid's story. Juno tells Morpheus to 'creep into the body' (144), or possess it, and to 'do the body speak' (149), that is, use it like a ventriloquist uses a dummy. He is no swamp thing like the dead king Ceyx back from the bottom of the sea, but Giacomo matches the creepy, grotesque element in Morpheus' visit to Alcyone's bedroom at least as well as Hamlet's ghost.

Giacomo visits Innogen in Britain bearing misleading news of how her own lost husband fares, and with a strange bedroom stunt in mind. As is often the case, the term for Shakespeare's handling of the material he borrows from Chaucer here is dark reversal. Alcyone's husband sails away and dies. She asks a god to bring news of his life or death. Her prayers are answered, oddly, but faithfully. The strange man "at her beddes fet" (199), talk to her while she sleeps, really is her husband. Innogen's husband, by contrast, sails away and lives. He himself sends a messenger to her who he knows will not only lie to her but try to sleep with her too. Where Morpheus delivers honest word of Ceyx's death, Posthumous, who does indeed live, seems to die, to lose, that is, his

very identity, in Giacomo's false report of his reveling and carousing; he has, it seems, "forgot Britain" and "himself" as well (1.6.114). Where the gods conspire to deliver Alcyone's husband to the foot of her bed and, while she sleeps, give her the information she needs to understand what has happened to her husband and carry on, Giacomo waits in a trunk until Innogen falls asleep so that, speaking from the foot of *her* bed, he may gather information necessary to drive a wedge between her and her husband and make them understand each other *less*. Without sending anyone to the ocean floor, Shakespeare manages to turn the episode he found in Chaucer inside out. Where a creepy bedroom visit resolves Alcyone's situation, another one menaces Innogen's.

A common thread between Morpheus' and Giacomo's strange errands is the theme of impression, performance. Mercury is to instruct Morpheus to 'creep into the body' of Ceyx and 'do the body speak' the way he spoke when he was alive so that Alcyone will be convinced of the illusion: "Ryght as hyt was woned to doo / The whiles that his was alyve" (150-51). In the same way, but with worse intentions, Giacomo must "induce" Posthumous "to believe" (2.4.63) that he has been with Innogen, and his performance involves making inanimate things come to life – "the true life on't was" (76), he says of the tapestry in her bedroom, and the figures on the chimney, he says, were "likely to report themselves" (83) — and imitating Innogen's movement and speech. Presenting Posthumous with a bracelet he lifted off her arm as she slept, Giacomo brings her to life: "She stripped it from her arm. I see her yet. / Her pretty action did outsell her gift, / And yet enriched it too" (101-3). Again, the distinction is that Morpheus' performance, his impression of Ceyx, is meant to resolve the trouble in his story, Giacomo's to stir trouble up.

In the stories of both Ceyx and Alcyone and Procne and Philomela, the main characters are, in the end, transformed into birds; although both of our authors leave this part out of their dreamers' bedtime reading, it may have linked the stories in Shakespeare's mind. In most other

regards, the stories contrast. For Chaucer's beloved husband lost at sea, Shakespeare substitutes a maniac who crosses the sea on an errand that ends in the rape and mutilation of his wife's sister. *This*, we think, is the husband that should have drowned. Most important though is the distinction when it comes to the role and representation of women. Alcyone dies alone, as though of a broken heart; Philomela, by contrast, reveals her abuser and, conspiring with her sister, gets her revenge. Where Chaucer offers a love story with feminine grief and lamentation at its center, Shakespeare serves up a nasty tale of unspeakable violence against women and the vengeful feminine agency it awakens.

Storybook bedrooms. With the Ceyx and Alcyone interpolation, Chaucer floods the dreamer's bedroom scene with story. The tale takes over for the main narrative of *The Book of the Duchess*, flooding the text of the poem as its tonic influence floods the dreamer's psyche. When the dream itself begins, however, the dreamer finds himself in a *different* bedroom, this one also brimful of stories, only this time they are found on the walls and windows, rather than on the pages of a book (291-343). The dream begins at dawn on a clear May morning. Lying naked in bed, in a chamber ringing with the voices of many birds singing in harmony, the dreamer looks around and sees that the whole history of Troy is wrought into the windows and the entire *Romance of the Rose* is painted on the walls. Whether the stories the dreamer reports seeing are in the form of images or words is, in both cases, left ambiguous. He says that version of *The Romance of the Rose* that he sees on the wall includes "bothe" the book's "text and glose," as though he were seeing both lines of poetry and marginal notes interpreting their meaning (333). This would suggest a textual vision, but it may simply be a colorful way of driving home the idea that the walls are completely covered, in other words, that the decorations are elaborate,

and the room really is loaded with narrative: The windows feature not just some of but "hooly al" of the Troy story, the walls "al" of the *The Romance of the Rose* (326, 334). Indeed, the multimedia aspect of this ambiguous effect may be precisely the point: In dreams, such distinctions between forms of media can appear to blur; Chaucer leaves the reader with an unstable, uncertain image. What is clear is that this bedroom, in which the dream begins, is loaded with classic literary material.

Sunlight streams through the storybook windows, casting beams on the dreamer's bed, urging him out of the room and into his adventure (335-43). The image of sunlight suffusing a bedroom covered in scenes out of classic stories and driving our hero, in his dreaming mind, out into the clear, cloudless morning suggests that this sunlight is the light of literary inspiration. If, in the first bedroom, reading Ovid unlocks the door to the dream, then, here, basking in the glow of great texts of classical antiquity and medieval Europe allows the surreal adventure of the dream to commence. Both bedrooms are, in different ways, shot through with influential literary source material and, together, they amount to a multimedia representation of the would-be poet's writing mind, of the author's shaping literary influences at work on his burgeoning artistic consciousness. In this way, *The Book of the Duchess* shares the stage with the literary influences behind its own composition, integrating them into its own fiction, and represents the story of, not only an insomniac on the mend, but a literary mind at work. Indeed, in the final lines of the poem, the dreamer resolves to set his wonderful dream down in a poem (1330-33), a turn that seems strange when we think of the existential angst of the poem's early lines, but less so when we remember the powerful effect the dreamer's bedtime story had on him and the classic stories on the walls and windows of the sunlit bedroom in his dream.

Chaucer does not provide many details to help readers visualize the literary-themed interior design of his storybook bedroom. The basic implication is that the designs are elaborate: they cover 'wholly all the story of Troy' (326 my emphasis) and 'both' the 'text and gloss,' that is, the complete text and textual commentary, of *The Romance of the Rose* (333). Chaucer does, however, provide a brief list of figures from 'the story of Troy' that the dreamer remembers seeing wrought into the chamber windows:

For hooly al the story of Troye
Was in the glasyng ywrought thus,
Of Ector and of kyng Priamus,
Of Achilles and of kyng Lamedon,
And eke of Medea and of Jason,
Of Paris, Eleyne, and of Lavyne. (326-31)

On the surface, this is disappointing: A mere catalogue of characters, and a brief one at that, is, as the only explicit representation of such a wonder as the storybook bedroom, rather mundane. It is striking, however, that the list includes several characters not traditionally associated with 'the story of Troy.' Jason and Medea do not figure in the Troy story at all. Lavinia seems out of place too, particularly in the group she is assigned to in her line of verse: Paris and Helen are a pair, of course; but Lavinia only comes on the scene late in *The Aeneid*, long after Troy has fallen and a whole civilization after Paris and Helen have fallen out of the story, so she makes a conspicuously awkward third wheel in connection with them. Brief as it is, the unruly list of characters from the story of Troy that Chaucer provides, among so few other visual details of the storybook bedroom design, warrants our attention.

It is possible that the reason the list of characters is messed up is that the dreamer is not a very sophisticated reader. The traditional idea of the 'naïve dreamer' in Chaucer's early poems has to some extent fallen away, but the fact remains that the dreamer's rendition of the Ceyx and Alcyone story is missing important elements, such as the queen's suicide. In addition, the dreamer fixates – understandably, given his insomnia – on an ancillary aspect of the story, the idea that a god of sleep exists, rather than its ostensible point, the intensity of Alcyone's grievous longing and her coming to terms with the death of her husband. This, along with his famous inability to understand what the story the Black Knight tells him is about, would suggest that the unusual list of figures from the Troy story in the bedroom in the dreamer's mind is evidence of his misreading or misremembering of the classics.

I would suggest, however, that Chaucer injects a list of characters you would expect in connection with the story of Troy – Hector, Priam, Achilles, etc. – with ones you would not – Jason, Medea, and, at least where she is positioned, Lavinia – because he wants to draw attention to the evolution of the story from one author's hand to another. While they do not figure in the basic story of Troy, it is a commonplace that Jason and Medea prefigure Dido and Aeneas, in their disastrous marriage and subsequent abandonment. By slipping Jason and Medea onto the list, Chaucer suggests that, in the dreamer's mind, 'the story of Troy' includes precursor texts that influence the basic story. The awkward grouping, 'of Paris, Helen, and of Lavinia,' has a similar effect: Helen shares a line of verse with the woman who will play the part analogous to hers when the Trojan War is reimaged, in *The Aeneid*, as the war for Latium.

Indeed, the ultimate source for the scene in the dreamy bedroom is the third book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, in which Aeneas describes how the Trojan exiles had their course to Italy set right by a vision in a dream (205-38). Beset by hardships, waylaid and confounded in Crete,

Aeneas dreams that moonlight streams through his bedroom windows and casts its beams on the household gods of Troy: "I saw them / Plain in the pure light cast by the full moon / Edging its way into unshuttered windows" (209-11). The gods tell Aeneas that Hesperia, not Crete, is his destination, and, in this way, the Trojans right their destined course.

Chaucer swaps *ignarus* Aeneas for the naïve dreamer; for the hearth-gods of fallen Troy, he substitutes the paradigmatic influences on his own late medieval literary mind: the history of Troy and *The Romance of the Rose*. In Virgil's *Aeneid*, the vision of the moonlit dream clarifies the hero's direction and destination, illuminating the emblems of his life in the old world as it points him toward the new. This suggests that Rome will be a new Troy; the Trojan exiles' new life in the promised land will bear the influence, however divergently, of the destroyed old world. In literary terms, it is the swerve from Homeric to Virgilian epic, the *ur*-example of imitation with a difference, that is being charted here: Aeneas' trials are, in part, the trials Virgil faces in writing an epic in the great wake of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

By analogy, the vision, in *The Book of the Duchess*, of the sunlit storybook bedroom would suggest that, on the dreamer's quest for consolation and mental health, which takes on an explicitly literary dimension when, in the poem's final lines, he resolves to set down his wonderful dream in rhyme, the story of Troy and *The Romance of the Rose* are the emblems of the old world left behind that will inform the new one destined to be found and founded: Just as Aeneas will translate empire and give renewed glory to the old gods of Troy in the life he builds in the promised land of Italy, the new, vernacular English poet will translate the classic materials rattling around in his literary mind into new forms and subjects. True, these are conventional texts that any literary medieval writer would number among his influences, whose influence could be discerned across the entire canon of Chaucer's works; still, it is remarkable that Chaucer

would produce his own translation of *The Romance of the Rose* – it is unclear whether this translation or *The Book of the Duchess* came first, or whether Chaucer worked on them over the same period of time – and would go on to produce a Trojan epic, *Troilus and Criseyde*. The sunlit storybook bedroom in *The Book of the Duchess* puts the literary materials that Chaucer is working with or ambitious to work with on display, then, representing their still-latent influence on his writing mind.

The distinction wrought into this intertext is that, where Aeneas gets clear instructions from his dream that right his course and will guide him to the promised land, the dreamer gets a fuzzy message and wanders tentatively through the surreal adventure that that message commences. As we have seen, the characters from the story of Troy that are visible in the bedroom, which stand in for the Trojan hearth gods in Aeneas' dream, are all mixed up. In addition, the horn that summons the dreamer out of the storybook bedroom, while it may be "wonder lowde," is unsure of itself: the dreamer says, "I herde an hunte blowe / T'assay hys horn and for to knowe / Whether hyt were clere or hors of soun" (344, 345-47). Aimlessly, the dreamer allows a stray dog to lead him away from Augustus Caesar's hunting party, which had seemed to be the main event of his dream (387-415). The implication is that the influence of the classics on the burgeoning vernacular English poet is, while powerful, oblique, hard to pin down, a wonder one wanders after rather than a clear epic mandate.

Shakespeare responds to the literary self-presentation that Chaucer wrote into the storybook bedroom in *The Book of the Duchess* in the lines Giacomo speaks as he stalks around Innogen's bedroom while she sleeps, and in his description, two scenes later, of the interior

design of her bedroom.³ At this point, the two texts would seem to diverge. When the dreamer falls asleep after his bedtime story out of Ovid, readers get direct access to his dream; the storybook bedroom is all in his mind. In Innogen's case, by contrast, the storybook bedroom that she inhabits, after falling asleep reading Ovid, is her real bedroom in waking life, so it might seem strained to suggest that one episode is based on, and responding to, the other. No one jumps out of a trunk in *The Book of the Duchess*. There is no heavenly birdsong in Innogen's bedroom.

What is happening here, however, is that Shakespeare is borrowing a dream vision convention and repurposing it for dramatic effect. In *Shakespeare's Living Art*, Rosalie Colie identified the technique, in other plays, with other connections, and described it as Shakespeare's habitual "trick of making verbal convention part of the scene" (145); this technique allows Shakespeare to crack open old literary patterns and clichés and reform them, making them new (11). Such is the case with Shakespeare's answer, in Innogen's bedroom, to the storybook bedroom in *The Book of the Duchess*. Because *Cymbeline* is a play performed on the stage, the action in it must be externalized; it would be difficult for the audience to peer directly into Innogen's mind, except, perhaps, in a stunt or an outlandish kind of scene. Shakespeare has Giacomo perform the function of the dream vision in Chaucer in the textual excess of his speeches in Innogen's room and his description of it later – his literary allusions and his vivid *ekphrases*. Like the dreamer, Innogen falls asleep on her copy of Ovid, but the work of

³ For a useful recent account of everything going on in Innogen's bedroom, see Barret. The custom is to interpret the figures that Giacomo reports seeing as "imaginative possibilities" (Burrow 126) that linger alongside the story of the play; see Burrow 123-26 and Barret. For the ethical dimension of these images, see Bate 215-19 and Barret; Bate sees the audience as complicit in Giacomo's deed and notings (216, 219).

representing the stew of literary influences that feed her ordeals in the story falls to another character, since the style of narration used in Chaucer is not fit for the stage.⁴

Where in Chaucer the storybook bedroom is filled with the ur-text of classical antiquity, the story of Troy, and the ur-text of medieval Europe, *The Romance of the Rose*, Shakespeare loads Innogen's bedroom mostly with allusions to his own work, with some Ovidian references thrown in for good measure. As such, he follows Chaucer in the sense that he uses the storybook bedroom to put his literary influences on display: Ovid is one, his own, earlier work is another, and Chaucer, who provides the model for the entire scenario, is a third. Shakespeare diverges from the model, however, in that where Chaucer's storybook room puts literary materials he will go on to work with on display, Shakespeare's looks at works in his rearview mirror. What is, in Chaucer, a portrait of the artist as a young man becomes, in Shakespeare, a portrait of the artist feeling out his late style.

The first figure that matters in the crowd in Innogen's bedroom is that out-of-place servant Helen who takes away the book Innogen is reading and marks her place in the story. There is no obvious reason for this figure to exist or to have a name as resonant in classical literature as Helen: She is, first, an analogous figure to the unnamed servant that brings the dreamer 'a romance' to read in *The Book of the Duchess*; she helps to establish the basic echo. In addition, her famous name reminds us of the central female figure in the story of Troy. For Helen to serve Innogen, to literally carry a book for her and mark her place in the story, suggests that Shakespeare is drawing attention to the evolution of the place of the female figure in the kind of

⁴ For a powerful and different take on this scene, see Wall-Randell, esp. 50-52, 69-70. She writes, "...the impression is almost created that [Giacomo] is actually coming out of the book she has just laid aside, stepping out of the story of rape. The suggestion is that Imogen has somehow opened her private space to sexual invaders by reading—by going to bed with—such a salacious book as Ovid" (52).

story he is telling. In the same way that Chaucer's strange line 'Of Paris, Helen, and of Lavinia,' establishes an awkward grouping that forces Paris and Helen to sit beside the figure who is like Helen in the next iteration of the story, the servant Helen in Innogen's bedroom is there to make us remember a female figure who prefigures Innogen and highlight the distinction between her place in her story and Innogen's in hers. Shakespeare hacks into the way that Homer passes the epic mantle onto Virgil, asserting himself into the epic lineage, with Chaucer as mediator, and the female lead the focus.⁵

Next up is Giacomo's channeling of the tyrant Tarquin in Innogen's bedroom: In addition to bringing another classical figure into the mix in the manner of Chaucer's storybook bedroom, Giacomo's Tarquin reference is an allusion to earlier Shakespeare as well in that it recalls the dagger speech in *Macbeth*. "Our Tarquin thus / Did softly press the rushes ere he wakened / The chastity he wounded" (2.2.12-14), Giacomo says, imagining himself walking in the shoes of a famous rapist as he cases Innogen's bedroom for details that he can use to ensnare Posthumous. The effect of these lines is chilling: Giacomo comes off as a smooth criminal even as he intensifies the impression that Innogen is in terrible danger. In the dagger speech, after a cluster of lines describing the lateness of the hour, how deeply all are asleep, and so on, which are also similar to lines Giacomo deploys, *Macbeth* imagines that he moves toward his dark design "with Tarquin's ravishing strides" (2.155), as though he were on his way to rape someone, rather than murder them.

The trunk scene, Shakespeare suggests, is somehow analogous to the scenes in *Macbeth's* castle in the earlier play. But because no murder takes place here the impression is that this story

⁵ On Shakespeare's use of the name Helen in other plays, and his attempt to "liberate" (119) that name from its powerful negative associations, with implications for issues of rape and consent, see chapter 3 in Maguire.

could have been like the story told in *Macbeth*, that is, could have been tragic, but instead suspends tragic potential in the dreamlike excesses of Giacomo's lines of speech, delivered as he moves around the drowsy setting of a dark bedroom after hours with a sleeping figure in it. In other words, in the same way that the figure of Helen gives way to the figure of Innogen, while remaining on stage as though to highlight the evolution of the female figure in a classical story and the distinction between these two as that kind of figure, Giacomo's channeling of Tarquin and, by extension, *Macbeth*, highlights the passing of Shakespeare's tragic mode and the arrival of another. Innogen is mostly unlike Duncan, of course, and it is striking that she is now the center of this story; on the other hand, Posthumous will soon instruct Pisanio to murder her, so, while Giacomo is not there to kill her, her position *is* like Duncan's in a way. By the same token, Giacomo, in *Macbeth*'s position, is now a supporting, rather than a lead, character. Of course, Innogen will not die like Duncan does in *Macbeth*; the story will have to sidestep tragic developments and resolve itself in another way.

Shakespeare looks back at his tragic mode in the reference to Tarquin and allusion to *Macbeth*; with Giacomo's ekphrastic description of the tapestry in Innogen's room, he looks back on an earlier Roman play. As a decoration on the wall, the tapestry calls back to the walls and windows of the storybook room in *The Book of the Duchess*, but again, Shakespeare is conjuring the image of his own influence on himself in order to highlight the swerve from tragic and now more straightforward Roman plays to the experimental new form of the late plays and his emerging late style.

Giacomo tells Posthumous that he saw a silk and silver tapestry hanging in Innogen's room, which told "the story" (2.4.69) of "Proud Cleopatra when she met her Roman" (70). He sets the scene by a river: "Cydnus swelled above the banks, or for / The press of boats or pride"

(71-72). In Giacomo's mind, the available analogy is probably Antony and Cleopatra to Innogen and himself; in this analogy, he is the dashing Roman lover abroad, she the foreign royal beloved. For readers, by contrast, the principle association is less Antony and Cleopatra as historical figures, more *Antony and Cleopatra*, the Roman play by Shakespeare. Giacomo conjures an image of Cleopatra on the Cydnus which calls back to Enobarbus' famous description in that play – "The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne, / Burned on the water" (2.2.196-97) and so on to the end of the famous speech. Shakespeare lingers for a moment on the model provided by one of his own, earlier plays in order to highlight the distinction between it and the one that he is writing and we are reading now. What was the central relationship in *Antony and Cleopatra*, he with her, Rome with Egypt, is refigured in *Cymbeline*, in the form of Giacomo's stalking of Innogen, as the force that menaces another kind of relationship, another kind of story: here it is Innogen's relationship with Posthumous that is central, the *agon* between ancient Rome and old Britain that braces the action of the new form of Roman play.

In the storybook bedroom in *The Book of the Duchess*, Chaucer puts his literary influences on display and represents, in the form of a sunlit bedroom full of these influences, the literary materials that are rattling around in his mind and which he will go on to use in his own works. He translates *The Romance of the Rose*, but, perhaps more importantly, the influence of that text pervades his entire *oeuvre*; the story of Troy is the foundation of his *Troilus and Criseyde*. In Innogen's bedroom, Shakespeare puts his literary influences on display as well. In addition to the story of Antony and Cleopatra, Giacomo draws for us an image of "Chaste Dian bathing" (82) on the chimney mantelpiece, presumably awaiting Acteon's fateful interruption. Here the analogy is Ovidian: Shakespeare calls back to the tale of Acteon in *Metamorphoses* 3 to

conjure Ovid's figures to the literary menagerie of Innogen's room and to suggest that Giacomo, the Acteon figure in this analogy, is in danger as well.

The most important divergence from Chaucer's storybook room in Innogen's bedroom is that Shakespeare includes both Chaucer and himself among the influences on display – he includes Chaucer in that the episode is borrowed from him, and himself in the allusions to *Macbeth* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. Clearly, at the beginning of his writing career, Chaucer saw himself as a wanderer of a burgeoning literary consciousness, guided, however dimly, by the lights of Augustan literary authority and the outsize influence of *The Romance of the Rose*. What is striking about Shakespeare's divergent imitation, in *Cymbeline*, of the storybook bedroom in *The Book of the Duchess*, is that Shakespeare wants to do the sensibility-defining work of Chaucer's literary education while in the full bloom of his artistic maturity. The allusions in the storybook bedroom to *Macbeth* and *Antony and Cleopatra* suggest that, in the composition of *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare subsumes both his tragic and Roman-historical modes into a new, experimental dramatic form. The allusion of the storybook bedroom to the dream vision convention and, particularly, the iteration of that convention in *The Book of the Duchess*, suggests that the definition of Shakespeare's late style requires a reckoning with the influence and authority of both classical, Augustan literature, and of Chaucer.

The storybook bedroom in *The Book of the Duchess* serves as a base station for the dreamer's surreal adventure in the poem. After he leaves it, he rides along for a time with a hunting party led by Augustus Caesar before arriving at the main episode of his wonderful dream: his encounter with the Black Knight. Lying in bed, admiring the storybook walls and windows,

the dreamer hears a horn and, suddenly horseback somehow, rides right out of his bedroom base station and into a field. Overtaking a great hunting party, the dreamer learns that it is led by Augustus Caesar, "th'emperour Octovyen," and that the man himself is nearby (368). The dreamer does not get to meet the emperor, however; soon the hounds have lost the scent they are tracking and the hunt loses steam: "The houndes had overshote hym alle / And were on a defaute yfalle" (383-84).

