## PLAY THIRTEEN- Joseph’s Trouble with Mary

## (The Pewterers and Founders)

**JOSEPH**

Of great mourning may I me \*mene (\*complain)  
And walk full wearily by this way,  
For now \*than wend I best have been (\*i.e. rather than)  
At ease and rest by reason \*ay. (\*ever, eternal)  
For I am of great \*eld, (\*age)  
Weak and all unwield(y),  
As \*ilke man see it may. (\*each, every)  
I may neither \*busk nor \*\*belde, (\*bustle, hasten) (\*\*stay, shelter)  
But either in \*frithe or field. (\*wood)  
For shame what shall I say?  
  
That thus gets now on mine old days  
Has wedded a young wench to my wife,  
And may not well \*tryne over two straws? (\*step)  
Now, Lord, how long shall I lead this life,  
My bones are heavy as lead  
And may not stand in \*stede (\*place)  
As \*kenned it is full rife. (\*known) (i.e. known everywhere)  
Now, Lord, thou me \*wisse and \*\*rede, (\*learn, wise) (\*\*advise)  
Or soon me drive to dead,  
Thou may best stint this strife.  
  
For bitterly then may I \*banne (\*curse)  
The way I in the Temple went,  
It was to me a bad bargain,  
For ruth I may it \*ay repent. (\*ever)  
For therein was ordained  
Unwedded men should stand  
All (as)sembled at assent,  
And \*ilke one a dry wand (\*each, every)  
On height held in his hand,  
And I ne \*wist what it meant. (\*knew, understood)  
  
Among all other one bare I,  
It flourished fair and flowers on spread,  
And they said to me \*forthy (\*therefore)  
That with a wife I should be wed.  
The bargain I made there,  
That rues me now full sore,  
So am I straightly \*sted. (\*afflicted, in a bad position)  
Now casts it me in care,  
For well I might evermore  
\*Anlepy life have led. (\*own-living, i.e. living alone)  
  
Her works me works my \*wonges to wet. (\*cheeks) (i.e. wet cheeks with tears)   
I am beguiled, how \*wot I nought. (\*know)  
My young wife is with child full great,  
That makes me now sorrow unsought.  
That reproof near has slain me.  
\*Forthy if any man \*\*frayne me (\*therefore) (\*\*ask)  
How this thing might be wrought,  
To \*gabbe if I would \*pain me, (\*taunt)  
The law stands hard against me,  
To dead I \*mon be brought. (\*must, may)  
  
And loath methinketh, on the other side,  
My wife with any man to defame  
And \*whether of there two that I bide, (\*i.e. which of these two)  
I \*mon not scape withouten shame. (\*may, must)  
The child \*certis is not mine; (\*certainly, surely)  
That reproof does me pain  
And gets me flee from home.  
My life if I should \*tyne, (\*taken, i.e. lose)  
She is a clean virgin  
For me, withouten blame.  
  
But well I \*wate through prophecy, (\*wit, know)  
A maiden clean should bear a child,  
But it is not she, \*sekirly, (\*surely, certainly)  
\*Forthy I wate I am beguiled. (\*therefore) (\*\*wit, know)  
And why ne would some young man take her?  
For \*certis I think over gone her (\*certain, surely)  
Into some woods wild.  
Thus think I to steal from her;  
God child there wild beasts slay her,  
She is so meek and mild.  
  
Of my wending will I none warn,  
Nevertheless it is mine intent  
To ask her who got her that \*bairn, (\*baby, child)  
Yet would I wit \*fayne ere I went. (\*ask, inquire)  
  
All hail, God be herein.  
  
**I \*PUELLA**    (\*Girl)  
Welcome, by God’s dear might.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Where is that young virgin,  
Marie, my bird so bright?  
  
**I PUELLA**     
\*Certis, Joseph, ye shall understand (\*certainly, surely)  
That she is not full far you from. (\*from)  
She sits at her book full fast \*prayand (\*praying)  
For you and us, and for all them  
That ought has need.  
But for to tell her will I go  
Of your coming, withouten dread.  
Have done, and rise up, dame,  
And to me take good heed:  
Joseph, he is comen home.  
  
**MARIA**     
Welcome, as God me \*speed. (\*prospers)  
  
Dreadless to me he is full dear,  
Joseph my spouse, welcome are ye.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Gramercy, Marie, say what cheer,  
Tell me the \*soth, how is’t with thee? (\*truth)  
Who has been there?  
Thy womb is waxen great, think me;  
Thou art with bairn, alas, for care.  
Ah, maidens, woe worth you  
That let her \*lere such lare. (\*learn) (\*\*law, teachings, lessons)  