Alone again and down from his horse, the dreamer gets a visit from a stray dog, the famous "whelp" (389), who leads him deeper into the dream. They walk through an idyllic wilderness with a healing, therapeutic vibe to it: You can tell, by how green everything is (414), that this landscape has forgotten 'the poverty' (410) and 'sorrows' that winter 'made it suffer' (412). This region of his mind, in other words, is able to heal and move on in the way the dreamer could not when we met him at the beginning of the poem. The landscape is thick with enormous trees and, under one of them, the dreamer finds the Black Knight: 'a man in black' (445), "a wonder wel-farynge knyght" (452), about twenty-four years old (455); the knight does not see him, though, because his head is hanging down (460-61). Remaining unseen, the dreamer takes note of the Black Knight's sorrowful look and listens in while he recites a tuneless song about a lost beloved lady. A long conversation between the dreamer and the Black Knight ensues in which the dreamer seems consistently to misapprehend what the knight is saying and to fail to fathom the depth of his loss. 'I have lost more than you know,' becomes the Black Knight's refrain: "I have lost more than thow wenest" (744).

In *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare reverses the arrangement he found in Chaucer: Where, in *The Book of the Duchess*, the dreamer wanders out of a hunting party led by Augustus Caesar and into the company of an English knight in the idyllic wilderness of his dream, Innogen stumbles

out of the company of nobles of old Britain – a banished lord and two kidnapped princes – mislaid for a time in an idyllic mountain wilderness in Wales, and, as the chance of war, rather than the logic of dream, has brought Romans into this part of the world, into the emperor's diplomatic party and the service of Caius Lucius, a Roman general and Augustus' ambassador to Cymbeline and Britain. In addition to suggesting the source of a significant part of the design of Shakespeare's play, this reversal of the arrangement in Chaucer's poem is significant in that it involves the Augustan dimension in the poem in the play's conclusion. In Chaucer, the dreamer wanders away from Augustan authority in a way that suggests a tenuous, spectral connection; in Shakespeare, by contrast, the unraveling of the plot depends on sorting out the Roman dimension of the play.

There are obvious differences between brave Belarius and the glum Black Knight, but they share an important quality: Both have lost the one they love to a turn of Fortune's wheel; the Black Knight has lost his lady, Belarius his lord. After an initial rejection, the Black Knight earns his lady's "mercy" (1270) and lives "ful many a yere" (1296) with her in mutual joy. She dies, however, leaving the knight in his present state of melancholy. The Black Knight describes the death of his lady as a chess game he lost to Fortune (616-69) and takes several opportunities to curse that fickle force of nature, calling her a 'false thief' (650) and a 'perverse traitress' (813). Thus Fortune turns her 'false wheel' (644), which is 'nothing stable' (645). Like the knight, Belarius, Guiderius, and Arveragus are, out in their wild environs, bereft. Before "losing" their friend Fidele, who is really Innogen in disguise, the kidnapped princes lost Euriphile, Belarius' companion, who nursed them and pretended to be their mother. Every day they "do honor to her grave" (3.3.105).

But a better analogue for the Black Knight's loss of his beloved lady to Fortune is Belarius' fall from grace at Cymbeline's court. "Cymbeline loved me," he says (3.3.58); Guiderius reacts to the story of his downfall with a phrase that conjures both the fickle wheel of Fortune and the changing heart of the Black Knight's lady: "Uncertain favor!" (64). While he chooses a different metaphor than the game of chess – namely, that of a lush and healthy tree stripped bare by a storm or, perhaps, by vandals – Belarius' account of his ruination has the same sudden, arbitrary quality as the Black Knight's.

Then was I as a tree
Whose boughs did bend with fruit; but in one night,
A storm or robbery, call it what you will,
Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my leaves,
And left me bare to weather. (60-64)

The scene maintains the medieval key throughout. Belarius says, of the court, its "top to climb / Is certain falling," like the wheel of Fortune (47-48). His attitude toward his former life as a courtier and a soldier is that of the Boethian man idealized in Chaucer's poem "Truth," retiring from the hateful press of the court to dwell with truth, serve God, and be happy with what little you have. "Oh, this life / Is nobler than attending for a check, / Richer than doing nothing for a bauble," he says, preferring his home in a mountain cave and his daily sport hunting with Guiderius and Arviragus to the shallow, decadent comforts of his former life (21-22). Though Belarius, along with the princes, stands in for the Black Knight in the intertext between *The Book of the Duchess* and *Cymbeline*, and the hunting party led by Caesar Augustus in Chaucer's poem changes into a diplomatic one in Shakespeare's play, it is striking how, in this scene where we are first introduced to the mislaid mountaineers, a hunting sound initiates this new strain within

the story. Where, in the dream, the dreamer is driven out of his bedroom and into the field by a hunting sound – "Me thogt I herde an hunte blowe" (345) – Belarius comes on the scene with a similar sound. After he argues with the princes over the rightness of his reclusive worldview and explains to the audience who they are and how they came to live with him in the mountains, sounds of hunting are heard (98sd), and he exclaims, "Hark! The game is roused!" (98) and "The game is up" (107). As Shakespeare's adapted version of Chaucer's Black Knight, Belarius has lost the one he loved to Fortune's uncertain favor. As Shakespeare's take on the main central arrangement of *The Book of the Duchess*, in which a hunt sweeps us into a new dimension of the fiction, the ordeal in the mountains of Wales is heralded by hunting sounds.

Andrzej Wicher has demonstrated that Shakespeare drew on the figure of the Black Knight in his characterization of Hamlet. In Wicher's reading, Hamlet's uncertain reliance on his father's ghost is an early modern twist on the conventions of medieval ghost stories, a genre he extends to include Chaucer's dream visions, in which a supernatural guide helps the protagonist get through a crisis: Hamlet's unsteady reliance on the ghost is like the dreamer's on the Black Knight or, in *The House of Fame*, Geoffrey's on the eagle. In this light, the Black Knight's mourning melancholy prefigures Hamlet's dark attitude at the beginning of the play as well as the antic disposition he puts on as the story unfolds. The dreamer's inability to understand what the Black Knight is saying and to fathom the depths of his grief prefigures the struggle to pluck out the heart of Hamlet's mystery (148-50).

My aim is to suggest another analogue in Shakespeare for the dreamer's encounter with the Black Knight: Innogen's encounter, in the mountain wilderness of Wales, with Belarius, a banished lord going, in his exile, by the name Morgan, and her two long-lost brothers, Guiderius and Arviragus, whom Belarius has kidnapped and taken to calling Polydore and Cadwal. To start,

both encounters involve tuneless songs for lost beloved ladies. Shakespeare diverges from the Black Knight's lament, however, by having Guiderius and Arviragus intone their obsequies for a lady they have mistaken for a boy and who is, moreover, not actually dead. Another twist is that, where, in the Black Knight's lament, the focus is on the effect the lady's death has on the speaker of the poem, in the song of Guiderius and Arviragus, the focus is on the lost beloved him- or herself, and how they need not fear the difficulties of the world any longer: In other words, Shakespeare shifts the focus from one of inward lamentation to one of outward consolation. It can be said then, that, in *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare transposes the grim adaptation of the Black Knight he did in *Hamlet*, fashioning the prince's antic disposition, according to Wicher, out of Chaucer's characterization of the dark knight, into a different, brighter key; while Belarius, in his exile, recalls the Black Knight's dark side, these princes, unlike brooding Hamlets, remix his tuneless songs of lamentation as happier elegies.

Before engaging with the Black Knight directly, the dreamer listens to him recite a few lines of verse. He says that the Black Knight delivered these lines with 'a deadly sorrowful sound' (462) and that, though he spoke, rather than sang them, they made up a kind of song, but one without a melody: "He *sayd* a lay, a maner song, / Withoute noote, withoute song" (471-2 emphasis added). The dreamer 'rehearses' (474) the Black Knight's lament in full (475-86); "I have of sorwe so gret won" (475), it goes, because, "my lady bryght, / Which I have loved with al my myght, / Is fro me ded and ys agoon" (477-79). Notice how the ostensible subject of the poem, the lost lady, is always framed by her loss's effect on the speaker: my lady, which I have loved, with all my might, is, in a somewhat weird phrase, *from me* dead and gone. The poem continues in this vein, lamenting the death of the beloved lady, but emphasizing the effect that death has on the condition of the poem's speaker: He has lost all his joy and he wishes death had

taken him too (476, 481-83). By no means unusual by the standards of late medieval love poetry, the inward lamentation of the Black Knight's verses contrasts strikingly from the outward consolation of the song of Guiderius and Arviragus for their dead boy Fidele, who is, of course, not actually dead, a boy, or Fidele.

When they find their beloved Fidele and mistake him for dead, Guiderius and Arviragus stop themselves from grieving in the drawn-out manner of the Black Knight. "Let us bury him," says Guiderius, "and not protract with admiration what / Is now due debt. To th' grave!" (4.2.232-34). Cutting off Arviragus' "wench-like words" (231) about strewing Fidele's grave with flowers (219-29), Guiderius suggests they get on with it and bury the boy in the hallowed spot where they buried their mother; when Arviragus then suggests that they "sing him to th' ground" (237) like they did her, Guiderius says that he will not be able, and they resolve to "speak it then," instead (243). The 'unmanly grief' of the Black Knight's drawn-out elegy is corrected here and reimagined as a brisk, bracing ceremony; his tuneless "maner song" is reimagined in the spoken song of the lost princes for Fidele.

The inward lamentation of the Black Knight's verses – "I have of sorwe so gret won" – is corrected as well, reimagined in the rustic outward consolation of the princes' famous spoken song: "Fear no more the heat o'th' sun, / Nor the furious winter's rages" (4.2.259-60). The Black Knight's me-approach, if you will, is replaced with the princes' you-approach. Where, in Chaucer, the focus is on the knight's admiration for the lady – she is 'bright' (477), 'sweet' (483), 'so fair, so fresh, so free' (484), and in 'goodness' unequaled (486) – and the theme of the poem is his own sorrow, in Shakespeare Arviragus' language of admiration is shut down and, in its place, we find the outward theme, addressed to the lost beloved, of 'fear no more;' furthermore, for the predominantly abstract, emotional character of Chaucer's lines, with their references to sorrow,

joy, and goodness, Shakespeare substitutes an array of concrete imagery and references: the heat of the sun, the 'rages' of winter, going home after a long day's work, getting paid (261-62), and so on. Everything points to Shakespeare's alteration of the protracted courtly solipsism of the Black Knight's lamentation into a hardier, more down-to-earth style of mourning befitting the tribute of princes mislaid in the mountain wilderness. The shift from inward lamentation to outward consolation, from the abstract and, perhaps, overly emotional to the vivid and concrete betrays Shakespeare's effort to vie with Chaucer as a poet in the elegiac mode.

An obvious objection to what I am arguing here is that the Black Knight from *The Book of the Duchess*, who is a single melancholy figure sitting under an oak tree in a dream, is an incongruous analogue for Shakespeare's trio of cave-dwelling mountaineers in Wales. While I acknowledge this incongruity, I want to suggest that it makes the mountain scenes in *Cymbeline* more, not less Chaucerian. In *The Book of the Duchess*, the Black Knight serves as the supernatural guide, conventional in medieval ghost stories and dream visions, that helps the protagonist resolve a crisis. That crisis, remember, is the dreamer's despair stemming from his debilitating insomnia; there is, moreover, a literary dimension to the resolving of this crisis in that the extraordinary dream that is described in the poem is brought about by a consciousness-expanding bedtime reading experience and results in, not only a new lease on life for the dreamer, but a newfound impulse to write: To paraphrase his parting words in the poem, so curious was his dream that he resolves to put in the time necessary to set it down in rhyme the best he can (1330-34).

In *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare replaces the figure of the crisis-resolving guide, a role filled in *The Book of the Duchess* by the Black Knight, with a Chaucerian tableau. When we encounter the triangle of Guiderius (aka Polydore), Arviragus (aka Cadwal), and Innogen (aka Fidele), we

are meant to remember the contending love triangles of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. It is well known that Arviragus, give or take a letter, is a name that occurs in both Holinshed's *Chronicles* and Chaucer's Franklin's Tale, both of which are established sources for *Cymbeline*, and that Innogen sounds a little like Dorigen, the female part of the Franklin's Tale love triangle. What has not been acknowledged, however, is that the Franklin's Tale triangle depends, in the intertextual Canterbury storytelling competition, on the foundational one in The Knight's Tale and that, in the mountain wilderness of *Cymbeline*, that triangle is also in play.

In *Shakespeare's Troy*, Heather James argues that Guiderius (Polydore) and Arviragus (Cadwal) are *Cymbeline's* answer to Romulus and Remus. In this epic Roman fantasia, the British Aeneas, Posthumous Leonatus, is not destined to found and rule a nation, but rather to reconcile with his estranged wife; it falls, in the end, to a pair of noble, rough-and-tumble boys, raised in the wild, to set the nation right (179-85). While I do not dispute James's reading, I want to propose another layer of intertextual analogy for the two princes: They are also *Cymbeline's* answer to Palamon and Arcite from The Knight's Tale. In brief, Chaucer's pair of knights are imprisoned without hope of release, and they endure their captivity for years. Both knights fall in love at first sight with Emelye, the younger sister of the queen, when they see her walking in a garden from their window of their prison cell. When one of the knights, Arcite, is unexpectedly released, he is banished from the kingdom, and The Knight invites readers to think about which of the two knights in his story is worse off, Palamon, who is stuck in prison but still able to see Emelye from his cell, or Arcite, who is now free, but banished from her sight.

Shakespeare reimagines this familiar situation in Chaucer in his depiction of the lives of Cadwal and Polydore in the mountains of Wales. He answers the Knight's Tale prison cell with the cave of Belarius, in which, although they are free to hunt and roam the mountainsides, the

two princes feel they are incarcerated. The quiet, rustic life in the cave that Belarius extols is, to Guiderius, "A cell of ignorance," in which "traveling" is only possible "abed," that is, in dreams (3.3.32), and "a prison for a debtor that dares not / To stride a limit" (33-34), or step over the line. Arviragus says that he and his brother are living like caged beasts (39-44). Amid many obvious differences between the pair of knights in Chaucer and the pair of princes in Shakespeare, there is, then, an important point of connection in their long confinement together.

Into this imprisonment in the wilderness wanders a new Emelye in the form of Innogen disguised as a boy and going by the name Fidele. As in Chaucer, both prisoners are immediately smitten, this time to comedic effect, because of Innogen's disguise. "Were you a woman, youth," says Guiderius, "I should woo hard but be your groom in honesty, / Ay, bid for you as I'd buy" (3.6.66, 67-68); in other words, if you were a woman, I would court you intensely but do right by your value with a marriage proposal in the end. Arviragus is attracted to Fidele too, but he will settle for a brother, since a lover is not in the cards: he says, "I'll mak't my comfort / He is a man, I'll love him as my brother" (68-69). Of course, part of the fun in the situation here is that, unlike in *The Knight's Tale*, the love triangle is made up of siblings who do not realize that they are related, but the basic situation of two prisoners who love a late-arriving lady at first sight is clearly a playful adaptation of Chaucer's arrangement.

I am not suggesting, in pointing this analogy out, that we should explore the intertext between *Cymbeline* and *The Knight's Tale*. As I say above, Shakespeare replaces the crisis-resolving guide figure played, in *The Book of the Duchess*, by the Black Knight, with the household of Belarius, which includes the two princes, who I am now suggesting are Chaucerian analogues in an additional way. Where, in *The Book of the Duchess*, Augustus' hunting party gives way to the Black Knight, as though the classical influence on the dreamer's writing mind

were only the background noise behind the medieval English main event, in Shakespeare, the two forces go to war, and the medieval strain has become, more particularly, Chaucerian. Guiderius and Arviragus save the day, defending Cymbeline and capturing Lucius and Giacomo, which suggests that, amid the sorting out of various losers and winners in the play's elaborate final scene, the influence of Chaucer has established supremacy in Shakespeare's literary consciousness, though by no means to the exclusion of the classical, Augustan.

At the end of *The Book of the Duchess*, the dreamer, either feigning ignorance or because he really is extremely dense, asks the Black Knight what has become of his beloved lady. Now the courtly language falls away and the plain truth rings out that, "She ys ded" (1309). At that fateful word, the hunting horn is heard again: "They gan to strake forth; al was doon, / For that tyme, the hert-huntyng" (1312-13). Augustus' hunt is winding down, in other words, as is the exploration of the heart of the dreamer in the poem. The parting image, of "this kyng" (1314) riding home to a white-walled "long castle" (1318) is, in addition to an acknowledged reference to John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, an image that juxtaposes a lone medieval English rider with the great host of hunters and hunting animals representing Augustan Rome. As the hunt winds down and the king rides home, then, a medieval emblem coexists with a classical one.

Where, in *The Book of the Duchess*, Augustus' hunting party, which had seemingly left the scene to make room for the Black Knight, reasserts itself in the end and shares the stage with him, in *The Knight's Tale*, the two knights must come before their king and former prisoner, Theseus, to settle both their fortunes and the tangled threads of Chaucer's story. Following an elaborate tournament of arms in which both knights acquit themselves well, Palamon ends up with Emelye in a surprising way: *Although the victor* in the tournament, Arcite is thrown from his horse and mortally hurt; before he dies it is decided that Emelye's hand will fall to Palamon.

It is Theseus, however, who dominates the end of the poem. He arranges the marriage between Palamon and Emelye, and he delivers a long quasi-Boethian sermon on the subject on the nature of existence – the order and coherence of the cosmos, the inevitability of death, and so on (2987-3074). As the resident man of great authority in *The Knight's Tale*, Theseus comforts those assembled after Arcite's death, ties up the story's romantic loose end, and asserts – whether convincingly or not is for each reader to decide – that all that has transpired is only natural.

The final scene in *Cymbeline* resolves not only the various plot strands affecting the characters in the story but also the drama of competing literary influences this chapter has been tracing. The scene is like the end of *The Knight's Tale* in that the two princes – who are, incidentally, knighted in the scene, in the king's ignorance of their true identities (see 5.6.19-22) – and the woman, Innogen, with whom they fell in love at first sight, although they thought she was a boy, are, after a battle, brought before the king for sorting out. *Cymbeline's* savvy diplomatic surprise at the end of the scene – "Although the victor, we submit to Caesar / And to the Roman empire" (5.6.460-61) – is also indebted to *The Knight's Tale*, I think: It is the answer, on a national scale, to Arcite's victory in the tournament of arms, which is coupled with his subsequent letting go of his claim on Emelye; although the victor, he gives up what he gained to his adversary. Guiderius and Arviragus inherit the kingdom of *Cymbeline*, which is to say that Shakespeare's born-again versions of the knights from *The Knight's Tale* emerge from a hiding spot in the wilderness to prove kings of the realm. As avatars of Chaucerian influence amid the competing literary influences of *Cymbeline*, the two princes overcome obscurity and battle down the forces of Rome and assert their supremacy, however qualified. *Although the victor, we submit.*

The final scene in *Cymbeline* is also like the end of *The Book of the Duchess* in that the dreamer, the knightly helper(s) in the wilderness, and the representative of Caesar Augustus – for Chaucer, the "kyng" of a "long castel," for Shakespeare, Caius Lucius – reconvene. The difference is that where, in Chaucer, classical and medieval images juxtapose themselves with no clear sense of resolution or reflection on that juxtaposition, in Shakespeare there are winners, losers, and a sense of order, however manic, among these reunited figures in the end. Caius Lucius, the representative of a group headed by Augustus into which the dreamer is conscripted, is seemingly put down – when he asks Innogen to intervene on his behalf and save his life, she has, catching sight of Giacomo, bigger fish to fry, and says that his life "Must shuffle for itself" (5.6.104) – before being elevated again by the king's paradoxical final diplomatic gesture. Guiderius and Arviragus inherit the kingdom; Belarius, who, with the two princes, makes up the Chaucerian helper in the wilderness figure, is, after long banishment, restored, like Chaucer in the drama of literary influences, to his rightful position and dignity. Innogen, as the reimagined dreamer figure from *The Book of the Duchess*, recovers the 'one' thing that was lost when she fell into the deep and troubled sleep that preceded her surreal adventure, her husband Posthumous.

CHAPTER 5: *CYMBELINE'S ANSWER TO THE HOUSE OF FAME*

In its central conflict of a marriage threatened by estrangement and the machinations of a wily rival, its use of the rash wager motif, and its theme of transcendent forgiveness, *Cymbeline* takes its cues from The Franklin's Tale. But the play reaches back to Chaucer in other ways too: It is loaded with allusions to Chaucer's dream visions, particularly *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*. In the previous chapter, I argued that, in *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare vies with Chaucer as a rival poet under the influence of Augustan literature by appropriating meta-poetic moves from *The Book of the Duchess* and embedding them, in twisted new forms, in the design of his play. The present chapter turns to *The House of Fame* and argues that allusions to *that* poem in *Cymbeline* mediate the intertext between the play and Virgil's *Aeneid*. In this, I suggest, the issue Shakespeare diverges from Chaucer's example most sharply on is the representation of women. As rival adapters of Virgil, Chaucer and Shakespeare vie in their efforts to champion the female element of their masculine epic source material: Where Chaucer lavishes sympathy on Dido for the mistreatment she suffers, Shakespeare resists this arguably sentimental reading and carves out a space for heroic female agency in his divergent adaptation of Virgil. Innogen, the Dido figure of Shakespeare's new English adaption of *The Aeneid*, has more to offer than lamentation, more to do than just complain. In *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare crafts a tougher, more active way to reimagine Virgilian source material around a female lead than the model he found in Chaucer, and he highlights the divergence from his rival adapter in his allusions to the dream visions.

Readers of Chaucer know that he kicks off the dream in *The House of Fame* with an abridged, idiosyncratic translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and scholars – particularly Patricia Parker and Heather James – have demonstrated that *Cymbeline* is itself also a divergent adaption of the Roman epic, one suited, in its alterations to its literary source, to the social and political climate of the Jacobean era. What has not received enough attention is the fact that the two projects are connected: in *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare frames his divergent imitation of Virgilian epic as an answer to Chaucer's in *The House of Fame*.

When his dream begins, Geoffrey, the narrator and protagonist of Chaucer's poem, finds himself in a temple and notices the text of *The Aeneid*, rendered in irreverent Middle English tetrameter couplets, written on the temple wall. At this point, Chaucer hits pause on Geoffrey's own story and has him retell the epic in its entirety in his own answerable style. Geoffrey's *Aeneid* clocks in at just over three hundred lines (140-467), so either the text in the temple is significantly abridged, or Geoffrey has taken significant liberties with it, or perhaps both; after quoting the unmistakable, albeit modified first lines, "I wol now synge, yif I kan, / The armes and also the man / That first cam, thurgh his destinee, Fugityf of Troy contree..." (143-46), Geoffrey seems to stop reciting what he reads verbatim and to continue in a kind of visionary paraphrase, "First sawgh I the destruction / Of Troye..." (151-52). The shift from the 'I sing,' or *cano*, of Virgil's epic invocation – diluted somewhat with Geoffrey's tentative, hopeful 'if I can' – to Geoffrey's un-Virgilian formulation 'I saw,' calls the medium of the epic that he finds on the wall – whether it is textual, visual, or a multi-media conflation of both – into question, as well as the medium of his representation of it. In other words, it is hard to say where the story written on the walls stops and Geoffrey's imaginative take on it begins.

What is clear is that the part of the story that most interests Geoffrey is the affair between Dido and Aeneas, and that he takes her side when they break up. After making it clear that Aeneas "betrayed hir" (294), "unkyndely" (295), Geoffrey gives Dido a 60-line speech (300-60) – the final *six books* of *The Aeneid*, by contrast, are dispensed with in only 14 lines (451-65) – in which she laments both the fact of her abandonment and that she was ever born to be relegated to such an embarrassing place in a famous story: She cries, "O wel-away that I was born! / For thorgh yow is my name lorn, / And alle myn actes red and songe / Over al thys lond, on every tongue" (345-48). A great deal hangs on the referent of that 'yow;' certainly, Dido is saying that 'through you, Aeneas,' her name is ruined, but we also hear her say, 'though you, Virgil,' and, of course, we do not have to choose; both male framers of her story are in play, both culpable in this version of it. Dido laments her abandonment by Aeneas, but it is resentment over her place in the story and the way her part in that story will be remembered and rehearsed that really hurts. As the author of this poem, *The House of Fame*, the steward, in that role, of Dido's name and story, it is not surprising that Dido's lament touches Geoffrey even as he recites it in a participatory act of composition: It is like Dido is telling him that authors continue to subordinate and degrade her and, hearing what she says, Geoffrey responds in the middle of his epic retelling and takes the story in another direction. At 60 out of 300-some lines, Dido's lament is unquestionably the showcase passage in Geoffrey's *Aeneid*. It is, moreover, the passage that is most Geoffrey's own: As the editors of *The Riverside Chaucer* point out in a note, only 6 out of 60 lines in it are traceable to Virgil (980n314), and Geoffrey cares about it enough to put his signature on it and deny any hand in it but his own, saying "Non other auctor allege I" (314). Sympathy for Dido turns Geoffrey's *Aeneid* inside out, then, promoting her feminine perspective

over Aeneas' and framing her as a victim, mistreated in the story, and, apparently, it also brings out the creative writer in Geoffrey.

Scholars who take on the intertext between *The Aeneid* and *Cymbeline* focus on Shakespeare's handling of Virgil's imperial theme. Patricia Parker argues that, by linking Posthumous with Aeneas and with epic westering, but also including the untimely character Giacomo, a Machiavellian from the Italian Renaissance, Shakespeare arranges "two parallel gestures of submission" in the play's final scene (204): Although the victor in war, Cymbeline submits to ancient Rome, rejecting the "narrow English nationalism" represented by Cloten and the queen (201); at the same time, Giacomo submits to Posthumous in a gesture that subordinates Renaissance Italian culture to that of the British people, the real latter-day Trojans.

In *Shakespeare's Troy*, by contrast, Heather James argues that Shakespeare's handling of Virgil's imperial theme in *Cymbeline* evinces his resistance to Stuart absolutism. In James's reading, the important thing about the epic associations attached to Posthumous is that they are *not* imperial, *not* dynastic, and that they are subordinated in the end to the rugged native valor of Guiderius and Arviragus; it is the rise of this new British Romulus and Remus, not Posthumous' new Aeneas, that inherits the kingdom in the end and "promises a new era for the nation" (184). It is striking that, in James's reading, Posthumous is more Shakespeare's adapted version of the Aeneas who abandons Dido than the one who fathers a nation. Posthumous' destiny is to save, not his country, but his marriage, as though Shakespeare were reimagining the part of the story about Dido and Aeneas' separation, relieving Aeneas of the burden of his manifest epic destiny, and restoring the lovers to each other in his play. The implication here is that some other, more elastic form than epic, and some other form of leadership than the absolutism that King James, as

the peace-making new Stuart Augustus, theorizes in *The True Law of Free Monarchies*, are what Shakespeare envisions for England.

While she does not connect it to Shakespeare's project in *Cymbeline*, James takes up Chaucer's handling of the Troy story in *The House of Fame* in her introduction, arguing that, when he reaches the "interpretive crossroads" of Dido's tragedy, Chaucer lets his translation of Virgil fall apart (22). For James, Chaucer struggles, in the dream vision, to reconcile "the Didos of Vergil and Ovid," in their differing levels of sympathy, and with the "crisis of authority" the many different versions of the Troy story create (24). Chaucer's way through this interpretive crossroads and authority crisis is, for James, to follow Ovid's example and set Virgil's figure of Fama in charge of his Virgilian adaptation, "since she stands for incomplete, misleading, narration" (24).

I would add that Shakespeare's divergent adaptation of Virgil in *Cymbeline* is connected to Chaucer's in *The House of Fame*, that Shakespeare puts his take on Virgilian epic in conversation with Chaucer's. Where Parker and James focus on Shakespeare's handling of the epic theme of empire and the link between Posthumous and Aeneas, I would suggest that Shakespeare's allusions to Chaucer's dream visions mediate the intertext between *The Aeneid* and *Cymbeline* and highlight a different link: that between Innogen and Dido. Where, in reimagining the Troy story with her at its center, Chaucer offers his version of Virgil's heroine great sympathy and space to lament how both Virgil and Aeneas treat her, Shakespeare resists this approach and embroils Innogen, the tougher new Dido at the center of his divergent adaptation, in all the perils and adventure of his revamped Virgilian story. To some degree, Chaucer's sympathetic depiction of Dido is, for the middle ages, conventional, in that, as the Riverside editor points out, "The influential *Roman d'Enias* treats the Aeneid as a romance with Dido as its

heroine;" Gavin Douglas, however, singles Chaucer out for having "gretly Virgill offendit" from his biased position as "all womanis frend" (980n240-382). *Cymbeline*, I argue, is Shakespeare's foray into this revisionary medieval mode of adaptation, Chaucer his primary model, and the nature and scope of Dido's heroism his principal point of divergence.

Dido's lament is a lovely, memorable passage, one of the great set pieces in all of Chaucer, but an unpleasant aspect of it is that, while the feminine perspective is given pride of place, its purpose is to generate a sentimental brand of sympathy and, really, to launch the education of the male writer who gives Dido voice. In other words, Geoffrey only points out Dido's subordinated place in the story, using this insight as an occasion to hone his chops; however, he offers no solution to the aesthetic deficiency he finds in Virgil, no alternate path where Dido she might share in the epic narrative in an integral way, its adventure and danger, as something more than a broken heart to the side of Aeneas' central place in the story. This, I suggest, is what Shakespeare gives us in *Cymbeline*, with Innogen as the new, hardier Dido. Innogen does lament her abandonment by Posthumous, but we also get to see her follow her heart in defiance of her father's wishes with respect to her marriage, and stand up to him in his rage over it (see 1.1.125-70), rebuff Giacomo's indecent proposal and push back against his misrepresentation of Posthumous' character (1.6.142-56), *mercilessly* rebuff Cloten when he refuses to take a hint (2.3.128-31), and run away from home (3.2). Most importantly, in a crucial scene, in which Innogen draws a parallel between what Posthumous has done to her and what Aeneas did to Dido (3.4.57-63), and she and Pisanio decide that she will live and quest deeper into the story, rather than be killed or kill herself, Pisanio convinces her to, as he puts it, "wear a mind, / Dark as your fortune is" (143-44). While he is trying, of course, to say that he wants her to dress up like a man, Pisanio's resonant phrase suggests a hardening of the character of the

Dido figure in the story into one that rises to meet the challenge of her fall, rather than let it defeat her spirit and drive her, like Dido, to suicide. "This attempt / I am soldier to," Innogen says, meaning committed, but with the added implication of putting on the bravery and toughness of a soldier, "and will abide it with / A prince's courage" (182-84). In his divergent adaptation of *The Aeneid*, Shakespeare follows Chaucer in re-centering the story around a female lead, but he does so in a way that makes her an equal partner in the dangers of the fiction and the satisfaction, as well as the achievement, of the denouement.

What connects Chaucer's unorthodox translation of *The Aeneid* in *The House of Fame* to Shakespeare's divergent dramatic adaptation of it in *Cymbeline* are Giacomo's echoes, in his remarkable description of Innogen's bedroom, of Geoffrey's description of the curious figures he sees in the temple of Venus where his dream begins and where he finds the translation. Taking on, for a moment, the register of a medieval dream vision, and alluding to Geoffrey's report of the design of the temple interior, Giacomo turns Innogen's bedroom into a space like the temple in Geoffrey's dream and, in so doing, sets the Virgilian adaptation unfolding around him beside the one that Geoffrey retells.

Just before he finds the translation of Virgil on the wall, Geoffrey realizes he is in a temple of Venus, because there is a portrait of the goddess, her naked figure floating in the sea: "in portreiture / I sawgh anoon-ryght her figure / Naked fletynge in a see" (131-33). In addition to that striking image, Geoffrey reports seeing more statues, portraits, and fine workmanship in the temple than he has ever seen before.

... ther were moo ymages

Of gold, stondynge in sondry stages,

And moo ryche tabernacles,
And with perre moo pynacles,
And moo curious portreytures,
And queynte maner of figures
Of olde werk, than I saugh ever. (121-27)

Just before he waxes epic, then, Geoffrey admires statues standing around the temple on various stages and in elaborate niches (n123) with pointy decorations (n124). Among the 'golden images' and 'curious portraits,' there is an image of Cupid (137). The most important portrait, however, is the naked figure of Venus floating in the sea. She lords over the other quaint and curious figures around the room and her influence suffuses the epic story on the wall. It is Geoffrey's *Aeneid*, in other words, but, since he finds it in Venus' house of worship, it will bear her influence. Geoffrey recognizes this and, before his epic retelling begins, he marvels at Venus' image and at the interior design of her temple.

The features of the temple that Geoffrey reports seeing before he finds the epic story on the wall reappear in Giacomo's cunning description of Innogen's bedroom (2.4.67-92). While the situations are completely different – Geoffrey, who wouldn't hurt a fly, is simply feeling out the setting of his wonderful dream, while Giacomo is slandering an innocent woman and trying to cheat his way to winning a high-stakes wager – the description is remarkably similar. Like Geoffrey, Giacomo mentions a portrait on the wall and a statue, and, furthermore, says the statue is affixed to an elaborate niche with pointy decorations; like Geoffrey, he also recalls seeing golden images and decorative Cupids. In Innogen's bedroom, the portrait is of, not Venus, but Cleopatra (69-77), the statue Diana (81-86); the elaborate niche is a fireplace, the pointy decorations the andirons for the fireplace, which have decorative Cupids on them (88-92).

Innogen's bedroom – at least Giacomo's rendering of it – is, in its interior design, curiously reminiscent of the temple of Venus in Geoffrey's dream. Venus herself would seem, as the central figure of the room's design, a conspicuous absence. But it is Innogen's own form, sleeping naked like the centerpiece all the room's lifelike designs, that stands in for Venus' figure; Giacomo calls her "Cytherea" as he tiptoes around the room (2.2.14).

Turning from the features of the bedroom to the style in which they are described, readers will find that Giacomo sounds just like Geoffrey when he expresses his wonder at all that he has seen in Innogen's room; he has never seen anything, he claims, like the vividness and beauty of the features of her bedroom's design. Where Geoffrey reports more "queynte maner of *figures* / Of olde werk, than *I saugh ever*" (126-27 my italics), Giacomo echoes him, saying, "Never *saw I figures*" as lifelike as the portraits of Cleopatra and Diana in Innogen's room (2.4.82 my italics). In addition, Giacomo's conspicuously inverted subject-verb phrase "saw I" is a distinctly Middle English syntactical flourish, one Chaucer uses incessantly throughout Geoffrey's *Aeneid* and that Shakespeare almost never uses in the entire canon of his works. Geoffrey says "I saugh" more images of gold, etc., than ever before and "I sawgh" Venus' naked figure floating in the sea, so Giacomo, in his ekphrastic descriptions, is speaking in the mode of a medieval dream vision (127, 132); in the translation of *The Aeneid* that follows this passage, however, Geoffrey repeatedly uses the phrase 'saw I,' in that order, starting with his, "First sawgh I the destruction / Of Troye" (151-52). Thus, Geoffrey's description of the temple and its extraordinary, multi-media features provides the language for Giacomo's lie; Giacomo turns Innogen's bedroom into a space like the one that houses Geoffrey's *Aeneid*, drawing an analogy between Geoffrey's dream and the ordeal of the play.

In Giacomo's description of what he saw in Innogen's bedroom, there is great textual excess. He knows that Innogen has a mole on her breast, which is probably what anyone else would lead with if they wanted to convince her husband that they had seen her naked. Instead, Giacomo waxes lyrical about the interior design of her room, marveling, like Geoffrey, at the wonderful workmanship. The portrait of Cleopatra is to him, "a piece of work / So bravely done, so rich, that it did strive / In workmanship and value; which I wondered / Could be so rarely and exactly wrought, / Such the true life on't was" (2.4.72-76). The reason for this textual excess, this sense of wonderstruck admiration, is that Giacomo has switched into the register of a medieval dream vision. The lies he tells are dreamlike in that they generate the surreal ordeal that Posthumous must go through; they are like Geoffrey's dream both in their details and in the fact that the ordeal they generate is adapted from the epic ordeal in Virgil.

Another feature of Geoffrey's dream temple that appears in Giacomo's description of Innogen's bedroom is its feminine portraiture. Of all the curious figures of old work that impress Geoffrey when his dream begins, the centerpiece is the portrait of Venus with 'her figure naked floating in the sea.' When he sees it, Geoffrey understands instantly, despite the different statues and portraits that surround him, that the temple belongs to her – "wel wyste I / Hyt was of Venus redely, The temple," he says (129-31).

There is no portrait of Venus in Innogen's room, but there are two analogous ones: The first, in a tapestry, is of Cleopatra on the river Cydnus (2.4.68-76); the other, carved into a chimney, is of Diana taking a bath (80-85). All three portraits feature a powerful female figure doing something in water: Venus is 'floating,' Cleopatra meeting Antony on the river (70), and Diana "bathing" (82). Giacomo's Diana is, perhaps, particularly redolent of Geoffrey's Venus in that both are goddesses naked in water. The only mortal of the three, Cleopatra nevertheless

appears in glory on the water; the tapestry depicts the famous scene that Enobarbus describes in *Antony and Cleopatra* (see 2.2.197-224). One distinction among the analogous portraits is that Giacomo's images have more "story" in them (69). Cleopatra has her scene with Antony, Diana hers with Acteon; Venus just floats. That Shakespeare echoes, in Innogen's bedroom, the temple of Venus in Geoffrey's dream, but swerves from it in terms of its female portraiture, Giacomo's initial association of Innogen's still, sleeping form with Venus – "Cytherea" (2.2.14) – and his subsequent, analogous portraits charged with story, evince.

Another common thread among the three images is the subordinated or spectral presence of a man, particularly one that the woman in the portrait humbles. In the temple, Geoffrey understands from the portrait of Venus that this is her house; the image of "Vulcano," her husband, with his grimy face "ful broun" is an afterthought (138, 140). In Innogen's room, Giacomo reports seeing "Proud Cleopatra when she met her Roman" (2.4.70), leaving Antony unnamed, though he may appear in the tapestry. Vulcan is an all-time cuckold, Antony a noble Roman disgraced by his irresponsible dalliance abroad, defeat at Actium, and ignoble death. Finally, "Chaste Dian bathing" raises the specter of Acteon, who the goddess transforms into a stag and feeds to his hounds as a punishment for stealing a glimpse of her taking a bath (82). Thus, Shakespeare takes Chaucer's temple portrait of a powerful female figure and, while retaining enough aspects of the image to establish an echo, substitutes man-eating female totems of his own. Venus lords over Geoffrey's *Aeneid* as her subordinated husband looks on, and, when the story gets going, Dido overtakes Aeneas as the star of the show; in Shakespeare, the totems are Cleopatra-over-Anthony and Diana-over-Acteon, with Innogen emerging as the more active female hero up against the crazed jealousy of her own lost Aeneas, that is, Posthumous, and the added threat of Giacomo's Machiavellian villainy. As a lusty Roman on a sex adventure abroad,

Giacomo recalls Antony; as a voyeur in Innogen's room, he recalls Acteon. The images, in other words, conspire against him. He is the subordinated man in the scenic portrait with Innogen sleeping at its center; as such, he is in line for a humbling administered by a powerful female figure. Where, in Chaucer, this humbling is administered via a heavy-handed authorial intervention born out of intense sympathy for the female figure in the story, in Shakespeare the drama is externalized; Innogen must fend for herself.

What was for Geoffrey a private dream experience is externalized and shared among several characters in Shakespeare's play: Innogen is the one who enjoys her bedtime reading and falls deeply asleep, but the description of the dream temple, here externalized as the design of her bedroom, falls to Giacomo, who uses it for treachery, rather than artistic exploration and wonder, and then reaches the ears of another character, Posthumous, who reacts to it with major ramifications for the action of the play. What is for Geoffrey a transformative dream with only salutary effects becomes the central conflict of Shakespeare's play, the practical, personal, and moral problem, with real danger in it, real stakes, that Innogen, Posthumous, and Giacomo have to work out for the play to resolve itself. And Geoffrey's bedtime reading, his revisionist *Aeneid* that brings the female element to the fore, Shakespeare externalizes in the divergent Virgilian adaptation of his play, complete with its own, more active, more endangered, more responsible female lead. By transforming verbal conventions in Chaucer into dramatic conflicts, Shakespeare frames the action of his play as a working out of his response to literary problems broached in Chaucerian dream. In the case of *Cymbeline's* answer to *The House of Fame*, that literary problem is the representation of women in *The Aeneid* and the challenge, for the adapter of Virgilian epic, of retelling the story with Dido, or a figure analogous to her, in the position of hero.

As a rival adapter of Virgil, the issue Shakespeare most sharply diverges from Chaucer on is the representation of women; where Chaucer offers Dido sympathy and a platform to lament her treatment by both the man she loves and the one who wrote her story, Shakespeare carves out a space for a more active female role at the center of a Virgilian adaptation. The portraits Giacomo sees in Innogen's bedroom, which answer Chaucer's image of Venus floating naked in the sea with images of Cleopatra radiant on the river Cydnus and Diana taking a bath, ready to splash any Acteon into oblivion, are keys to this insight. In Chaucer, the point of the portrait of Venus is that the mind of the uninitiated poet is too much under Venus' influence; when he diverges from that too-powerful influence, he distorts his tale from within with a sentimental overcorrection, lavishing sympathy on the female figure at its center. As a result, the story misfires, albeit productively in relation to his burgeoning aesthetic sensibility, which will continue to develop as the poem progresses.

Only after Geoffrey describes the temple of Venus and delivers his Dido-centric *Aeneid* do we learn that he is an impotent literary servant of Love. Geoffrey has served Love, Venus, and Cupid for a long time, but with nothing to show for it (615-19). Every night after work he makes the same rookie mistake: he goes home and buries his head in a book (652-60). Neither clever nor experienced as a lover, he keeps writing love song and love poems anyway (620-28). In this light, Geoffrey's dream begins beneath a portrait of Venus because she is the lord of his literary imagination. Her temple is his writing mind. It seems strange that the dream begins with text, the text of the story on the temple wall, until we learn that Geoffrey reads and writes himself into a daze every night after work – "Thou sittest at another book / Tyl fully daswed ys thy look" (657-58). On the night he has his wonderful dream, Geoffrey's ritual of hard, shallow reading and then writing bad poetry in the impotent service of Love carries over into his dream

and informs the version of *The Aeneid* he finds there and retells. Venus serves as a totem of Geoffrey's idiosyncratic *Aeneid*, and her disruptive, even destructive influence underlies the confusion and contradictions that tear it apart from within and hasten its unceremonious abridgement.

Venus' role in Virgil's *Aeneid* is clear: She props up Aeneas and ruins Dido in the process. Venus guides Aeneas, her son, to Dido's court and tricks her into falling in love with him, disguising Desire, her henchman, as Aeneas' charming son, Ascanius, so that he can get close enough to "ensnare the queen / By guile," and "pin her down in passion" (921-22). The disguised god makes Dido forget her old husband and sets her heart on Aeneas instead (981-85). Before this premeditated takedown there is no hint of Dido the tragic lover who will let her city falter during her affair and kill herself when Aeneas abandons her. Rather, we see her as a magnificent diplomat, offering full and equal enfranchisement to the refugee Trojans, or safe escort to another new home (772-79); when we first meet her, she leads a throng of men, and is compared, in an epic simile, to Diana at the head of her mountain nymphs (673-82). As Aeneas' champion by any means necessary, Venus is Dido's enemy, the reason for her downfall.

A writer who serves Venus should take Aeneas' side. But a writer who serves Love, and Love's servants, would sympathize with Dido. It is out of this tension that Geoffrey author-izes Dido's long lamenting speech, thus rebelling, from within his epic recitation, against both Venus, the lord of his literary mind, and Virgil, his textual authority. After her Lament, which, again, is mostly original and which Geoffrey signs with his "Non other auctor" (314), Dido commits suicide. At this point, which corresponds to only book 4 out of 12 in *The Aeneid*, Geoffrey has pretty much had it with Virgil and with epic. He says that anyone who wants to know the details of the suicide or what was said when it happened can find that information in Virgil's *Aeneid* or

Ovid's *Heroides* (375-82), sources which had guided his retelling until now but he had not mentioned. In other words, after Dido's lament, Geoffrey defers to the authorities for the rest of the story; whether out of frustration, distaste, or inattention – he does say it would be tedious, 'too long to write' (381) – Geoffrey deserts his little epic. All that remains is a digression on men's falseness (383-426), a short trip with Aeneas to the underworld, emphasizing glimpses of his lost love, Dido, and his lost sense of direction, the boat pilot Palinurus (433-50), and, finally, the measly fourteen-line version of the final six books of *The Aeneid*. What began as an epic retold under Venus' influence, derails in a burst of sympathy for Dido, and finally fails when the dreaming teller loses interest in the rest of the story.

Diverging from Venus' influence and reimagining *The Aeneid* in Dido's favor is only the first step in Geoffrey's literary education in a dream. The real lesson begins after Geoffrey's *Aeneid*, on the flight through space with the eagle, when, after being outed as an impotent literary Love servant, Geoffrey learns that the key to proper Love service is not found in books at all but rather in the getting and repurposing of what the eagle calls "tydings" (675), diverse stories and sounds, from diverse sources. Geoffrey's project of reimagining *The Aeneid* with Dido at its center and insisting that the reader sympathize with her over her place in the story and her treatment by Aeneas, should not, then, be understood as Chaucer's authoritative take on Virgil's epic materials, but rather as a sentimental overcorrection by an uninitiated writer breaking free for the first time of Venus' unproductive overinfluence. The real lesson begins later, when Geoffrey learns about the importance of tidings; the real payoff comes when he wanders from The House of Fame to the whirling whicker and gains access to the diverse voices careening around in there, which he could never have found in a book. The temple of Venus, emblemized by the portrait of the goddess, with her naked figure floating in the sea, is where

Geoffrey's journey begins; journey's end is the whirling whicker, huge, cacophonous, multi-vocal, diverse. Should the thesis of this chapter seem invidious or insulting toward Chaucer, one only needs to remember that the idiosyncratic version of *The Aeneid* interpolated into *The House of Fame* is an apprentice work in a self-deprecating portrait of the artist as a young man, or a naive dreamer.

Shakespeare engages the unruly *ars poetica* of *The House of Fame* more fully in *The Tempest* than in *Cymbeline*, as he engages the meta-poetic dimension of The Franklin's Tale more fully in that play, although it too influences both. It is Geoffrey's *Aeneid* and its representation of Dido that matter here. Shakespeare has Giacomo conjure, in his description of Innogen's bedroom, the features of the temple of Venus that houses Geoffrey's *Aeneid* and kicks off his dream, but he swaps the portrait of Venus for portraits of Cleopatra and Diana in order to signal that he is putting a female character at the center of his Virgilian adaptation in a different, more powerful way than Chaucer had. This is not to say that Shakespeare is a better feminist than Chaucer, or a feminist at all. It is only to say that Shakespeare notices Chaucer's handling of the female element in Virgil in *The House of Fame*, conjures it in his own adaptation of Virgil, and sets his way of making a female character the star of a divergent adaptation of Virgil in contrast to Chaucer's. Where Chaucer writes Dido in the key of complaint, Innogen, Shakespeare's new Dido, reclaims her place in the epic story in a more active and impactful way.¹

Geoffrey's portrait of Venus floating naked in the water is a stunning image of the divine female, but, in relation to *The Aeneid*, its purpose is to prop up the masculine element in the story;

¹ For a classic feminist account of *Cymbeline* focused on the eradication of Posthumous' feminine side, see Adelman 199-219. For a more recent account focused, in part, on Innogen's bedroom, see Gajowski.

the point of the portrait is to show that the writing mind of the uninitiated poet that Chaucer takes as the dreaming hero of his poem is too much under Venus influence to write, and to reimagine Virgil, effectively. The portraits of Cleopatra and Diana that Giacomo sees in Innogen's bedroom, by contrast, represent different brands of female power. If Venus stands for imperial Roman masculinity, Cleopatra stands for its opposite: her main association, apart from her quasi-divine feminine power and allure, is the way she strips Antony of his sense of responsibility to the Roman empire, transforming, as Philo puts it, "the triple pillar of the world...into a strumpet's fool" (see *Antony and Cleopatra* 1.1.12-3). Venus burns Dido so that Aeneas can found Rome; Cleopatra, like an anti-Dido, takes one of Rome's three legs away, subordinating Antony's civic and professional duty to her, and, of course, his own, desire.

As divine patroness, Diana projects a different brand of female power than Venus as well. To state the obvious, Venus stands for sexual desire, and has the courtly love triangle involving her husband Vulcan and her lover Mars in her portfolio of erotic associations, while Diana stands for virgin chastity, the woods, and the hunt, and we picture her in the strong, all-female company of her hunting party made up of mountain nymphs. When we first meet Dido in *The Aeneid*, before Venus makes her insane with love, she is described in just this way, and likened to Diana among her nymphs (678-87). What is really striking is that the statue of Diana in Innogen's room depicts her, not in her hunting gear, with arrows and quiver, with hounds and deer around her, as she is often depicted in the visual arts, but rather naked, taking a bath. In this way, Shakespeare aligns the portrait of Diana with the portrait of Venus floating naked in the water while also diverging from it in a way suggestive of female dominance over males. The only reason to depict Diana bathing naked is to evoke the figure of Acteon who, like Giacomo, and, by extension, us in the audience, sees something powerful and feminine that he should not and is destroyed for it.

In the reimagined Chaucerian dream temple of Innogen's room, Shakespeare raises the stakes both for himself as an imitative artist writing after Virgil and for the female character he has, following Geoffrey's example, reoriented his Virgilian fiction around. The obvious alteration Shakespeare makes is to replace, in the figure of the dreamer, Chaucer's naïve young man who, while he is safely asleep, quests safely into himself, with a young woman sleeping deeply through the clear and present danger of a home intrusion. Where, for Chaucer, rescuing the feminine in the story involves a sympathetic gesture within the male writing mind, here the female takes prominence in a more integral way; Innogen is both the 'dreamer' and the heroine of the vivid, continuous Virgilian dream that is the action of the play.

Where, in Chaucer's portrait of the artist as a naïve dreamer, Venus rules Geoffrey's writing mind, Shakespeare complicates the dream-temple trope in ways befitting a mature poet-playwright feeling out his late style: In addition to replacing Venus with new totems in Cleopatra and Diana, he fills the room with echoes of his own earlier literary work, as though the artistic swerve he effects in *Cymbeline* is from his own artistic influence on himself. When, for example, Giacomo compares himself, as he tiptoes around Innogen's room, to Tarquin pressing the rushes on his way to rape Lucrece (2.2.12-14), we think of, not only Shakespeare's poem on that subject, but also of Macbeth, who makes the same comparison as he readies himself to murder the king (see 2.1.54-56). Here Shakespeare raises the stakes for Innogen as a character and for himself as a literary artist: The implication is, on one hand, that Giacomo has the power to kill Innogen if he chooses to, as Macbeth kills Duncan while he sleeps, or rape her, which might, in light of the Tarquin and Lucrece analogy, prompt her to kill herself. On the other hand, it is implied that Shakespeare has the power to make this story into a tragedy if he chooses to, just as he used to do. Both Giacomo and Shakespeare have other designs, however; the first is taking notes to prop

up an elaborate lie, the second breaking new ground with an innovative new kind of literary work, a different kind of story.

The sense that Shakespeare is swerving from the influence of his own earlier work the way Geoffrey swerves from that of Venus on his writing mind is compounded by the portrait of Cleopatra on the river Cydnus. The image is a callback to Shakespeare's play *Antony and Cleopatra*, which, in addition to the basic connection, features a memorable set piece describing the same moment, when Antony and Cleopatra meet by the river (at 2.2.196-232). Consciously, as he tries to convince Posthumous that he spent the night in Innogen's room, Giacomo probably evokes this moment because he wants to drive home the idea of an Italian sex adventure abroad, with himself in Antony's role. Beyond Giacomo's awareness, however, the portrait of Cleopatra has other, more striking effects. For example, it calls to mind an earlier Roman play by Shakespeare in order to make audiences and readers aware that *Cymbeline* is also a Roman play, albeit a stranger, more experimental one, and to encourage them to hold the earlier text in mind as they take in the later one. Where, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, sexual desire clouds the sense of duty, an ill-considered foreign entanglement is tested, and tragedy ensues, *Cymbeline* is a Roman play in a more complex sense: In addition to the diplomatic entanglement between old Britain and ancient Rome, a historical dispute which Shakespeare transforms, through his dramatic art, into a kind of cultural *agon* among native English, classical, and Renaissance Italian influences, and which is the base conflict on which all other conflicts in the play depend, there is the intertextual Roman dimension in which Shakespeare refigures aspects of *The Aeneid*, the epic of Rome, into the new fiction of his imitative romance. In this light, Giacomo's evocation of Cleopatra has the effect of reminding Shakespeare's audience what a Roman play used to look like and how different and more complex this new one is by contrast.

In "The Crowd in Innogen's Bedroom," J. K. Barret argues that the figures Giacomo conjures in his description of Innogen's bedroom load *Cymbeline* with competing narrative possibilities which, through the elastic medium of the theater, Shakespeare sets beside the main ordeal of the play. In *Cymbeline*, she writes, "narrative possibilities (what *might be*), once discarded, exhibit staying power as what *might have been*" (441). Giacomo's allusions linger in contrast to the action playing out on stage, "setting narrative potential and imitative action side by side" (444). For Barret, the elaborate sorting out of plot strands in *Cymbeline's* final scene is offset by this allusive dimension, in which what *might have been* haunts the pat resolution of act 5. Barret's central thesis is that Giacomo's "contradictory classical allusions" have an ethical dimension in that they demonstrate how allusions "can 're-author' a source, changing a narrative's (and an audience's) perspective by calling attention to a more expansive process of interpretive choice" (457).

We can sharpen our sense of the re-authoring effect Barret discerns, however, by attending to the intertext between Giacomo's description of Innogen's bedroom and Geoffrey's of the temple in his dream. Giacomo's portraits of Cleopatra and Diana are based on Geoffrey's portrait of Venus; the difference is that Giacomo evokes tougher female totems for the play he re-authors and for its heroine, and he evokes *more than one*. Where Geoffrey, the inept poet of Love, is ruled in the temple of his mind by Venus alone and, as a result, produces an adaptation of *The Aeneid* that breaks down from within in a rush of sympathy for the main female character, jettisoned for the sake of masculine epic pursuits, leaving her in a passive position of lamentation, Giacomo conjures, on one hand, a queen associated with sexual and military potency as well as the ability to emasculate and even tear an empire apart – a Rome-wrecking anti-Dido – and, on the other, a divine huntress who shuns men and, in Acteon's case, literally tears them apart; by

loading Innogen's bedroom, 'the temple' at the heart of *Cymbeline*, with multiple models of female agency and power, Shakespeare prepares his audience for an adaptation of *The Aeneid* attentive to the feminine, but in a tougher, more powerful, rather than a sentimental, way.

In act 3, Innogen makes her way into Wales with Pisanio, a servant who says he is leading her to a reunion with her husband Posthumous, but is really weighing the possibility of murdering her, on Posthumous' orders, against a scheme he has concocted to save her life and his own soul. In the course of act 3 scene 4, Innogen and Pisanio decide together not only that he will not kill her, and that she will not kill herself, but that she should stay alive, disguise herself as a man, and insinuate herself into the service of the Roman ambassador, now departing Britain with notice of imminent war. In other words, tragic choices for Innogen are set aside in favor of heroic questing and a deeper involvement with the action of the story. Faced with this daunting situation, Innogen's lament melts into resolve.

Having traveled a long way, with an increasingly anxious Pisanio, and with Posthumous nowhere in sight, Innogen demands that her servant-companion tell her what is going on. His eyes wild, Pisanio hands over the note that Posthumous wrote him instructing him to kill her. "Why tender'st thou that paper to me with / A look untender?" (3.4.11-12), she asks him as he turns over the scrip. Shakespeare sets a Chaucerian mood by having Posthumous write to Pisanio that if he fails to kill Innogen for him he will be the "pander" to her dishonor (30). But I think the fateful scrap of paper itself is more important. Remember that the eagle instructs Geoffrey that, if he wants to serve Love more effectively, he needs to get out more and that, moreover, he needs to create streams of access to lovers' 'tidings,' that is, news, true and false, good and bad, that are the source of effective literary love service. When he reaches the whirling whicker, it is full of tidings in the form of countless scraps of paper, particularly lies ("With scrippes bret-ful of

lesinges" 2123). Everyone remembers the fateful mislaid letter in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Shakespeare remembers it, certainly, when he composes this new, more disturbing one between Posthumous and Innogen. Behind both, however, is Chaucer's wild world of true and false letters in the whirling whicker; what is for Geoffrey an artistic boon, a widening of artistic horizons, access to the motherlode of tidings, Shakespeare darkens and makes an agitating aspect of a scene, his usual method.

Pisano's anguished words as Innogen reads the letter bear this out: "'tis slander," he says, "Whose edge is sharper than the sword" (3.4.32-3), more venomous than the snakes in the Nile (33-4), and so on, that is going to kill Innogen, not him, it seems (31-38). Pisano's little aside on the nature of slander is a riff on the dark, dangerous side of fame. In all the varieties of tidings that the eagle describes to Geoffrey and that he sees careening around in the whirling whicker, no one said anything about anyone getting murdered. And readers remember, when they encounter Pisano's little speech, the form that Rumor takes in *Aeneid* Book 4 (see 239-65), that of a terrible winged monster, with eyes instead of feathers in her wings, and as many tongues, buzzing mouths, and ears as eyes (249-52). This dark vision of fame is the context for the allusions to Chaucer's dream vision that follow in the scene; it is as though Shakespeare is saying, the work that Chaucer did to reorient Virgil's epic around a female hero is too soft, especially in its handling of the role of rumor in the story, and then returns us to the nastiness of Virgil's own representation of that vice as he embroils his heroine more deeply in the fiction unfolding around her.

At first, when she learns about Posthumous' plot against her life, Innogen rails against men's falseness. "Men's vows are women's traitors" (3.4.53), she says. After what Posthumous has done to her, she reasons, women will react to anything that seems good in men with

suspicion. "All good seeming" (53) will be seen less like a natural virtue, "born where't grows," and more like a garment, "Put on for villainy" (55) and "worn" as "a bait for ladies" (56). This was also true in the time of "false Aeneas," Innogen thinks (57); all women knew about the promise he broke to Dido, so even the "True honest men" of that time would be "thought false" (57, 58). It is striking that Innogen is not lamenting the way she has been treated, or the way men do women wrong, but rather the broader effect of men's lies on the social fabric: The problem is not that she was almost murdered, or that men's lies ruin women's reputations, but that you cannot tell what is true and what is a lie when these false men are around. What Innogen says is almost distasteful by today's standards: She focuses on how men's treachery affects other men, diverting attention from its female victims. But this altered form of lamentation is consistent with Shakespeare's resistance to the sentimental approach taken by Chaucer in Dido's lament; the invocation of "false" Aeneas highlights the distinction he draws between Dido's tougher brand of feminine lamentation and Innogen's.

Innogen's "false Aeneas" outburst echoes Dido's Lament and the catalogue of false lovers in Geoffrey's *Aeneid*. Dido says that she cannot believe how far Aeneas' words of love are from his actions and abandonment: "is every man thus trewe[?]" she asks, and "have ye men such godlyhede / In speche, and never a del of trouthe?" (301, 330-31). In her anguish, she concludes that women are helpless before this kind of deception, not gullible exactly, but not savvy enough, when it comes to lying and deceit, to keep up with men, who are experts in those areas.

"Now see I wel, and telle kan,
We wretched wymmen konne noon art;
For certeyn, for the more part,
Thus we be served everychone.

How sore that ye men konne groone,
Anoon as we have yow receyved,
Certaynly we ben deceyvvd!" (334-40)

Dido's point is that women will never see through this level of deceit, Innogen's that, in its glare, they will never recognize truth; both are reeling from the shock of their false Aeneas' betrayal. When Dido has had her say, Geoffrey is inspired to name names; he catalogues, in the style of Ovid's *Heroides*, the false male lovers of myth: "fals" Theseus, "fals and reccheles" Achilles, Demophon who treated Phyllis "falsly," and so on (405, 397, 389), and so on. At the start of *Cymbeline* act 3 scene 4, this is where Innogen's head is too: in despair over men's falseness, particularly that of her own "false" Aeneas, Posthumous.

In Geoffrey's *Aeneid*, Dido wishes for death, first as a means of keeping Aeneas with her, then in protest of her place in Virgil's story and how she will be remembered; her lamentation finished, she kills herself, tragically.

"O Eneas, what wol ye doo?
O that your love, ne yore bond
That ye have sworn with your ryght hond,
Ne my crewel deth," quod she,
"May hold yow stille here with me!
O haveth of my deth pitee!" (320-25)

If your love for me and the oath you swore won't keep you here, she asks, would you even pity me if I die? Dido's anguished thoughts then turn to her place in the story and how she will be remembered.

"O wel-away that I was born!
For through yow is my name lorn,
And alle myn actes red and songe
Over al thys lond, on every tonge." (345-48)

On the surface, the "yow" she refers to is certainly Aeneas. It is because of Aeneas that Dido will be remembered and immortalized in books and songs all over the world. When she thinks about it, given her place in the story, she wishes she were never born. There is a meta-poetic aspect to her outburst, however, signaled by striking phrase "red and songe," that indicates that Dido is thinking of herself not only as a human being but also as a character in a story. Readers hear, and Geoffrey hears, her implicate not only Aeneas, but Virgil, for the way she has been treated. After her suicide, Geoffrey races to conclude his *Aeneid*, apparently over the rest of the story.

Innogen, by contrast, fights her way out of the scene in which her world is shattered by husband's falseness, and into deeper levels of the action of Shakespeare's play. At first, like Dido, she wishes for death. "Do his bidding; strike" (3.4.70), she says to Pisanio, who hurls his sword away out of horror for his soul (72-73). Pisanio says he has not slept a wink since receiving his orders to kill Innogen (98-99). Innogen's famous reply is that Pisanio should "Do't, and to bed, then" (99). In a phrase aware of her ancestry in the dream vision tradition, Innogen tells Pisanio that he would sleep better if he just killed her off in this, her moment of lamentation. His refusal, and the plan they work out together to keep her alive and involved, signals the play's swerve away from the medieval poetic convention of male dreaming paired with female lamentation and death.

For a moment, Innogen plays at Prince Hamlet, saying that she would kill herself except that "Against self-slaughter / There is a prohibition so divine / That cravens my weak hand" (3.4.75-77). Compare Hamlet: "[O] that the Everlasting had not fixed / His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!" (1.2.131-32). Again, Shakespeare swerves from his tragic mode, providing more, deeper options for this new kind of character in, for him, this new style of play. Finally, Pisanio lays out his scheme for Innogen to dress up like a man and take up the service of the Roman ambassador. "You must forget to be a woman," he says (3.4.154). Innogen urges him forward: "Nay, be brief. / I see into thy end, and am almost / A man already" (165-67). What began as a scene of lamentation threatening the murder or suicide of the female lead has transformed, as Innogen will transform herself, into one of new narrative opportunities and dangers for her. In short, Shakespeare has decided, and set his decision in contrast to Chaucer's, that, in his adaptation of Virgil, the Dido figure lives, and lives to face the adventure of the restoration of her broken family head on.

While the classic studies of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare – Ann Thompson's *Shakespeare's Chaucer* and *The Swan at the Well* by E. Talbot Donaldson – do not make the connection, scholars have explored the intertext between *Cymbeline* and *The Franklin's Tale*. As Deanne Williams demonstrates, Shakespeare borrows a great deal from *The Franklin's Breton lai*, from the name of a central character and the setting "in a legendary ancient past" to the "central theme of marital fidelity" (396, 397). The key aspect of *The Franklin's Tale* Williams discerns in *Cymbeline* is heroic forgiveness, a force capable of overcoming, not only a knotty plot, but the tricks, from magic tricks to rhetorical deceptions, that characters use to get over on others. In these fictions, things are not as they seem, but forgiveness sets things right in the end (399). Williams's central thesis is that Shakespeare's handling of *The Franklin's Tale* as a source for

Cymbeline evinces the "anachronic" nature of his "relationship to the Middle Ages" (400). In other words, Shakespeare conflates time periods – what we call classical, medieval and Renaissance – on the stage, resisting the urge to keep them distinct (395). For Williams, this technique is itself part of what Shakespeare took from *The Franklin's Tale*; Chaucer's tale "fuses ancient contexts with medieval," the same way *Cymbeline* fuses a story about Roman Britain with Renaissance Italian elements (400).

Where Williams's focus is on Shakespeare's attitude toward the past, Elizabeth Scala is interested in what the intertext between *The Franklin's Tale* and *Cymbeline* says about the nature of a literary source. She argues that *The Franklin's Tale* means more to Shakespeare than the raw materials of his "more convoluted" (155) version of the same story, and that the relationship between the two texts is "reciprocal" (157), rather than one-way. Shakespeare's handling of the various trials of Innogen and Posthumous, then, put him in creative conversation not only with the representation of a marriage on the rocks in *The Franklin's Tale*, but with the broader debate about marriage going on across multiple tales in the *Canterbury* anthology (156). Williams and Scala mostly agree about what *Cymbeline* learns from *The Franklin's Tale*, particularly the use of "linguistic trickery" – as Scala puts it, "it is precisely their attention to language, both its problematic and its restorative effects that most forcefully links the two works" (146).

The common thread between Scala's article on *Cymbeline's* debt to *The Franklin's Tale* and Patricia Parker's on its debt to *The Aeneid* is the mediating text of Holinshed's *Chronicles*. Scala argues that, while using Holinshed as *Cymbeline's* historical source, Shakespeare encountered a name he knew from Chaucer, Arviragus, and allowed his memory of *The Franklin's Tale* to blend with the historical material he was working with and create a hybrid imitation (141-42). For Parker, by contrast, Holinshed is the British link to the imperial

westerling impulse *Cymbeline* takes from *The Aeneid*. Holinshed's own figure named Posthumous is the son of Aeneas and Lavinia; his Innogen is the wife of Brute, "Britain's legendary Trojan founder" (192). *Cymbeline*, then, adapts both The Franklin's Tale and *The Aeneid*, and, however disparate the texts may seem, Shakespeare seems to have discerned a kind of intersectionality between them, one that catalyzed his own exploration of issues ranging from the ordeal of a marriage to the translation of empire in a strange new work of fiction.

I would add that one of Chaucer's dream visions, *The House of Fame*, also mediates the intertext between *Cymbeline* and *The Aeneid*, and that Shakespeare evokes it in order to distinguish Chaucer's way of reanimating the female element in Virgil, which is characterized by separation, lamentation, and death, from his own, which is characterized by the transcendence of those things, achieved, in part, by heroic feminine agency. In this light, Innogen is the descendent not only of Dorigen, from The Franklin's Tale, but of Virgil's Dido and of the Dido from Geoffrey's *Aeneid* in *The House of Fame*. What distinguishes her from both of these Chaucerian ancestors is the agency afforded to her in the story. While, like them, she laments, albeit more briefly than they do, her treatment by men and her place in the fiction, Innogen neither kills herself for love like Dido nor requires an all-male intervention to save her in the end, as Dorigen does.

In The Franklin's Tale, the love triangle of Arveragus, Aurelius, and Dorigen, that makes up the main action of them poem, creates problems that can only be solved by the homosocial triangle of Arveragus, Aurelius, and the magician that comes together in the poem's last lines. It is only through this male mutual forgiveness society that Dorigen is saved from the experience of having to sleep with a strange man against her will. That she would sleep with him as her husband's idea of how to handle her losing of the rash wager; her own thought was to kill herself.

Before Arveragus declares that Dorigen must keep her word and sleep with Aurelius (1472-86), she thinks her predicament through on her own and, in a long lamenting speech, considers the examples of women before her who, when faced with the choice between death or dishonor, chose to kill themselves (1355-1456); after a hard day or two spent lamenting her plight, Dorigen resolves to do the same (1457-58). The major difference, then, between the elaborate resolution of conflicts that takes place in act 5 of *Cymbeline*, and the one that takes place at the end of *The Franklin's Tale*, is that the principal female figure is involved in it at all. Dorigen is the remainder left over at the end of *The Franklin's Tale*; she can only look on as her husband, his rival, and a wizard compete with each other to see who can give the most freely, be "the moost fre" (1622). In the end, Dorigen is the problem the guys band together to solve. Innogen, by contrast, has an active role to play in the elaborate untangling of plot strands in *Cymbeline*, act 5. She controls the fate of the Roman ambassador, for instance; it is she, moreover, who is 'the most free,' in that she has to forgive Posthumous, after he lashes out and strikes her, all over again.

Amid the "parallel gestures of submission" Patricia Parker discerns in this scene – of Renaissance Italy to Renaissance England, and of Britain to Ancient Rome – and in light of the non-dynastic, non-imperial reanimation of Aeneas Heather James discerns in Posthumous, the reunion of Posthumous and Innogen is less like a happier ending for the couple at the center of *The Franklin's Tale*, Arveragus and Dorigen, an impression Shakespeare drives home by giving that leading man's name to another character, Innogen's brother no less, and more like a happier ending for Dido and Aeneas, as though the queen of Carthage had not killed herself but rather taken on her own quest and brought her errant husband, somehow relieved of his stoic duty, back home at last. In this light, Shakespeare blends a divergent adaptation of *The Franklin's Tale* with a rival adaptation of *The Aeneid* designed to overgo Chaucer's sentimental way, in Geoffrey's

Aeneid, in *The House of Fame*, of reimagining the story with the female figure repositioned to a place of central importance.

CHAPTER 5: *THE TEMPEST* AND *THE HOUSE OF FAME*

The argument of this chapter is that Chaucer's dream vision *The House of Fame* is a source for Shakespeare's *Tempest* and that, in that play, Shakespeare vies with Chaucer not only as a rival poet, but also as a rival *imitative* poet, particularly a rival adapter of Virgil's *Aeneid*. While, on the surface, it might seem like these two texts do not have much in common, they both take the form of aesthetic fantasy in which literary art itself, the author's sense of his artistic vocation and craft, is the stuff of speculative fiction. *The House of Fame* takes place on a space station, *The Tempest* an enchanted island, but in both cases the settings are, as Caliban says, "full of noises;" they are, moreover, stations full of sounds and stories where the protagonists of their fictions come into their own as artists.

Among many similarities, the most important is that in both texts the self-portrait of the artist that emerges depends on a literary activity: namely, adapting Virgil's *Aeneid*. It is not enough for Shakespeare to take on Chaucer as a rival poet; he must do so by performing his own version of Chaucer's dismantling of Virgilian epic in *The House of Fame*, and, in vying with him as an adapter of Virgil, by putting a new fiction together out of the parts available to him after he takes the classical model apart. In the intertext between the *The House of Fame* and *The Tempest*, the object of divergent imitation is not only the work of literature, in the sense of aspects of character and plot, but *the work* of literature – creative process, the craft of verse, the portrait of the artist. While *The Tempest* is mostly unlike *The House of Fame* in the sense that it tells the story of an overthrown Milanese duke with a daughter and magical powers rather than

dopey loner and wannabe writer with a desk job, it is very much like it in the sense that, in both texts, an artist with a hand in the divergent adaptation of *The Aeneid* unfolding around him takes that story in a new direction when his sympathy is unexpectedly aroused in the course of his creative work. In *The Tempest*, then, Shakespeare answers Chaucer's creative *ars poetica*, his imitative "poetics in action."¹

To start, Prospero and Geoffrey, the dreamer from *The House of Fame*, have deceptively similar backgrounds. While one is a duke, the other kind of a dope, both men put themselves at a disadvantage by cutting themselves off from the world and studying excessively in isolation. We learn about Geoffrey's bad habits from the eagle on the flight through space. When Geoffrey gets home from work, the eagle says, he reads and writes alone in his room, shutting out other people, isolating himself from his neighbors and from new experiences (lines 641-60). "In thy studye, so thou writest," he says to Geoffrey, but "thou hast no tydynges" (633, 644); Geoffrey writes so much that he misses out on the thing writers need most: the eagle's word for it is "tidings," the gossip, news, and new stories that you get from putting yourself out there and interacting with other people. The eagle knows that Geoffrey has been a dedicated, but ineffective servant of love in his fruitless literary efforts, so he has come to take Geoffrey to a place full of all kinds of tidings, which he calls the House of Fame (614-40, 661-99).

Shakespeare turns Geoffrey's artistic problem into Prospero's political one: The same bad habits that get Geoffrey a talking-to from the eagle cause Prospero to lose his dukedom to his brother and get kicked out of Milan. Prospero attributes his treacherous usurpation to his own

¹ Greer's phrase. See Greer 34-44 for a persuasive reading of Prospero's life on the island as a literary metaphor. For a classic account of Prospero's rough magic that rejects the idea that, in the end, sympathy takes hold and he learns to forgive, see Berger.

bookish seclusion and negligence of state affairs. Foolishly, he left the work of government to his brother Antonio so that he could study and be alone: "The government I cast upon my brother, / And to my state grew stranger, being transported / And rapt in secret studies" (1.2.75-77). "Me, poor man," Prospero says, "my library / Was dukedom large enough" (109-10). It was Prospero's negligence that "Awaked an evil nature" in his brother and made his overthrow possible (93). Where Geoffrey's habit of shutting out other people is simply embarrassing and, from a writing perspective, counterproductive, Prospero's has devastating consequences. It awakes evil in his brother and allows him to win over the subordinates that Prospero should be leading to his side: Prospero says that Antonio "new created / The creatures that were mine" and managed to "set all hearts in'th' state / To what tune pleased his ear" once Prospero was out of the way (81-82, 84-85). Prospero's enemies push him and his daughter Miranda out to sea in boat that seems likely to sink, more an attempted murder than a forced banishment (140-51). His friend Gonzalo provides them with food and water and sneaks some of Prospero's books onto the boat (161-69). The circumstances, then, that brought Prospero and Miranda to the magical island are like those that bring Geoffrey to the House of Fame, with Prospero's political negligence taking the place of Geoffrey's interpersonal kind, and the dramatic stakes of the situation ratcheted up.

In this way, Shakespeare establishes an analogy between the magical powers Prospero finds on the island and the artistic ones Geoffrey finds at the House of Fame. The distinction, however, is that, where Geoffrey's reward of unlimited tidings comes at the end of Chaucer's poem, with no conflict to resolve other than the rather low-stakes situation of his own corrective journey into the recesses of his own mind, and there is simply no more to the story than that, in the case of *The Tempest*, because there is a dramatic situation to resolve as well, Prospero's powers are put to the test in a way that Geoffrey's never are. In this way, Shakespeare answers

Chaucer's portrait of the artist with his own, while adding a dramatic dimension to the model he found in Chaucer, which allows him to trouble, challenge, and further define that portrait. As an artist, Geoffrey only learns, only gains; Prospero has lost more, suffered more, and Shakespeare gives him more to do.

There are many points of correspondence between Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play, but we can begin with the endings of both and establish the main aesthetic analogy that this echo in the protagonists' backstories implies: Where, in *The House of Fame*, Geoffrey has to get to the point where he can renounce the desire for fame and even, it seems, let go of his own identity in order to come into his own as an artist, Prospero has to get to the point where he can let go of his artistic fire and accept his sameness with those he felt that it distinguished him from, in his audience, among his powerful peers, and so on, in order to rejoin the world of straight living and secure a future for his daughter. Geoffrey is at the beginning of his aesthetic adventure, Prospero the end, but they both come into a world of sound and voices at the whirling whicker and the enchanted island, and their progress at the end of their stories is marked by the need to accept certain conditions and liberate themselves from others.

We know from the eagle that Geoffrey begins as a kind of failed literary recluse, writing bad poems and reading books badly at home alone when he finishes up at his day job and until he is blue in the face. And we know that the eagle has diagnosed his problem as a tidings deficiency. Geoffrey's service of Love, the form of which is writing, will never be effective so long as he continues to bury his head in books and close himself off from exposure to tidings and new things. The eagle takes Geoffrey to the House of Fame both as a reward for his dedicated, albeit ineffective, service of Love and because he wants to point out this quality that is holding him back. On their way there, the eagle gives Geoffrey a bonus lecture on the nature of sound,

emphasizing its diversity ("Lowd or pryvee, foul or fair," "in many wyse" 767, 771) as well as its flatulent, percussive nature: "Soun is noght but eyr ybroken," he says, nothing but broken air (765). Strike or blow into an instrument, you simply break the air (771-81); and the same is true for speech (780). This disquisition on the nature of sound is to a certain degree conventional and, according to the explanatory note in *The Riverside Chaucer*, has the effect of "reducing language to the equivalent of any other noise or sound," even implying that *The Aeneid* is basically the same thing as farting (983n765-81). Since it follows the eagle's claim that Geoffrey lacks tidings in his writerly service of Love, though, the point of the eagle's lecture on sound is to break down the basic unit of poetry for Geoffrey, not to denigrate literature or to say something gross, or at least not only to do those things.

At the end of the poem, having come through the manic capriciousness of the House of Fame itself, Geoffrey is asked his name and whether he has come to this remote place to become famous (1868-72). Geoffrey not only renounces the desire for fame and good reputation, but also declines to give his own name. "I cam noght hyder," he says, "For no such cause" (1874, 1875). Geoffrey knows where he stands and does not need to get his name out there: He would prefer, as he puts it, that "no wight have my name in honde," because, "I wot myself best how y stonde" (1877, 1878). Geoffrey now knows what Lady Fame is like and how she operates, in his phrase, "the ordre of her dom" (1896-1906, 1905). He has come here, he says, only to gain access to, listen to, and learn from tidings, "Somme newe tydynges for to lere," "newe thynges," "wonder thynges" (1886, 1887, 1893). In the poem's final moments, then, Geoffrey commits himself to self-effacement and the renunciation of fame. He also commits himself, I think, to a form of creative alterity; the House of Fame, where he will reap the great harvest of tidings, is, paradoxically, all in his head, this being a dream, so the implication is that Geoffrey needs to let

go of his own identity and embrace the capacity for diversity and multiple perspectives within himself, to develop a method somewhat like Keats's notion of negative capability, though perhaps even more open. While it might be objected that, at this point in the poem, Geoffrey and the eagle are no longer explicitly talking about writing, so calling the quest for tidings a quest for literary materials is a stretch, I think the tidings Geoffrey accesses in the whirling whicker leave little doubt that his reward is a form of literary enlightenment.

For his reward, Geoffrey gains access to a great house that he describes as made out of multi-colored twigs (1935-40), shaped like a huge cage (1977-85), with as many entryways ways as trees have leaves in summer (1945-47), and which he thinks is more intricate than Daedalus' labyrinth (1920-23); the structure spins and makes a great sound (1924-30), and it is full of diverse tidings, ranging from war, peace, and marriage to, notably, "good or mys governement" (1975), among many other new things and tidings (1961-76). The eagle drops Geoffrey into this spectacular structure at a window; inside, he can listen in on a bustling marketplace of tiding-telling, where stories are told and retold, and tend to grow and get exaggerated as they pass from one figure to another (2034-75). Tidings fly fast out of the whirling whicker, as the structure is commonly called, so many "Wynged wondres, faste fleen" (2118). Perhaps the most significant figures that Geoffrey glimpses in the whirling whicker, though, are the pilgrims:

And, Lord, this hous in alle tymes
Was ful of shipmen and pilgrimes,
With scrippes bret-ful of lesinges,
Entremedled with tydynges,
And eek allone be hemselve.
O, many a thousand tymes twelve

Saugh I eke of these pardoners,
Currorus, and eke messengers,
With boystes crammed ful of lyes,
As ever vessel was with lyes. (2121-30)

Here, in the poem's final lines, Geoffrey reveals that the great chamber of tidings in his mind is, at all times, overrun with pilgrims, even the familiar shipmen and pardoner, all of them packing stories, carrying bags full of lies. The culmination, then, of Geoffrey's literary education in *The House of Fame*, which is unlocked by his willingness to let go of his books and even of himself and give in to ulterior voices and stories, is access to the figures that will populate Chaucer's masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*, which is yet to be written. In *The House of Fame*, Geoffrey comes into his own as an artist, expanding his poetic consciousness to the point that a new, polyvocal form is invented, or at least glimpsed.

Germaine Greer calls *The Tempest* Shakespeare's "poetics in action," an *ars poetica* in the form of a creative fiction, as opposed a more traditional prescriptive treatise, "the nearest thing to a systematic exposition of Shakespeare's poetic" we have (34). As we have seen, the same can be said for Chaucer's *House of Fame*. Greer, like many readers, sees Shakespeare's enchanted island as a metaphor for the stage and Prospero as its somewhat sinister stage manager. In Greer's schematic understanding of this active representation of poetics, which I favor, Ariel stands for collective imaginative power, the artist's creative stuff at work on the audience's aroused imaginary forces, and Caliban for a lower, less sophisticated type of audience involvement, one out of touch with that power, that of the mean pleasure-seeker, or the escapist (35, 40). In different ways, both figures yearn to be set free from Prospero's control, Caliban from his punitive enslavement, Ariel from a more enfranchised form of servitude stemming from

his obligation to Prospero for saving his life. In the end, Prospero frees Ariel to the elements, thus relinquishing the main functionary of his power, and pardons Caliban for attempting to murder him, even, it seems, restoring him to his native control over the island, since Prospero intends to return to Naples with his daughter and his former enemies. At the same time, however, Prospero announces, somewhat cryptically, that, while the clowns Stefano and Trinculo belong to the Italian visitors to the island, and not to him, that, "This thing of darkness," Caliban, "I / Acknowledge mine" (5.1.278-79). Prospero releases the higher form of his power outright; the lower part he releases from his heavy-handed control while, at the same time, claiming him, rather than cursing or disavowing him. Like Geoffrey, Prospero has to let something go, and to own up to some half-hidden part of himself, in order to bring his aesthetic journey to a close.

In the basic aesthetic analogy, then, Chaucer's poem depicts an artist discovering his creative powers, Shakespeare's play an artist letting go of his. In both cases, these powers were discovered at a station full of noises, Geoffrey's house of twigs and Prospero's enchanted island, but Shakespeare sharpens the image by swapping Chaucer's broad notion of tidings and wonder things, the ulterior voices and stories that the artist must access and surrender to in order to do his proper work, for the creative trinity of Prospero, Ariel, and Caliban, a creative power struggle between the artist, here a stronger, more domineering figure than in Chaucer, his poetic fire, and his reluctant reliance on the lower sensibilities of the crowd of pleasure-seeking consumers. Where Geoffrey must let go of the desire for fame and give in to the voices in his head in order to come into his own as an artist, Prospero has to release, again reluctantly, his beloved *duende* and then humble himself, aligning himself with the least among the followers of his magic, not to mention his former enemies, in order to set his artistic powers aside and secure a future for his daughter. Returning to the backstory echo with which we began, it is significant that where, in

Chaucer's poem, Geoffrey is reprimanded for neglecting his neighbors and others around him and eventually inherits a sea of ulterior voices in his own head, in Shakespeare's play, Prospero has to reconcile, in the end, with his enemies, the very people who, in an echo of Geoffrey's basic situation, he had lost track of while he was rapt in secret studies. In short, Shakespeare puts Prospero's artistic retirement in conversation with Geoffrey's artistic commencement, while substituting his own model of the mature poetic consciousness with Chaucer's of the developing kind.

Where Prospero's backstory, in which he ignores his administration, echoes Geoffrey's, in which he ignores his neighbors, the epilogue to *The Tempest* aligns Prospero with Chaucer's dreamers in an even more direct way. After abjuring his powers and setting his two henchmen free, Prospero addresses the audience directly, in humbled tones, in a conspicuously un-Shakespearean verse style, which is precisely the style of Chaucer's early dream visions, *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*: rhyming tetrameter couplets. It is as though the dream of the play has ended, and the dreamer reflects on what has passed and brings the poem to a calm conclusion. *The Book of the Duchess* ends this way, and Shakespeare may remember the dreamer's line, "This was my sweven; now hyt ys doon" (1335), in his own, "Now my charms are all o'erthrown (Epilogue 1). The main thing though is that Shakespeare refigures the personal challenges faced by the dreamers, insomnia and despair in *The Book of the Duchess*, an inability to understand dream theory and his own books in *The House of Fame*, which they own up to and turn to dreams to reckon with, if not solve, into the touching depiction of Prospero without his powers and at the point of "despair" himself (15). Where, in the fiction of the play, Prospero seemed bound for Naples already in the closing moments, in the epilogue he says that he cannot leave until the audience agrees to release him: "Now, 'tis true / I must be here confined by you /

Or sent to Naples" (3-5). This is an actor's way to get applause, of course, and when he says "this bare island" (8) in the epilogue, he surely means the stage, but Prospero is also completing the creative divestment that he began by freeing Ariel and Caliban. Because the audience has a share in the illusion, they must consent to its dismissal. In the verse style of Chaucer's dreamers, Prospero brings the dramatic dream vision of the play to its proper end. As Geoffrey surrenders, nameless, to the roar of tidings in the whirling whicker at the end of *The House of Fame*, Prospero presents himself, powerless, in this final moment, and surrenders to the noises of the audience. Geoffrey says hello to the noisy crowd that powers his new aesthetic. Prospero asks his to let him say goodbye for good.

In addition to Geoffrey's backstory, Shakespeare appropriates the bedtime stories from both *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame* into the design of *The Tempest*. Geoffrey's bedtime reading, Virgil's *Aeneid*, is the play's key classical intertext, which I will explore in a moment; the dreamer's Ovidian bedtime story from *The Book of the Duchess*, the touching tale of Ceyx and Alcyone, influences the characterization of Ariel. Remember that, in the dreamer's bedtime story, Morpheus, the god of sleep, is sent by Juno on an errand to the bottom of the ocean, where is he to recover the body of the drowned king Ceyx, whose wife, Alcyone, is worried sick over his long absence and longs to know whether he is dead or alive. In Chaucer's version of the story, Juno gives Morpheus some grim instructions: he is to "take up Seys body the kyng," "crepe into the body," and "do the body speke," in other words, bring the drowned corpse of Ceyx to Alcyone and speak through it to deliver the message of consolation, which Morpheus does (line 142, 144, 149). The dreamer's bedtime story includes mention of "a tempest," and a description of the shipwreck it causes (70, 68-75). The most important resonance

with *The Tempest*, however, is the figure of a supernatural runner of errands who works on the ocean, flies, does voices, and reunites family members who were separated by a shipwrecking storm; in this, Morpheus prefigures Shakespeare's Ariel.

To be sure, Ariel is more like Ovid's version of Morpheus than Chaucer's. In a scholarly note entitled "Morpheus, Leander, and Ariel," Elisabetta Tarantino points out convincing echoes of Ovid's version of the Ceyx and Alcyone story in Shakespeare's play, arguing – correctly, in my view – that the way Shakespeare blends allusions to Virgil and Ovid in *The Tempest* is a way of presenting himself, "as an *imitator*, last in a line of distinguished poets who had played with virtuoso capacity upon the same set of topoi" (489). For Tarantino, the key precursor in this connection is Christopher Marlowe; while I do not doubt her idea that Shakespeare was thinking, as he composed *The Tempest*, of the brief passage she references from Marlowe's poem "Hero and Leander" (lines 345-51), I would contend that Chaucer, who Tarantino does not mention, is the more important figure in the "line of distinguished poets" that Shakespeare reaches out to his imitations of Ovid and Virgil in the play. The reason Shakespeare chooses the Ceyx and Alcyone story as an object of creative imitation is that it is the dreamer's bedtime story in *The Book of the Duchess*, the engine of the dream in that poem. The reason he blends imitations of that particular story out of Ovid and Virgil's *Aeneid* is because they are the bedtime stories Chaucer uses in his dream visions.

While Shakespeare's Ariel is more like Ovid's version of Morpheus than Chaucer's when it comes to verbal echoes, he is more like Chaucer's than Ovid's when it comes to his function in fiction: Morpheus is the spirit of Chaucer's poem in that he represents rest and consolation; Ariel is the spirit of Shakespeare's play, representing first revenge, then forgiveness and reconciliation, and ultimately freedom. Tradition has it that Chaucer wrote *The Book of the Duchess* for the

consolation of John of Gaunt after the untimely death of his first wife, Blanche of Lancaster; the poem's story involves the rehabilitation of a depressed insomniac who thinks, until he reads his bedtime story and dreams his wonderful dream, that his condition is beyond hope. Morpheus, then, is the agent of the central theme of Chaucer's poem, consolation. When he takes up Ceyx's body, creeps into it, and makes it speak, as Juno instructed him, he brings it before Alcyone and implores her, as they say, to let it be: "Let be your sorwful lyf," he says, "And farewel, swete, my worldes blysse! / I praye God youre sorwe lysse" (202, 210). As Morpheus brings consolation to Alcyone, he brings rest to the dreamer, who overcomes his eight-year case of insomnia after reading the story. As both the god of sleep and the one who brings consolation to those that need it, Morpheus epitomizes Chaucer's consolatory dream vision.

Ariel embodies the spirit of *The Tempest* in much the same way that Morpheus does that of *The Book of the Duchess*: He is the figure that carries with him, and even partly controls, the play's theme. When we meet him, Ariel is the agent of Prospero's revenge, performing the tempest that Prospero designs, freaking Ferdinand out with his strange songs, and taunting him about his father's drowning in act 1 scene 2; later, in act 3 scene 3, he tantalizes Alonso and the rest of the shipwrecked Italians with a banquet and then, taking on the terrifying form of a harpy, makes it disappear and puts the fear of god in them with the "men of sin" speech (lines 53-82), reminding them of how they supplanted Prospero and sentencing them to "Ling'ring perdition" on the island (77). The way Juno employs Morpheus, Prospero employs Ariel, but for revenge, rather than consolation.

In a famous exchange in act 5 scene 1, Ariel tells Prospero that his enemies are now "all prisoners" at the mercy of his power (line 9). Surprisingly, though, he adds that the sight of them confined would make Prospero pity them, rather than make him angry: "Your charm so strongly

works 'em / That if you beheld them your affections / Would become tender," he says (17-19). Prospero seems to take this message to heart, admitting that "The rarer action is / In virtue than in vengeance" (27-28). When exactly Prospero decides not to kill Alonso, Antonio, and the others, and whether he ever intended to kill them at all, are certainly debatable issues. I only want to point out that Shakespeare presents Ariel here as the agent of the poem's theme, capable even of changing *The Tempest* from within from a revenge play into something else. Thus, while he may have more of Ovid's Morpheus in him than of Chaucer's in terms of textual echoes, Ariel's significance in the fiction of *The Tempest* is more like that of Chaucer's Morpheus in *The Book of the Duchess*: Morpheus epitomizes Chaucer's consolatory dream vision, while Ariel epitomizes Shakespeare's play, which ranges from revenge to reconciliation. Finally, while the two texts differ in the central themes that their Morpheus figures epitomize, they are similar in the sense that that figure heals what troubles his respective protagonist's mind, overcoming the dreamer's despair and Prospero's vengeful "fury" (line 26).

The Tempest is even more invested in Geoffrey's bedtime reading from *The House of Fame*, which is Virgil's *Aeneid*. I discussed Geoffrey's *Aeneid* in chapter 4 in connection with *Cymbeline*, so I will limit my description of it here to a brief reminder of a few key features. The translation is about 300 lines, ranging over the entire epic poem, but focusing on the affair between Dido and Aeneas, and taking her side when they break up. The central passage is a long speech spoken by Dido, in which she laments how she has been treated in the story (lines 300-60). The custom is to read the pro-feminine tendencies in Geoffrey's *Aeneid* as evidence of Chaucer's preference for Ovid's perspective on the story in *The Metamorphoses*, books 13 and 14, as well as Heroides 7, Dido's complaint to Aeneas. Geoffrey's *Aeneid* has more of an Ovidian flavor than a Virgilian one. It is also important to remember that, although Geoffrey's literary

education will not explicitly begin until the flight through space with the eagle later in the poem, his participatory, quasi-feminist engagement with Virgil's epic is the first step on the journey of the poem's *ars poetica*. Disagreement with Virgil, in other words, brings out the creative writer in Geoffrey. Many of the lines in Dido's lament have no source in either Ovid or Virgil, and Geoffrey even signs it, announcing that he acknowledges no other author: "Non other auctor allege I" (980n314, line 314). The remarkable fact is that *The House of Fame* and *The Tempest* both integrate twisted versions of *The Aeneid* into their fictions and feature protagonists who are authorial proxies, portraits of the artist. The purpose of this shared activity in creative imitation is to fashion a new poetic while dressing down the classical master at the same time.

While it may not have a traditional source, *The Tempest's* crucial intertext is with Virgil's *Aeneid*. As an adaptation of Virgil's epic poem, *The Tempest* is remarkably divergent. Instead of retelling all or part of the story of *The Aeneid*, as Marlowe does in his play *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, Shakespeare strips the epic poem for parts, so to speak, rearranging Virgil's narrative and poetic materials, and putting them to new uses. Readers and scholars know this, and a few models for understanding the intertext between *The Aeneid* and *The Tempest* stand out. For Jan Kott, for example, Shakespeare makes use of what he calls "the Virgilian code" throughout the play, lifting and repurposing incidents and passages from *The Aeneid* as he goes along (425). As Kott points out, the wonders Prospero performs correspond to events in the first four books of *The Aeneid*: shipwreck, rescue, harpy attack, disrupted wedding pageant, and so on. Kott calls the Virgilian code "the theater for Prospero's art," *The Tempest's* "second theater" of wonders, the more sophisticated counterpart to the rude mechanicals' own second stage in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (440-41), and ultimately the medium through which Shakespeare "invoke[s], challenge[s], and finally reject[s]" the Virgilian code (444).

In *Jonson, Shakespeare, and Early Modern Virgil*, Margaret Tudeau-Clayton argues that Ben Jonson and Shakespeare disagree about what it means to be a Virgilian poet and that in *The Tempest* Shakespeare writes back against the monolithic, authoritative figure of Virgil Jonson cultivates in the play *Poetaster* and in masques like *Oberon* and *The Masque of Queens*, taking the side of the storm, the insubordinate boatswain, and the island full of noises, some beyond the magician's control, and rejecting Jonson's relegation of unruly voices outside the circle of the classically initiated to the hell-space of anti-masque in favor of a more polyvocal and less solidly authoritative vision of the Virgilian (194-207). Tudeau-Clayton thinks Shakespeare's take on textual authority is a check on Jacobean absolutism as political authority; too neatly, I think, she labels Jonson's Virgil "a collaborator in cultural and social hegemony" and Shakespeare "a member of the resistance" (17). Where Kott gives us what I take to be the best description of Shakespeare's handling of Virgil from an artistic perspective, Tudeau-Clayton's is, reservations aside, the standard political interpretation.²

In my own view, the most significant thing about the intertext between *The Tempest* and *The Aeneid* is that Shakespeare couples it with something and makes it both an intertext and portrait of the artist as a poet-playwright. In this, I suggest, he engages *The Aeneid* the way Chaucer does *The House of Fame*; both texts take on the literary challenge of deconstructing Virgil as a way of framing their *ars poetica*. One common thread between the two projects seems to be the impulse to buck Virgil's literary authority, at least the monolithic, hegemonic version of it that Tudeau-Clayton attributes to the likes of Jonson, in favor of a more raucous and polyvocal vision of the art of English poetry, classically inspired. Another common thread is the preference for Ovid. No one would be surprised to hear that Shakespeare prefers Ovid to Virgil in general;

² For another perspective, sensitive to the arts of poetry and political power, see Hamilton.

in *The Tempest*, however, Ovidian tendencies disrupt Virgilian imitation. In *Shakespeare and Ovid*, Jonathan Bate argues that *The Tempest* subjects Virgil's narrative materials to the same irreverent treatment they received from Ovid in *Metamorphoses* 13 and 14, subsuming Virgil's imperial theme, as Ovid does, into "a demonstration of the pervasiveness of change" (245). This is undoubtedly accurate, but, as usual, the mediating middle voice of Chaucer is left out of the story. Geoffrey's *Aeneid* does an irreverent Ovidian sendup of Virgil, just like *The Tempest*, only, with *The House of Fame*, there are the additional connections between Geoffrey and Prospero's backstories, the dreamer's bedtime reading and Ariel's tendency to echo Morpheus, as well as, as we will see, the two stations "full of noises" where Geoffrey and Prospero attain greater artistic powers.

Both Chaucer's poem and Shakespeare's play are "full of noises." In addition to the roar of the whirling whicker, which Geoffrey says that you could hear in Rome if the sound was made in Paris (lines 1927-30), *The House of Fame* features the eagle's disquisition on the percussive, quasi-flatulent foundation of all sounds, already mentioned (765-822). Shakespeare appropriates both features of Chaucer's poem into the design of his play.

Even before we hear any of Ariel's songs or the twangling music of the island, *The Tempest* begins with a violent burst of sound, with the stage direction indicating, "A tempestuous noise of thunder and lightning heard." The first scene of the play, the shipwreck of the Italians, answers the noisy scene at the whirling whicker in Chaucer's poem. As you recall, Geoffrey approaches the cacophonous cage of twigs after declining to divulge his own name, an important milestone on his aesthetic journey. Soon after he gains access to the tiding-tellers in the whicker, the poem ends abruptly, in mid-sentence, as Geoffrey spies what seems to him "A man of gret

auctorite..." (2158). No one knows exactly what this means, but it does seem that Chaucer's poem breaks down when the deconstruction of authority in it that ranges from Geoffrey's irreverent *Aeneid* to Lady Fame's manic misrule to the ultra-democratic vision of the whirling whicker cannot survive the idea of a man of great authority. Not only does the dream end when this figure appears, the poem itself simply ceases to be.

In the shipwreck scene, the first scene of *The Tempest*, the boatswain of the ship bearing the noble Italians home from Tunis is trying desperately to keep the ship from falling apart under Prospero and Ariel's magical storm, while the highborn Italians, who apparently know nothing about sailing, order him around. Everyone know this, as everyone knows that part of the point of the scene is that there is no such thing as a king on a boat being torn apart by a storm; the power of a king is nothing compared to the power of nature. What I want to suggest is that, if the island is one analogue for the space station Geoffrey ascends to in *The House of Fame*, another, in miniature form, is the storm-tossed ship the play begins aboard, which resembles the whirling whicker in being made of wood, being full of holes and being riddled with sound, in this case both the tempestuous noise of thunder and lightning and the violent argument between the boatswain and the king's men. When Antonio asks, "Where's the Master, Boatswain?" (1.1.11), meaning the shipmaster, he answers, "Do you not hear him?" (12), meaning the storm; authority resides in the noisy storm, in other words, not in any one man. Then, in a famous line that I think is indebted to the scene at the whirling whicker, he asks, "What cares these roarers *for the name* of king?" (15-16 my emphasis). The boatswain taunts Gonzalo, saying "Use your *authority*" (20-21 my emphasis), as though his station at court could possibly help in such a situation. A name will do you no good at the whirling whicker, and the appearance of a man of great authority is enough to shut the whole system down; likewise, in the world of Shakespeare's play, storms

laugh off "the name of king" and authority will do you no good against this level of power. Shakespeare's play begins, then, roughly where Chaucer's poem ends, substituting the storm conjured by the mature artist for the storm of voices inherited by the one starting out. The implication here is that, where Chaucer's poem depicts the sources of Geoffrey's creative power, Shakespeare's play will show Prospero's put into action.

The music Ariel makes on the island is enough to alarm Stefano and Trinculo. Everyone knows Caliban's words of comfort to them.

Be not afeared. The isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices
That if I then had waked after long sleep
Will make me sleep again; and then in dreaming
The clouds methought would open and show riches
Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked
I cried to dream again. (3.2.130-38)

I notice that, in addition to the bare mention of dreams, this famous speech alludes in several ways to Chaucer's eagle and the flight through space. As the eagle teaches Geoffrey, with divine authority, about tidings and their home at the House of Fame, as well as the nature of sound, Caliban teaches Stefano and Trinculo, in an inept but lovely way, about the sounds of the island, his understanding of them, anyway. First, Caliban's 'fear not' and his references to instruments in the sky align him with Chaucer's eagle. When the eagle swoops down and gets Geoffrey and then, carrying him away in his talons, starts talking to him in English, Geoffrey is understandably

concerned that he is about to die and asks if this is the way he is going out: "Shal I noon other wayes dye?" (585). Compare Trinculo, when he hears Ariel's music: "O, forgive me my sins;" Stefano: "Mercy upon us!" (3.2.125, 127). Geoffrey infers that Jupiter has decided to kill him and make him into a star ("me stellyfye" 586), but the eagle, like Caliban, tells him that he has the wrong idea and starts to explain things to him so that he will not be afraid. He says:

"Thow demest of thyself amys,
For Joves ys not therabout –
I dar wel put thee out of doute –
To make of the as yet a sterre;
But ere I bere the moche ferre
I wol the telle what I am,
And whider thou shalt, and why I cam
To do thys, so that thou take
Good herte, and not for fere quake." (596-604)

Despite many obvious, serious differences between the eagle and Caliban, in these moments they both take on the dual role of comforter and teacher, assuring their students that they are not about to die, as they imagine, and that they need not be afraid. Since the eagle teaches Geoffrey how best to serve the god of love and Caliban teaches Stefano and Trinculo how best to murder Prospero, the intertext Shakespeare is going for here is undoubtedly parodic, an impression compounded by Caliban's description of twangling instruments in the sky.

Remember that the eagle informs Geoffrey that sound is nothing but agitated air ("eyr ybroken" 765) and that all sounds are basically the same, whether they are farts or an epic poem.

Speech, he says, is like the sound any instrument makes, and he provides two examples, a pipe and a harp, although there is little difference between them:

"For whan a pipe is blowen sharpe,
The air ys twyst with violence
And rent – loo, thys ys my sentence.
Eke whan men harpe-strynges smyte,
Whether hyt be moche or lyte,
Loo, with the strok, the ayr tobreketh;
And ryght so breketh it when men speketh." (774-80)

Notice the violent, percussive language: Blow into a pipe and the air will be 'twisted with violence and rent' into making a sound; when a harpist touches the strings, he 'smites' them, no matter how 'light' his touch is. By contrast, Caliban's "thousand twangling instruments" only "hum" harmlessly about his ears; where, in Chaucer, you have to kind of hurt an instrument and then hurt the air to make any sound at all, Caliban claims the sounds of the island are totally innocuous, they, "give delight and hurt not."

It is tempting to say that here Shakespeare, via the medium of parodic intertextuality, is disagreeing with Chaucer about the sounds of poetry, elevating our sense of their elegance from the level of Chaucer's irreverent, flatulent presentation. Again, though, we have to remember that the eagle speaks with Jove's own authority and that Caliban is clearly giving the amateur version of the tour of the island. For him, the sounds and voices of the island are for pleasure only, with no power like the power Prospero derives from them and puts them to. I would suggest that, while Caliban's Chaucerian echoes are mostly of the eagle's words, the register in which he speaks, and his naive relationship to the instruments he hears twangling in the sky, have more in

common with Geoffrey, Chaucer's so-called naïve dreamer. Caliban loves the noises in the sky but has no idea what they signify or the power they hold. In a quite similar way, Geoffrey admits in the opening lines of *The House of Fame* that he is not able to interpret his dream, and that the finer distinctions in dream theory are not his area either; he can only retell them in an attitude of abject wonder (1-60). The allusion, then, is a conflated one, bringing together the eagle's lessons and Geoffrey's affable ignorance.

On the other hand, it is remarkable that the savage Caliban speaks perhaps the most elegant lines in the play, elevated to eloquence by the rich and strange sonic attractions of the island he loves. "Of all the inhabitants of the isle," Germaine Greer glosses the speech, "none appreciates what Prospero and Ariel create more than Caliban." For Greer, the speech is Shakespeare's "salute to the groundlings," the emblem of his preference for "the theatre of daylight" of the public theaters, as opposed to the more insular, aristocratic lamplight theater circumstances had driven him to by the time *The Tempest* was written and performed (39); Caliban represents the recreational audience member of the theater of daylight, pleasure-seeking and unreflective but nevertheless crucial, "the sensuous conduit through which the dramatist's art is made flesh" (40). It may even be possible to link Shakespeare's memory of the noisy groundlings of the public theater and their clamor in the wooden O he preferred to the new Jacobean theaters of lamplight with the roaring hustle and bustle of the whirling whicker, and to say that in adapting *The House of Fame* in *The Tempest* Shakespeare makes Caliban the mouthpiece of that nostalgia and of the connection between the whirling whicker and the playhouse. The Globe and the whicker are both, at least, round, wooden, and raucous.

Finally, Caliban's mention of the "voices," that he hears, that "make him sleep again," even after he wakes up from a long slumber, and the dreams in which he thinks the clouds "open

and show riches," they are ready to drop on him, so enticing that he "cried to sleep again," strike me as a clear instance of parodic allusion to the situation in *The House of Fame*. The implication is that Chaucer's poem naively presents poetic inspiration as something that just falls out of the sky; the voices are there in the whirling whicker, you only need to keep dreaming in order to access them. Broadly, Caliban's naïve attitude that dreaming is better than real life, that he should 'cry to dream again,' when he wakes up is, in its irresponsibility, the kind of thing that Geoffrey might say, and precisely the quality in Chaucerian dream that Shakespeare is parodying in the speech and setting his own, more mature portrait of the artist, and the artistic consciousness, in contrast to. Geoffrey, we learn, has served Love ardently but in vain and has yet to receive any reward ("guerdon" 619); the reason for their journey into the sky is to get Geoffrey his "recompensacion" (665) in the form of tidings from the House of Fame – voices, literary poetic riches, in other words, in the sky.

Established connections between Chaucer and *The Tempest* revolve around a well-known allusion to The Franklin's Tale. When, after abruptly ending the wedding masque he conjures for Ferdinand and Miranda, Prospero says, "Our revels now are ended" (4.1.148), he echoes The Franklin's words when the magician in his tale abruptly ends his own magic show: "farewel! Aloure revel was ago" (1204). So in addition to channeling Ovid's Medea in his 'rough magic' speech, Prospero also channels a magical forebear out of Chaucer.

Also, John Simons notices broad, schematic "reverse correspondences" between the Franklin's Tale and *The Tempest*: He points out that 1. Magic causes a shipwreck in *The Tempest*, but it prevents one in The Franklin's Tale, and 2. While, in both texts, magic is a matchmaking force, it is used to protect chastity in *The Tempest*, but to destroy it in the tale (56). As Richard

Hillman puts it, “the main magical event[s]” of the two texts are nearly “mirror-image[s]” of each other (428). In other words, Shakespeare reverses the design he found in Chaucer's tale.

For Hillman, the Franklin's Tale magician is a psychic puppet master who, like Prospero, sets the whole thing up and knows all along that all will be made right in the end (431-32). Lewis Walker takes up this thread, exploring the two magicians' preoccupation with dramatic timing, and taking Prospero's difficulties in that area as evidence of his imperfections as an artist (125). Finally, Sherron Knopp sees *The Franklin's Tale* as a kind of defense of poesy where the magician stands for Chaucer and poetry, The Franklin for the poet-haters, and where "the crowning illusion" of "the impression of fiction dissolving into real life, and the voice of the narrator becoming the voice of the poet" is the main point of connection with *The Tempest* (350). Here, again, the speech after the wedding masque and its connection to the Franklin's Tale magic show is of central importance.

In my view, Shakespeare's divergent imitation of *The House of Fame* in *The Tempest* and the rival adaptation of Virgil it comprises supplement the established work on *The Tempest* and *The Franklin's Tale*. Shakespeare has brought the Franklin's Tale magic show and the metapoetry of the dream visions together before – in the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew* – as a way of catalyzing and carving out his own self-deprecating self-portrait of the artist in contrast to Chaucer's (see chapter 2). In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare's version of the Franklin's Tale magician meets his version of the literary work Chaucer (along with Geoffrey) does in *The House of Fame*, namely, crafting a creative *ars poetica* out of an off-the-rails imitation of Virgil's ur- and supremely authoritative epic, *The Aeneid*.

Prospero's books make the journey from Milan to the island. In Milan, they were the reason for his overthrow. On the island, they become the source of his power. It was Prospero's

bookish isolation that allowed his brother Antonio to usurp his position. With the same books, he takes it back, albeit belatedly. To say, then, that, like Geoffrey, Prospero has to overcome his counterproductive bookish isolation is only part of the story. After the magic show, Chaucer describes the magician and his audience sitting stunned "in his studie, ther as his bookes be" (1207). However it is that the magician is able to conjure the images in the show – with a crystal ball, an illustrated manuscript, mind-altering drugs, or "real" magic - we don't know – Chaucer makes it clear that the he does it in a room with books in it. The cryptic association of books and magical powers, including powers of illusion, relates to Prospero and the magic books he keeps within his cell. Shakespeare, then, aligns the old Prospero with the crisis in *The House of Fame*, the new one with the powerful magic of *The Franklin's Tale*. It is as though Prospero matured from a refigured naïve dreamer into a new version of the *Franklin's Tale* magician; he grew up, as it were, in terms of his relationship to Chaucerian meta-poetry. As a maker of illusions with powers mysteriously connected to his book collection, Prospero resembles *The Franklin's Tale* magician. As a master of sounds with powers mysteriously connected to a base station "full of noises," he resembles Geoffrey at the end of *The House of Fame*. He's a hybrid figure, a dynamic composite of ancestors out of Chaucerian metapoetry.³

Rough magic. Prospero's rough magic speech (5.1.33-57) adapts Medea's incantation from Book 7 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, linking Shakespeare's magic duke to a notorious black witch. The speech depends both on Ovid's Latin version and Arthur Golding's English translation of Medea's magic words. The most striking difference between Medea's speech and

³ Lerer and Williams provide a different model: they connect *The Tempest* to Chaucer's handling of the assassination of Julius Caesar in *The Monk's Tale* and argue that Prospero is "a Jacobean Caesar" (407).

Prospero's seems to be that, where she calls on powers of the night to come to the aid of her magic work, send down her dragon car, and so on, Prospero invokes the elves and spirits that assist his magic deeds not to employ them but to kind of say goodbye and draw them into an idle stillness. Medea is getting ready to rock, Prospero to retire, so the allusion is a little puzzling.⁴

For Charles and Michelle Martindale, in *Shakespeare and the Uses of Antiquity*, the rough magic speech's connection with Ovid is "imitative, not allusive" (23). In other words, when Prospero evokes Medea, he delivers a standalone set piece that would have pleased members of his early modern audience familiar with the passage in Ovid, but not an invitation for scholars to explore the intertext between the *Metamorphoses* and *The Tempest*. In *Shakespeare and Ovid*, by contrast, Jonathan Bate sees *The Tempest* as "a kind of collaboration with Ovid," Shakespeare's "metamorphic romance" (239, 240). Where scholars have explored connections between *The Tempest* and another classical text, Virgil's *Aeneid*, Bate says that it is actually hard to make sense of the Virgilian touches in *The Tempest* without Ovid's help. Bate argues that Shakespeare adapts Virgil and his imperial theme in much the same divergent way Ovid does in *Metamorphoses* 13 and 14; in both texts, "the imperial theme" out of Virgil "is subsumed into...a demonstration of the pervasiveness of change" (245).

In my view, when Prospero channels Medea in the rough magic speech, he is answering a related gesture on Chaucer's part in the first book of *The House of Fame*: Where Geoffrey, on his quest to become a more sophisticated man and poet, sympathetically slips Dido into the starring role in his version of *The Aeneid*, retold from inside a dream, and, in a stunning speech (lines 300-60), allows her voice to dominate, Prospero takes on the voice of Medea when, amid his quest for revenge and restitution, his own sympathy is unexpectedly aroused. In both texts, the

⁴ For a useful elaboration of this point, see Burrow 131-32.

literary artist makes an emblem out of a jilted Ovidian heroine amid a divergent adaptation of Virgil. The difference is that, in Chaucer, the channeling is productive and sentimental, a subversive, pro-feminine revision of Virgil's epic on the way to even richer poetic revelations. In Shakespeare, by contrast, the heroine is not a victim having her day but a potent magician and a killer evoked in order to culminate and extinguish rather than inaugurate poetic power. In typical fashion, Shakespeare reverses a design he finds in Chaucer and revises it, scrubbing Chaucer's sentimental handling of female figures.

In both texts, the artist-hero is driven to speak in a female voice by newfound sympathy. As Geoffrey dreams his retelling of *The Aeneid*, he takes Dido's side of things, corrupting Virgil's epic strain from within. According to the editors of *The Riverside Chaucer*, Geoffrey's *Aeneid* exaggerates Aeneas' guilt and adds an Ovidian catalogue of false lovers in order to burn him by association, thus betraying a more romantic and pro-feminine view of the story than his source (980n240-382, 981n388-426). Geoffrey also implants a long new speech, "Dido's lament," in which she wishes were never born and, in a meta-fictional touch, laments her part in a story sure to be told forever. Most of the speech is original Geoffrey, not translated Virgil. He even signs it: "Non other auctour alegge I" (line 314). "The originality," of the passage, write the Riverside editor, "is presumably inspired by his aroused sympathy for Dido" (981n314); in other words, Geoffrey begins to find his own voice as a writer through the process of loosely translating Virgil and, by indulging his sympathy for Dido, starts to form a new fiction from within.

Shakespeare has Prospero channel Medea in a similar way, surprised by sympathy. Before he launches into the rough magic speech ("Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves..."), Prospero chats with Ariel, his magic henchman. Ariel tells Prospero that his enemies are now his prisoners and that they helplessly await his revenge, but adds that if he could see

them now, so much in thrall to his power, his heart might be moved to pity rather than wrath: "Your charm so strongly works 'em / That if you now beheld them your affections would become tender" (5.1.17-19). Intrigued, Prospero asks Ariel if he really thinks this is so; Ariel's famous response is that, although he is a spirit, even his own affections would be moved by such a sight, as he puts it, "were I human" (line 21). Prospero comes around and, conceding that "the rarer action is / In virtue than in vengeance" (27-28), resolves to reconcile with his enemies, rather than exact his revenge on them. What follows this surprising exchange between Ariel and Prospero about their sympathy for the enemy is the speech where Prospero channels Medea.

As in Geoffrey's loose, creative translation of *The Aeneid*, Prospero's sympathy is aroused from within his own creative process. Ariel is a character in the play, but he also stands for Prospero's *duende*, his artistic fuel and fire, so it is important that it is Ariel who convinces him to forgo vengeance, and it is Ariel's capacity for pity, despite the fact that he is not a human being, that really makes his message sink in with Prospero: "Hast thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling / Of their afflictions, and shall not myself, / One of their kind...?" (5.1.21-23). In other words, it is not the fact of the matter, but the behind-the-scenes conversations between the artist and his creative spirit, in the process of writing, that inspires a new kind of story out of a new sympathy. Notice Ariel's word choice: he doesn't say, your enemies look so sad or in pain that if I were human I would pity them, he says that it is because Prospero's charm has such power over them ("Your charm so strongly works 'em...") that pity is evoked. In other words, they are making artistic, rather than moral, adjustments. As Harry Berger argues in his classic article, "Miraculous Harp," we should not understand what happens here sentimentally, as though Ariel is teaching Prospero how to be a better man; we should understand it in literary terms, as though Ariel is pointing out the possibility of a satisfying plot twist, a more interesting way to end the

story. Like Chaucer, Shakespeare makes adjustments within the fiction-making process; like him they are inspired by sympathy and culminate in a disruptive speech by a heroine out of Ovid.

Again, for Jonathan Bate, as an adaptation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, *The Tempest* is shot through with Ovidian subversion. This is the also the conventional view of Geoffrey's *Aeneid* in Book 1 of *The House of Fame*. One text is a divergent Renaissance imitation, the other a dreamy medieval translation, but beneath very different narrative surfaces is a very similar type of literary work. For Bate, Shakespeare seems, in *The Tempest*, to be adapting *The Aeneid* but handles the material in a way more reminiscent of Ovid, a process which culminates in the rough magic speech, a direct imitation of a passage in the *Metamorphoses*. In Chaucer, Geoffrey purports to translate *The Aeneid* from inside a dream, but Ovidian subversion keeps cropping up, a process culminating in Dido's lament. Chaucer takes Dido as his emblem of Ovidian rebellion within a divergent adaptation of Virgil; Shakespeare answers this gesture, taking Medea instead. In other words, Bate is, in my view, correct; he only misses the mediating voice of Chaucer, and the last text of the composite intertext, *The House of Fame*.

As Dido is to Chaucer, then, Medea is to Shakespeare. The rough magic speech answers Dido's lament. Shakespeare advances his own female emblem of creative power out of Ovid to rival the one he found in Chaucer. That he answers Chaucer's gesture in this way, however, does not mean Shakespeare agrees with it, and the distinctions between Dido's lament and the rough magic speech are typical of Shakespeare's responses to Chaucer: He takes the older poet's design and reverses it, scrubs it of its sentimentality, particularly sentimentality toward women, and suspends what was propulsive and productive in it into a kind of stillness. *The House of Fame* proceeds in three parts, of which Geoffrey's *Aeneid* is only the first: the dream translation in Book 1, the flight through space with the eagle in Book 2, and the visit to the whirling whicker in

Book 3. Each episode is like a class in Geoffrey's MFA curriculum; before the eagle can teach him about the importance of tidings to the creative process and reveal the mother lode of tidings to him at the whirling whicker, Geoffrey has to pass through the divergent translation of *The Aeneid* and find his own voice, amid the stronger ones of his classical forebears, in Dido's lament. No longer beholden to the hyper-masculine epic strain, having found his own voice in his impersonation of Dido's, Geoffrey can pass to the eagle's more advanced instruction on the flight through space. Put another way, Geoffrey has to kind of rescue a female victim out of a familiar story, and to allow her to give her side of things, before he can advance to deeper poetic insight. In Shakespeare the situation is much different.

The purpose of Medea's incantation in *Metamorphoses* 7 is to gather her magic ministers to her aid. But Prospero channels her incantation in the rough magic speech just to shout out his own magic elves and demi-puppets rather than to actually put them to any work. The purpose of Dido's lament in Geoffrey's *Aeneid* is to catalyze a new, still-burgeoning poetic voice. But Shakespeare answers this gesture in the rough magic speech for the exact opposite purpose: in order to bring Prospero's creative power, and perhaps his own, to a retiring end. Dido is a victim of Aeneas' abandonment and, perhaps, the cold, duty-bound stoicism and hyper-masculinity of Virgil's epic. It falls to Geoffrey to rescue her in Book 1 of *The House of Fame*. Here, again, Medea's case is in some ways similar, but not the same. While readers and scholars tend to emphasize Medea's status as a black witch and a child-killer, and to wonder how much of that blackness we should attribute to Prospero when he calls her out in the rough magic speech, mindful of his strange claim in that speech to have raised the dead, opened their graves, and led them back out into the world (5.1.48-50), when we meet her in *Metamorphoses* 7, Medea is not yet an evil presence, but instead very much a lover and magic helper to a stranger, Jason, that has

arrived in her country and is involved in a conflict with her father. First Medea helps Jason overcome the challenges her father puts between him and his target, the golden fleece. With her help, he yokes a pair of fire-breathing oxen and ploughs a field with them; then he sows the ground with dragon teeth and overcomes the armies that spring up from these seeds. The incantation itself is for another purpose: Jason asks Medea to take years from his own life and grant them to his aged father. It is this task that requires Medea's dragon car and magic midnight ministers.

In this light, it is difficult to agree with the Martindales that the rough magic speech is "imitative, not allusive." There is a lot in Medea's story that relates to Prospero and Miranda's. What seems all along, in *The Tempest*, to be a divergent adaptation of *The Aeneid* is revealed at the moment of the rough magic speech to be a new version of the Jason and Medea story as well. Where Prospero had, to this point, been playing the role of Aeetes, Medea's father, who stands in the way of his daughter's (Medea-Miranda) union with the stranger (Jason-Ferdinand) and makes him do annoying things like yoke oxen from hell or lug heavy logs around, in this moment he changes parts and puts himself in the position of Medea herself, the savior of the Argonauts – that is, in *The Tempest* version of the story, the ship full of nobles from Naples and Milan. More dimly, the specter of Aeson, Jason's father, who would recover his youth, also hangs over *The Tempest*; no such magic is available to Prospero, who may recover his position and country, but not his lost years – "retire me to my Milan, where / Every third thought shall be my grave" (5.1.313-14).

Medea has some Dido in her, some of the jilted lover, but she is not a victim in the end. Shakespeare has Prospero channel her not in her murderous fury but in the height of her magic, bold-as-love power, in sharp distinction to Chaucer's sentimental presentation and poetic rescue

of Dido. Shakespeare's Medea is *the one who rescues*. Everyone knew, just like everyone still knows, who she will become; Shakespeare is not trying to make us see her another way, to win us to her side. He simply shows that, like Chaucer, he can do Ovid's feminine voices amid the tempest of Virgilian adaptation, but he chooses for his own artistic emblem, not a victim in an attitude of lament, but a powerful, magical woman in love, later a ruthless killer. In this, he contends with Chaucer as an Ovidian poet, delivering a multi-faceted emulation of Ovid in conversation with Chaucer's one-dimensional one. There is more in Ovid than sympathy for the female, he seems to say, and more power in his female characters, than you get across in Dido's lament. Taking Medea, rather than Dido, as his female Ovidian emblem is Shakespeare's way of showing that he subsumed more of Ovid's poetic power and sophistication than Chaucer.

I do not think that it is possible to deduce pat conclusions from all that Shakespeare does to the various features of *The House of Fame* in *The Tempest*. Powerful, elegant ideas like Germaine Greer's, that Shakespeare's "poetics in action" in *The Tempest* evince his belief that art and nature exist in a continuum are, I think, finally unavailable in this intertextual connection. What I have tried to do is point out Shakespeare's emulations of, and divergences from, Chaucer's literary *work*, rather than a work of literature – his use of the bedtime reading move, especially his dressing down of Virgil's *Aeneid*, his taking of a jilted Ovidian heroine as a poetic emblem, and his extraordinary vision of a remote station riddled with sounds where an artist can expand his creative consciousness. In *Shakespeare and the Medieval World*, Helen Cooper says that "Chaucer gave him [Shakespeare] high-octane fuel for his imagination, but he used it to propel his plays on very different trajectories. What he took from Chaucer was not primarily words or phrases, but big ideas, big structures, and strong disagreement" (210). My sense is that

Shakespeare admired Chaucer's poem, most of all for its attempt to create a behind-the-scenes image, fantasy style, of the art of poetry, and set out to answer it with his own vision, altered for the stage, but that he quibbled with Chaucer's apolitical, arguably sentimental presentation of poetic art, with his denigration of the nature of sound, even as he emphasized its importance to the poet, and with his rather broad and outlandish (however wonderful) idea of a gossip factory in space. This is not to suggest that *The House of Fame* is Chaucer's last word on various poetic subjects – far from it – or that *The Tempest* is Shakespeare's, only that the intertext between them affords a precious opportunity to see them vie with each other as literary artists at their creative work.

CHAPTER 6: SHAKESPEARE AND JONSON, RIVAL CHAUCERIANS

In the previous chapter, I made the case that Shakespeare integrates the bedtime stories from Chaucer's dream visions, notably Virgil's *Aeneid*, as well as the idea of a sound station in space – or, in Prospero's case, on an island – where an artist can attain a new level of creative power, into the design of *The Tempest*, staging a fictive *ars poetica* in that play to rival Chaucer's in *The House of Fame*. In this final chapter, I want briefly to apply this insight to the intertext between *The Tempest* and Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queens*, starting with the striking fact that Jonson set his masque in Chaucer's House of Fame, and suggest that Shakespeare considered himself Jonson's rival in the reception and creative imitation of Chaucer's poetry – rival Chaucerians, rival Chaucerian poets, not merely rival playwrights.¹ In many ways, it must be said that Jonson is the clear victor in this creative competition, but Shakespeare distinguishes himself in cultivating a searching engagement with Chaucer's often unruly poetics, as they are represented in the dream visions, *The House of Fame* especially, to rival Jonson's way of upholding, and claiming for himself, Chaucer's great literary authority.

The established sense of an intertext between Jonson's masque and Shakespeare's play starts with the fact that, in both texts, witches are overcome by a superior power. In the masque, a gathering of witches led by Dame, their chief, is made to disperse suddenly, even at the height

¹ For an old, related theory, that Shakespeare vies with another man of letters, the editor Thomas Spight, as a rival in bringing Chaucer's poetry to a new audience, see Ord 38-51. For the evidence that Shakespeare and Jonson roistered together at the Tabard and cut their names into the panels of Chaucer's famous roadhouse, see Carlin.

of their evil conjurations, by the appearance of twelve queens, played by Jonson's cast of female masquers, enthroned atop the House of Fame. Perseus, representing "*heroic and masculine virtue*," descends, announcing, "So should, at Fame's loud sound and Virtue's sight, / All dark and envious witchcraft fly the light" (342sd, 344-45). Perseus, or Heroic Virtue, then introduces the queens and calls Fama Bona forward for the masque's crowning moment. This is the whole matter of the play – an anti-masque of witches, led by Dame, their chief, gives way, at the sound of Fame and the sight of virtue, to a masque of virtuous queens, enthroned at the House of Fame, with Fama Bona given pride of place among them.

In *The Tempest*, Prospero's magical rule over the island follows that of Caliban's mother, Sycorax, who Prospero refers to as a "damned witch" (1.2.264). When, before Prospero's arrival, Ariel refused to obey her commands, Sycorax imprisoned him, with the help of the "more potent ministers" of her powerful magic, and driven by her "unmitigable rage" (266, 267). Prospero did not overcome Sycorax in a magicians' showdown. It seems that she died before his arrival, leaving her unmagical son in charge and Ariel stuck. But he does overcome her in the sense that he reverses the legacy of her reign, freeing Ariel from prison and enslaving Caliban. It is also implied that his new form of magic is a rarer and more powerful kind than hers. What Caliban calls "the charms / Of Sycorax," the "toads, beetles, bats" that she used for her black magic (341-42), are the same kind of materials used by the witches in Jonson's anti-masque – black cats, toads, bats, charms, and so on – but not by Prospero. Where heroic fame drives out the witches in Jonson's masque, Prospero's new kind of magical rule over the island replaces Sycorax's in Shakespeare's play.

Complicating this established analogy, the primary textual echo of Jonson's masque in *The Tempest* is Prospero's echo of a phrase, not from Heroic Virtue or the goddess Fama Bona, but from Dame, the chief witch in the anti-masque. In her big speech, an invocation, like Prospero's rough magic speech, in the style of Medea's invocation from *Metamorphoses* book 7, Dame announces that she and her team of witches, among other acts of magical mischief, "have set the elements at wars, / Made midnight see the sun, and day the stars" (213-14). Remember Prospero's lines, in his own speech of invocation: "I have bedimm'd / The noontide sun, call'd forth the multitudinous winds, / And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault / Set roaring war" (5.1.41-44). Jacqueline E. M. Latham was the first to point out that the image Shakespeare lifts the image of war between the elements of sea and sky from Jonson, and that it does not appear in Ovid's version of Medea's invocation or Golding's translation of it, the known sources of the rough magic speech; Shakespeare relies, then, not only on Ovid and Golding, but on the language of the witches in Jonson's anti-masque for his great description of Prospero's tempest-making magical powers (Latham 163). Margaret Tudeau-Clayton makes sense of this complication in the Queens-Tempest connection by claiming that Shakespeare resists, in this moment, Jonson's clean dichotomy between masque and anti-masque, where that which is noisy and unruly is completely contained, aligning this formal distinction on Shakespeare's part with a kind of political protest against the absolute power of the Jacobean state: She writes, "while Jonson mobilises the analogy to underwrite the order of the absolute state, and to endorse a policy of repression, which the return to the main masque stages, Shakespeare aligns the performed tempest (and *The Tempest*) with this figure of dis-order" (140). Shakespeare's move here represents, for Tudeau-Clayton, "an interrogation of the main masque universe by the anti-

masque universe," resulting in the evocation of noisy, negative forces that resist containment and, ultimately, "cannot be mastered" in the way the simplistic hell-heaven structure of Jonson's masque insists they can (140).

In addition to these basic echoes, Latham points out that Jonson's masque was performed at Whitehall and then published in a quarto edition in 1609, just before the supposed date of *The Tempest*, so it was available in time to influence the play and had come out recently enough that Shakespeare's was a timely response (162). Latham suggests that the connection between Shakespeare's play and Jonson's masque accounts for the puzzling inclusion, in *The Tempest*, of such eclectic elements as Prospero overcoming a witch with his more benevolent form of magic, already mentioned, Ariel turning himself into a harpy, and the decidedly un-Shakespearean wedding masque in act 4, which Latham calls, "Shakespeare's most complete presentation of a dramatic form which was essentially occasional, aristocratic, allegorical and spectacular" (162). *The Tempest* may not have a narrative source, but it takes its disorienting cues from Jonson's masque, and even stages a masque of its own, against Shakespeare's habit of avoiding that form. "Reading *The Masque of Queenes*," Latham concludes, "one feels fairly certain that Shakespeare had seen or read it before writing *The Tempest*," adding that, since Jonson's anti-masque leans heavily on *Macbeth*, the influence was reciprocal (163).

The main purpose of this chapter is to supplement this established record of resemblances between Jonson's masque and Shakespeare's play by pointing out that both texts, in very different ways, appropriate aspects of Chaucer's dream vision *The House of Fame*. Where Jonson focuses on some of the more glorious features of the House itself and disregards the poem's highly skeptical view of fame as well as its unruly literary dimension, aspects that would not jibe with

the glories of his masque, Shakespeare writes a play that reaches out to Jonson's masque in the ways enumerated above, while appropriating the unruly aspects of the Chaucer poem that Jonson suppresses. I want to suggest that Jonson's highly selective handling of materials from Chaucer's poem in *The Masque of Queens* was the impetus for the composite intertextual design of Shakespeare's play, and that, where Jonson set out to bring Chaucer's authority to an aristocratic audience, building his own clout as a court poet in the process, and, indeed, succeeded at this project, Shakespeare is out to show that he can delve deeper than Jonson did into Chaucer's poem, appropriating more, and more difficult, aspects of it, into a more integral, and more authentically Chaucerian, creative adaptation.

By attending to the place of *The House of Fame* in the intertext between Jonson's masque and Shakespeare's play, you notice, among other things, that Chaucer's poem undergirds the debate over Virgil's legacy and literary influence going on there.² In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare responds not only to Jonson's handling of witches and black magic in a masque, but also his handling of Virgil's literary influence and authority. Predictably, perhaps, Jonson emerges here as a dutiful steward of Virgil's classical authority, Shakespeare the agent of its deconstruction. In *Jonson, Shakespeare, and Early Modern Virgil*, Margaret Tudeau-Clayton demonstrates that, for students in Shakespeare's day, Virgil was the model of a perfect writer and a perfect man, his works the gold standard of solid, substantive expression in a chaotic world of noise (44-77); for the initiated, who encountered Virgil in learned commentaries rather than textbooks, he was also a natural philosopher and even, like Prospero, a magician (78-101). In *Poetaster* and in several of his masques, including *Queens*, Tudeau-Clayton argues, Jonson presents Virgil as an

² For Virgil and *The Tempest*, see Kott and Hamilton. For the intertext among Virgil's *Aeneid*, Jonson's masques, and *The Tempest*, see Tudeau-Clayton.

authoritative poetic voice, a fitting literary analogue for an absolutist monarch such as King James. As "a collaborator in cultural and social hegemony" (17), Jonson adapts, not Virgil's poetry, in the sense of any aspect of appropriated craft, but rather his literary authority, fashioning himself into a state-sanctioned Jacobean poet the way Virgil was a state-sanctioned Augustan one. Tudeau-Clayton conceives of Shakespeare, by contrast, as "a member of the resistance" (17), who favors a different mode of adapting Virgil than the one Jonson advances in *Poetaster* and the masques, one which includes the wild cacophony of the storm, the diverse sounds of the island, and the insubordinate boatswain, energies that Jonson would relegate to and contain within anti-masque (194-207). In this light, it is Jonson's too-solid, state-sanctioned appropriation of Virgil, rather than his handling of classical literary materials themselves, that Shakespeare vies with. We do not have to accept the pat characterization of Jonson as a tool of hegemony and Shakespeare as a "member of the resistance" to profit from Tudeau-Clayton's sensitivity to the Virgilian dimension of Shakespeare's artistic rivalry with Jonson.

As I hope my elaboration, in the previous chapter, of allusions in *The Tempest* to *The House of Fame*, and particularly to its deconstruction of Virgil, as well as my discussion of Geoffrey's unruly *Aeneid* in chapter 4, make clear, the missing piece in Tudeau-Clayton's argument is the mediating voice of Chaucer in the intertext between Virgil's epic, Jonson's masques and play, and Shakespeare's play. The unruly energies that Tudeau-Clayton discerns in Shakespeare's Virgilian streak are part of his inheritance from Chaucer. Jonson's setting of *The Masque of Queens* in Chaucer's House of Fame, while suppressing the literary dimension of the poem of that name, was, I think, the impetus for Shakespeare's more searching, aesthetic adaptation of it in *The Tempest*. In vying with Jonson over the dramatic appropriation of Virgil, Shakespeare also vies with him as a rival Chaucerian, favoring an engagement with his unruly art

of poetry over Jonson's with his great authority; both of these dimensions are tied up in Chaucer's irreverent presentation of Virgil.

One final point before coming to Jonson's text: As Latham points out, one basic reason to believe that Shakespeare was thinking of Jonson and *The Masque of Queens* when he wrote *The Tempest* is that the play features a masque, the insubstantial pageant that Prospero puts on for Ferdinand and Miranda in act 4. Shakespeare, we know, never wrote a standalone masque for performance at court. Whether this highfalutin dramatic form was ill-suited to his talents or his tastes, its inclusion in *The Tempest* is striking and may suggest a purposeful intrusion into Jonson's creative area. To this Jonsonian feature of Shakespeare's play we might add another: *The Tempest* conforms, or nearly conforms, to the Aristotelian unities of action, place, and time. Shakespeare's habit of flouting the unities is commonplace; the explicit announcement, in the opening lines of *The Winter's Tale*, act 4, that Time will now slide o'er sixteen years is only the most egregious example of his irreverence toward the classical strictures Jonson honored. Adherence to the unities was a point of pride for Jonson as well as something he criticized other poet-playwrights for lacking: In the prologue to *Volpone*, Jonson distinguishes his own neoclassical creative practices from those of his unruly contemporaries, writing, "The laws of time, place, persons he observeth, / From no needful rule he swerveth" (qtd in Jacobs and White 211). *The Tempest*, then, not only features a masque, a form Shakespeare usually avoided and which Jonson was cornering the market on in the early years of the seventeenth century, but also makes it a point to conform, for the most part, to classical rules that were Jonson's signature and which Shakespeare usually ignored or mocked. What these conspicuously uncharacteristic features might suggest is that Shakespeare was trying to beat Jonson at his own game. By

establishing an intertext fraught with rivalries, over Virgil, Chaucer, and the depiction of witches, on his rival's creative terms, Shakespeare ups the potency of his poetic answer to Jonson.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Jonson's *Masque of Queens* is its setting in Chaucer's House of Fame. The subtitle of the quarto text announces this feature as though it were integral to Jonson's design: "The Masque of Queens / Celebrated from the House of Fame, by the queen of Great Britain / with her ladies. At Whitehall, February 2, 1609" (p. 122). Then, amid a grotesque anti-masque that features twelve witches dancing wildly and talking shop in a smoky hell, the stage directions describe a sudden and tremendous transformation:

In the heat of their dance on the sudden was heard a sound of loud music, as if many instruments had made one blast; with which not only the hags themselves but the hell into which they ran quite vanished, and the whole face of the scene altered, scarce suffering the memory of such a thing. But in the place of it appeared a glorious and magnificent building figuring the House of Fame, in the top of which were discovered the twelve masquers sitting upon a throne triumphal erected in form of a pyramid and circled with all store of light. (lines 334-41sd)

Jonson links this spectacular structure to the theme of his masque and to the dignity of the noble ladies it celebrates, writing, in his prefatory comments, "it was my first and special regard to see that the nobility of the invention should be answerable to the dignity of their persons," and, for that reason, "I chose the argument to be a celebration of honorable and true fame bred out of virtue" (3-5, 5-6). The setting in the House of Fame, then, is not merely ornamental, but rather

integral to Jonson's dramatic design. He set the masque in the House of Fame because the theme of his drama is virtue and authentic, honorable fame, which is virtue's natural reward.

All this makes perfect sense, except that Jonson sets his masque in *Chaucer's* House of Fame, a place that has an atmosphere like that of the New York Stock Exchange or a raucous racetrack, a place, moreover, where virtue and honor are entirely beside the point and fame is distributed in a wholly arbitrary manner. Jonson makes it clear that he means *Chaucer's* House of Fame, rather than Ovid's or any other writer's, in a stage direction describing the building Inigo Jones constructed for the masque:

First, for the lower columns, he chose the statues of the most excellent poets, as Homer, Virgil, Lucan, etc., as being the most substantial supporters of Fame. For the upper, Achilles, Aeneas, Caesar, and those great heroes which these poets had celebrated. All which stood as in massy gold. Between the pillars, underneath, were figured land battles, sea fights, triumphs, loves, sacrifices, and all magnificent subjects of honor, in brass, and heightened with silver. In which [Jones] professed to follow that noble description made by Chaucer of the place. Above were cited the masquers, over whose heads he devised two eminent figures of Honor and Virtue for the arch. (451-60sd)

The features of the structure that Jonson describes in this passage do correspond with certain features Chaucer mentions in his description of the House of Fame in his dream vision of that name, but Jonson is selective to the point of distortion. Chaucer does devote a short passage to a catalogue of great poets that Geoffrey sees on pillars in the House (lines 1451-1512). Consistent with Jonson's description of Virgil and the others as "the most substantial supporters of Fame,"

Chaucer says that Virgil, "bore hath up a longe while / The fame of Pius Eneas" (1484-85); Ovid is credited in similar terms: "he bar up wel hys fame," his being Love's (1490). In addition, the images of distinguished battles and sacrifices positioned "Between the pillars" in Jonson's description are a nice touch: Geoffrey sees wonders beneath him on his flight through space with the eagle, though not of this kind, and, in the whirling whicker, he hears about a wide array of situations that Jonson's list of great battles and loves elegantly reimagines: "Of werres, of pes, of mariages, / Of reste, of labour, of viages," and so on (1961-62). Jonson, then, captures one aspect of the House of Fame's interior, the permanent collection, so to speak, as well as the array of diverse incidents that is Geoffrey's main reason for going there.

A partial list of the features of Chaucer's House of Fame that Jonson does not include in his description of the structure Jones built for *The Masque of Queens*, however, will be enough to demonstrate that he completely misrepresents Chaucer's vision: Where Jonson's masque is about the validity of fame, Chaucer's poem is about its absurdity. Geoffrey is alarmed to find out that the House of Fame sits on a flimsy foundation of ice, which he calls "a feble fundament," "A roche of yse, and not of stel" (1132, 1130). In addition to its lack of structural integrity, the ice is covered with the names of famous people, but half of the names are difficult to read because they are "almost ofthowed," almost thawed (1143). Glory fades, it seems, and even the House of Fame itself will not stand forever.

While it is true that, inside the House of Fame, there are pillars honoring the poets Jonson honors in the masque, the place is also crawling with amateurs, with "alle maner of mynstralles / And gestiours that tellen tales," "al that longeth unto Fame" (1197-98, 1200). All kinds of storytellers, yearning for fame, not only those that have achieved it, are present here. The eagle

tells Geoffrey that, when he gets to the House, he will surely see, among other things, "moo berdys in two houres / Withoute rasour or sisoures / Ymad then greynes be of sondes" (689-91). In other words, the eagle promises Geoffrey that he will see more big, bushy beards at the House of Fame in two hours than there are grains of sand. Obviously, this is a very different, more comic tone than Jonson's with his land battles and love sacrifices, and the fact that the eagle may refer, with the word beard, to "tricks" and "delusions," suggests that the House of Fame is a place for tricksters and confidence men, not only epic poets and heroes (n689). Even the pillars themselves are compromised. As Helen Cooper has it:

The narrative does put on record the names of famous poets – Homer, Ovid, Virgil, and so on – but they are presented as quarreling with each other, and their own status as authorities falls with that, just as the dreamer's vision had opened by setting Virgil's and Ovid's versions of the story of Dido at loggerheads. ("Poetic Fame" 366)

In addition to this distortion, where Jonson's pillars honoring the poets, "All stood...as in massy gold," in Chaucer the description is more detailed, less gorgeous, and more various. Statius, for example, sits on a pillar of iron, painted all over with tiger's blood (1456-60). Virgil is on iron too, Ovid copper.

In Chaucer, Lady Fame is fiendishly arbitrary in the way she grants and denies suits. Again, Cooper sums the situation up nicely: "of the nine groups of people who come before her, only one is accorded fame in return for being worthy of it. The other eight are consigned to oblivion despite their worth, or accorded renown they have done nothing to deserve, or given the wrong reputation" ("Poetic Fame" 366). To my mind, Fame's treatment of the second group is

particularly brutal and indicative of the arbitrary nature of her pronouncements. The second group sues for fame on the basis of their "gentillesse" and their merit: "For we han wel deserved hyt" (1611, 1614). The text gives us no reason to doubt these credentials, but still Fame shuts the second group down hard. "As thryve I," she says, "ye shal faylle! / Good werkes shal yow nought availle" (1615-16). Fame's initial, brutal response, in other words, is that as long as she thrives, the second group will fail; good works will do them no good. Reconsidering, however, she makes it worse for the group, granting them infamy when they do not deserve it: "ye shal have a shrewed fame, / And wikkyd loos, and worse name, / Though ye good loos have wel deserved" (1619-21). ('Loos' means reputation.) We are, in short, a long way from Jonson's idea of "honor and true fame bred out of virtue;" in Chaucer's account, which Jonson's Chaucerian setting implies that he followed, or at least valued, virtue and fame have nothing to do with each other. Jonson's vision of fame is really the opposite of Chaucer's.

I am not suggesting that Jonson secretly did not read or did not understand *The House of Fame*. I am sure he did read it and completely understood the implications of the unruly features described above. In fact, Jonson makes it a point to specify, in a stage direction, that his goddess is from another source, several other sources, actually. He presents:

...Fama bona, as she is described (in *Iconologia* di Cesare Ripa), attired in white, with white wings, having a collar of gold about her neck and a heart hanging at it, which Orus Apollo in his *Hieroglyphica* interprets the note of a good Fame. In her right hand she bore a trumpet, in her left an olive branch; and for her state, it was as Virgil describes her, at the full, her feet on the ground and her head in the clouds. (422-29sd)

Jonson wisely leaves Chaucer's hysterical, sadistic Lady Fame out of his court masque in honor of the virtuous fame of the queen and her ladies. (She could have held her own with the witches in the anti-masque.) While awkward for readers in terms of coherence, setting the masque in Chaucer's medieval House of Fame and then repopulating it with a version of the goddess pieced together from classical texts allows Jonson to derive his figure of good Fame from classical poetry while, at the same time, paying tribute to the fame of classical poets themselves, because their statues stand on pillars in Chaucer's House, and, of course, to pay tribute to Chaucer; the richness of physical detail in Chaucer's description of the structure may have appealed to Jonson as well although, as we have already seen, he was highly selective, and even misleading, in that area too. The main thing is that Jonson wants the impressive features of Chaucer's structure, but not the mess that structure contains, or the lady in charge of it.

It also seems as though Jonson was not at all interested in the aesthetic dimension of *The House of Fame*, for which it is most famous today, its status, that is, as an *ars poetica*. Geoffrey's irreverent translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, his lesson in creative writing on the flight through space with the eagle, and the world of tidings he inherits at the whirling whicker have been described in previous chapters of this study. Without rehashing the details of these features, I would just highlight the moment before Geoffrey gets to the whirling whicker, when an unnamed figure asks him what his name is and whether he has come to this place to get fame (lines 1868-72). Geoffrey answers no, he has come "For no such cause," and even declines to give his name, saying, "Sufficeth me, as I were ded, / That no man have my name in honde. / I wot myself best how I stond" (1875, 1876-78). Secure in himself and undesirous of fame, in other words, Geoffrey ends the poem in an attitude of self-effacement; the only thing he is interested in is

listening and learning, taking in diverse tidings, "newe tydynges for to lere," "newe thinges," "Of love or suche thynges glade" (1886, 1887, 1889). John Fyler, the editor of the poem in *The Riverside Chaucer*, calls *The House of Fame*, "Chaucer's fullest exploration of the poet's position and responsibilities, the sources of his knowledge, and the limits of his vision" (348). If this is so, the poem's final word is that the poet is a self-effacing figure, a listener to the diverse sounds and stories around and within him. Not only, then, is Jonson indifferent to the aesthetic argument of *The House of Fame*; the central idea of Chaucer's poem is antithetical to the argument of Jonson's masque, "a celebration of honorable and true fame bred out of virtue." Joseph Loewenstein sums up the situation well when he says, in his book *Responsive Readings: Versions of Echo in Pastoral, Epic, and the Jonsonian Masque*, that Jonson's handling of Chaucerian materials in the masque amounts to "suppressions of literary memory," that are "powerfully distorted," delivering "only the splendors" of Chaucer's poem, and none of its special character, none, we might add, of its insight into the art of poetry (116).

Another striking feature of the quarto edition of Jonson's masque is its extensive critical apparatus. The quarto text is heavily footnoted, to the point that, on some pages, Jonson's explanatory notes crowd out the text of the masque itself. Jonson's notes spell out the many classical references he makes throughout the masque, providing sources and analogues for them from classical literature, with the longest notes devoted to the ancient queens who the twelve noble lady masquers play. No doubt this extensive critical apparatus is meant to endow Jonson's masque with the dignity and weight of a learned edition of Virgil or an annotated bible, but the incongruity of these painstaking, scholarly explanations tacked onto the text of a court masque, an occasional dramatic form mostly uncondusive to preservation for posterity, lends the

published text of *The Masque of Queens* an air of bluster and absurdity, not to mention an extraordinary and often grotesque *mise en page*, as well.

In the quarto dedication, Jonson tells us that he provided the notes at the “gracious command” of Prince Henry, who, having seen the masque, wanted to delve deeper into its wide array of classical literary references. This request honors Jonson, of course, and his masque; he writes, “it is now my minute to thank your highness, who not only do honor her [poetry] with your ear but are curious to examine her with your eye, and inquire into her beauties and strengths.” Jonson admits that it “proved a work of some difficulty...to retrieve the particular authorities,” of the classical references in the masque, particularly because, when he writes, he relies on memory, rather than open books – “those things which I writ out of the fullness and memory of my former readings” (p. 478). This paratextual performance in and past the margins on the page is, it seems, in part designed to compensate for those aspects of the live masque performance that cannot survive the transposition into printed text. In the rigor of his annotations, and by giving a mere masque in quarto the scholarly treatment normally reserved for a new edition of Virgil, the *Queens* quarto also sets the stage for the very official 1616 edition of Jonson's *Works*, which is meant to solidify his own authority as a figure worthy of the great editions afforded the likes of Virgil and, increasingly, Chaucer. For the purposes of this study, however, the important thing is that Jonson thinks that this elaborate apparatus making the learned authority behind his lines clear to Henry is the way to show him the beauty and strength of the poetry he has written. This work has beauty and strength, he seems to say, because it draws from the fountain of classical learning and because traces of great classical authorities can be discerned within it. The irony, again, is that Jonson set the masque inside Chaucer's House of

Fame, a structure from a poem which is itself an *ars poetica*, that is, an exploration of the art of poetry, whose own vision of the beauty and strength of poetry depends on the ways that it dismantles classical authority, not the way it holds it up.

Jonson's general attitude toward Chaucer is a complicated subject. Certainly, he revered the medieval poet for his literary achievements and for the level of poetic authority he attained. In addition to the tribute evident in the setting of *The Masque of Queens*, Jonson honored Chaucer in another masque, *The Golden Age Restored*, having Pallas summon him onto the stage among the great poets of England; the others are Gower, Lydgate, and Spenser. Pallas calls this dream team the "far-famed spirits of this happy isle," worthy to be called "Phoebus' sons," that is, authentic poets (line 112, 114). What follows is even more striking: Pallas implores the poets of England to, "Put on your better flames and larger light / To wait upon the age that shall your names new nourish, / Since virtue pressed shall grow, and buried arts shall flourish" (117-19). In addition to the customary gesture of praise, in other words, Jonson implies that Chaucer's achievement has been undervalued and that it falls to the stewards of the arts in the new golden age to come to restore it to its proper eminence and influence. Where Jonson is often rightly described as a devoted classicist, the tribute to Chaucer in *The Golden Age Restored* evinces great reverence for the medieval poet, and for the line of great English poets in general, as well as his desire to see late medieval and, in Spenser's case, latter-day medieval, English poetry thrive in his own time. While it is possible to say that the cloying character of the court masque

form casts doubt on the sincerity of encomiums such as this one, I hear more, in Jonson's lines, than lip service.³

On the other hand, Robert C. Evans has argued, in an article entitled "Jonson's Chaucer," that Chaucer appealed to Jonson, not so much as a poet, but as a poet laureate, comfortable in the halls of power, and as a conduit in English for classical literature and learning. Evans points out that Jonson's two favorite Chaucer poems, if the markings in the edition of Chaucer's works, edited by Thomas Speght and published in 1602, are any indication, were poems that we know now not to have been written by Chaucer: "The Remedy of Loue" and "The Cuckow and the Nightingale," which, Evans suggests, probably appealed to Jonson because they take up one of his favorite themes, the moral dimension of romantic love, in his preferred mode, that of comic irony (Evans 334-45). It is likely, then, that Jonson's favorite Chaucer poems were the ones that most reminded him of himself, and which Chaucer did not write. Evans also reminds us that Jonson disliked, or was at least ambivalent toward, Chaucer's antiquated Middle English style: In the *Discoveries*, he says that Chaucer and Gower are not safe reading for children, who risk "falling too much in love with Antiquity, and not apprehending the weight, they grow rough and barren in language onely;" famously, he criticizes Spenser on similar grounds, surely thinking of Chaucer when he wrote that, "in affecting the Ancients, [Spenser] writ no language" (qtd in Evans 324, 325).

³ See Cooper, "Poetic Fame," especially 363-64. She writes, "Jonson was...for all his classicizing, something of a Chaucer devotee" (363); she allows for the possibility that, "in choosing the title *Works* for his own volume, he was aiming to place himself, not only in the Classical tradition, but in the Chaucerian one, as a Son of Geoffrey" (364).

Rather than a deep love of Chaucer's poetry, then, Evans suggests it was certain parallels between the medieval poet's style and situation that drove Jonson's sense of an affinity toward him. Jonson probably looked up to Chaucer as a fellow "comic writer," who wrote, like he often did, in "a 'middle' style," about "a strange and conflicting assortment of character types" (330). Jonson also marks passages in his edition of Chaucer that refer to his classical erudition, his familiarity with, as Speght puts it, "those learned Authors, both in Greek and Latin, from whom he hath drawn many excellent things" (qtd in Evans 333). In the end, Evans infers that Jonson "recognized in Chaucer a poet who had done what he himself aspired to do: to 'english' the writings of important classical authors, to make them so much his own that it would require scholarly labors to record all the echoes" (333). This idea, and Evans's general idea about Jonson's Chaucerian streak, certainly rings true in connection with *The Masque of Queens*, where Jonson announces a lift from Chaucer, stunning in its disregard for the content and character of the poem that the lift is from, which is used to promote classical writers, and, less so, Chaucer himself, in a text that Jonson annotated heavily to record all its classical echoes. Jonson's marginalia show that he "valued Chaucer not simply as a poet who happened to write in English but as a poet who could infuse into the native poetic tradition the results of his own extensive investigations of non-native sources" (334).

Finally, Evans points out, Jonson recognized Chaucer as an "unofficial poet laureate" of medieval England, who composed his poems while "moving comfortably in the corridors of power, honored and rewarded at court" (330). Spenser, whose brand of Chaucerian imitation we know Jonson did not respect, was afforded the honor of laureateship officially in the 1590s, but it seems like Jonson considered himself an alternative, Jacobean second coming of laureate

Chaucer, and perhaps was even recognized as such. Evans points out that Jonson's position at court was formalized by the granting of both an annuity and a large amount of wine, a form of patronage that might be based on the similar one that was granted to Chaucer over a century before; moreover, "by the height of his career, Jonson had achieved a kind of literary prominence and proximity to power unlike that of any English poet before him except Chaucer," and, "It is hard to imagine that he could have been unaware of this" (331). While the case here is not exactly airtight – Chaucer was not actually a laureate, the wine could be meaningless, the marginalia misleading, etc. – in general, Evans's account of the Chaucer-Jonson dynamic rings true, particularly amid the reign of the new king come over from Scotland, where Chaucer was highly revered.

Building on Evans's study, Kathryn Jacobs and D'Andra White argue that there are veiled references to Chaucer throughout Ben Jonson's criticisms of Shakespeare,⁴ concluding that, "Jonson thought Shakespeare was far too interested in medieval writers in general, and Geoffrey Chaucer in particular" (198-99). Jonson objected, it seems, not only to Shakespeare's flouting of Aristotle's unities in his plays, his inadequate classicism, but also his preference for "dated material, medieval content, and linguistic anachronisms," over classical materials (209); in *Pericles* for instance, Shakespeare retells an ancient story that Jonson would have associated with Plutarch, but he marches Gower out on stage to specify that he means the medieval, rather than the classical version of that story, a conspicuous gesture that was sure to stick in Jonson's craw (208-9). While I do not always find the inferences Jacobs and White draw from the

⁴ For Jonson's attacks on Shakespeare, see Shapiro, chapter 4. For Shakespeare's purge of Jonson, see Bednarz. More cooperative accounts of the creative conversation between the two writers can be found in Bevington, DusiBerre, and Riggs.

somewhat cryptic passages in Jonson that they marshal for their argument convincing, such as their concluding point that Jonson sensed and disliked that Shakespeare had based the characterization of Polonius on Chaucer's Pandarus (see 211-15), I do think that their broader point rings true, that is, that "Jonson wanted contemporaries to heed what Chaucer *does*, not what he *says*" (203). In other words, Jonson's Chaucer is a model poet in the sense that he revered the ancient classics and brought them to a new audience in English poems, but his own poetry is not the equal of those ancient classics, and is mostly unworthy of emulation. Jonson enjoyed, then, status at court as a new Chaucerian laureate poet, while, at the same time, chastising his contemporaries, notably Shakespeare, if they took too much to (and too much from) Chaucer's poetry.

As I argued in chapter 5 of this study, Shakespeare appropriates many different elements from the dream visions, particularly *The House of Fame*, and works them into the design of *The Tempest*. These elements include Geoffrey's dopey backstory, which informs Prospero's as Duke of Milan, the dreamer's Ovidian bedtime story, which informs the characterization of Ariel, Geoffrey's bedtime story, a version of *The Aeneid* with a conspicuously Ovidian flavor, which informs the play's own metamorphic intertext with Virgil's epic, Geoffrey's speech in the voice of Dido, which informs Prospero's in that of Medea, the whirling whicker, which, as a remote sound station that expands the dreamer's artistic consciousness, prefigures Prospero's island, and the rhyming tetrameter couplets that Chaucer uses in the dream visions, which inform Prospero's lines in the play's epilogue. To me, these appropriations evince an extraordinary commitment to

Chaucer as a literary model, as a source of something more than just narrative material. *The Tempest* is a thoroughgoing divergent imitation of Chaucer's dreams.

To my mind, this is clearly Shakespeare's way, or one of them, of jockeying for position against Jonson as a rival poet-playwright. That Jonson was the superior classicist of the two, who called Shakespeare out for his small Latin and less Greek, is common knowledge and at this point a cliché. That he was also becoming, as Evans has it, a latter-day Chaucerian poet laureate, mostly indifferent to, even hostile toward the actual poetry of his predecessor, but invested in his proximity to power and his chops as a classicist, is more interesting; Evans's Jonson is not only the neoclassical early modern poet par excellence, but also, paradoxically, in that neoclassical role, the poetic heir apparent to native, medieval Chaucer as well, since it is Chaucer's classical sensibilities that matter. Finally, Jacobs and White show us Jonson policing the use of Chaucer in the work of his contemporary writers, irritated that they would incorporate his actual poetry into their plays and poems, rather than admiring his eminence and erudition while prudently avoiding his literary influence.

All of this lends credence to the idea that Shakespeare would answer a masque by Jonson, one which is arguably too deferential to literary and worldly authority, in which one of Chaucer's most interesting poems is underutilized and distorted, with a thoroughgoing imitation of that same poem focused with loving attention on its defining features. By taking up *The House of Fame*, with its irreverent, interpolated imitation of Virgil, Shakespeare vies with Jonson as a rival in both Virgilian and Chaucerian imitation, pitting his command of Chaucer's unruly classically-inflected poetics against Jonson's fixation on classical artistic authority and perfection and the upholding of it by a paradigmatic medieval poet. What better way to buck the authority

of the chief Chaucerian poet, who complains when other poets get too invested in Chaucer, than by turning his hellish anti-masque of witches and his heavenly masque, featuring "only the splendors" of Chaucer's poem, including a bust of Virgil and one of his queens, into a richer fantasy, at once deeply classical and deeply Chaucerian, as invested in the world of the sea and storm as that of the queen and court. Shakespeare's play, in which the hopeless, servile monster 'kisses' the book – really a bottle of wine – on the road to ruin and the central figure 'drowns' his book on the road to redemption, is a fitting answer to Jonson's masque, in which classical source-hunting, rather than integral, divergent imitation, purports to deliver the "beauties and strengths" of poetry.⁵

In *Rival Playwrights*, James Shapiro characterizes the rivalry between Jonson and Shakespeare as entirely one-sided, with Jonson firing at will at his rival from various prefaces, prologues, and other places, in an intense critical output that was met with what Shapiro calls Shakespeare's, "stony, deliberate, and, no doubt for Jonson, infuriating silence" (139). Provocatively, Shapiro adds that, while Jonson's masques certainly influenced the masques in Shakespeare's late plays, and Shakespeare may even have acted in them, his debt to Jonson in these moments is, "never signaled," only "quietly, seamlessly absorbed" (139, 140). While I favor this idea in general, I would suggest that, in embedding a thoroughgoing imitation of Chaucer's *House of Fame* in a play that also reaches out to Jonson's *Masque of Queens*, Shakespeare highlights the difference in character between his style of Chaucerian imitation and

⁵ Jonson would strike back. As Riggs points out, Jonson takes shots at *The Tempest* in the induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, maintaining that "Shakespeare's 'servant-monster' (Caliban)...cater[s] to the sub-literary taste of a popular audience in thrall to 'the concupiscence of jigs and dances'" (195). Jonson writes, of Shakespeare, that, "He is loath to make nature afraid in his plays, like those that beget *Tales*, *Tempests*, and such like drolleries, to mix his head with other men's heels" (qtd in Riggs 195). Note the correlation of tales and tempests.

Jonson's, the one focused on the features of a poem, the other literary authority. While perhaps, as Shapiro would have it, a silent, seamless way of answering a literary rival, Shakespeare's unruly Chaucerian streak roars in its own way.

EPILOGUE

Shakespeare's creative engagement with Chaucer's poetry spans his entire career writing for the theater, from the shades of The Knight's Tale in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* to the more direct imitation of the same source in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. The poet-playwright's devotion to the Wife of Bath, arguably Chaucer's most vivid creation, is clear from the memorable characterization of Petruccio in *The Taming of the Shrew* and, more explosively, that of Falstaff in the Henry IV plays and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. On the other side of his most disturbing direct Chaucerian adaptation, *Troilus and Cressida*, readers find two late-career efforts, *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*, that turn, in very different ways, to the rocky marriage and magic of The Franklin's Tale. And these are only a few highlights from the riches that researching Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare turn up.

What one learns is that Shakespeare is every bit as innovative and thoroughgoing a Chaucerian poet as the famed Scottish Chaucerians – Henryson, Dunbar, and Douglas among them – who kept the torch burning for Chaucer's poetry and poetics through the long fifteenth century. Shakespeare is, undoubtedly, to borrow Helen Cooper's playful phrase about Ben Jonson, a Son of Geoffrey. It may seem only natural that the greatest early modern English poet should concentrate on and experiment with the materials left to him by the greatest medieval one, particularly when one considers that the two writers are, to a substantial extent, kindred spirits: Both love the poetry of Ovid; both are preoccupied with dreams and the interplay of dreams with waking life and literary illusion-making; and both are willing to adapt classical literary models in

playful, arguably irreverent ways. Nevertheless, I find, as others have found, that Shakespeare's creative engagement with Chaucer is still somehow an underrated aspect of his literary art and career, and one that offers exciting possibilities for future study.

What I myself hope to contribute, with this dissertation, to the scholarly conversation around this important topic, is an account of Shakespeare's dramatic adaptations of Chaucer's poetics in action, as he encounters it in the early dream visions, *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*. By taking as his source material, not a traditional narrative tale, but rather a vision of a journey inward into the reading, dreaming, and ultimately writing mind of Chaucer's dreamers, one a manic depressive on the mend, the other an amiable but rather clueless amateur writer, Shakespeare imbues the rich, strange fictions of *Taming*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Tempest* with his own reactions and adjustments to the visions of poetics that Chaucer offers. Although the alternate poetic vision that Shakespeare offers in his adaptations of the dream visions is in some ways more a matter of attitude and tone than of discernable, prescriptive information, I notice that Shakespeare consistently pushes back against Chaucer's relatively benign presentation of Ovid as a poetic influence, as well as his habit of sympathizing with the feminine element in his poems. For me, the most interesting piece is the insight into the design of the plays. I have suggested that the elaborate plot of *Cymbeline* depends on repurposing of the features Shakespeare finds in both *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*, and that Prospero's rough magic, as well as his habitation on the enchanted island, are Shakespeare's reimagined versions of the dream vision bedtime stories and the whirling whicker in space to which Geoffrey travels. In this, my sense is that Shakespeare creates a fictive vision of his creative

power toward the end of his career by commandeering the features of Chaucer's playful, dreamy portraits of the artist as a young man.

Perhaps no one falls for Ben Jonson's famous claim that Shakespeare lacked for classical credentials anymore – that he had only small Latin and less Greek. Certainly, the pat distinction between Jonson, neoclassical master, and Shakespeare, Fancy's child, warbling his woodnotes wild, has fallen away. As Bate, Burrow, and many others have shown, Shakespeare was a brilliant and innovative reader and creative adapter of classical literature; Parker, James, Kott, Hamilton, Tudeau-Clayton, and others have explored his stunning late-career turn to Virgil in *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*. What I think is missing from the record, however, is the Chaucerian dimension in Shakespeare's neoclassical streak. I try to demonstrate, in chapter 2, that the *Duchess* dreamer's ride along with the hunting party of Augustus informs Innogen's with his diplomatic one, and how *Cymbeline*'s final scene reconciles, not only ancient Britain and Rome, but the literary influence of Chaucer on Shakespeare with that of the great Augustans. Then, in chapters 3 and 4, I argue that Chaucer is a mediating figure in Shakespeare's turn to Virgil: The Dido-centric deconstruction of *The Aeneid* in *The House of Fame* prefigures Shakespeare's own divergent adaptation of the Roman epic in *Cymbeline*, with Innogen in the more integral leading role; among other features appropriated from Geoffrey's wonderful dream in *The House of Fame*, Chaucer's Ovid-flavored adaptation of *The Aeneid* informs Shakespeare's own in *The Tempest*.

In this light, Shakespeare's legendary opposition with Jonson returns, but with a new look. As I discuss in chapter 6, following Evans, Cooper, and Jacobs and White, Jonson saw Chaucer as a poet worthy to be emulated for his engagement with the classics and his efforts to incorporate that engagement into English poems, but he did not think that Chaucer's poetry was

itself worthy of emulation. Shakespeare's approach, I find, is the opposite: His turn to Virgil in *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest* is a turn to Virgil by way of Chaucer's dream poetry. Shakespeare's neoclassical streak, then, is a creative, Chaucerian form of neoclassicism, one informed by Chaucer's freewheeling handling of ancient stories in the early dream visions, just the kind of thing that Jonson would object to. My sense is that Shakespeare mounts an aesthetic counter-offensive, in *Cymbeline* and, to a greater extent, *The Tempest*, both to Jonson's more buttoned-up approach to the classics and his way of keeping Chaucer's influence at arm's length while laying claim to his great authority. It is Jonson who rightly earns the reputation as a neoclassical master and, perhaps less deservedly, the status of a latter-day Chaucerian laureate in the court of James, but Shakespeare stakes his claim as the rightful heir in English poetry to both traditions in his willingness to fuse them in the composite imitations of his stunning late plays.

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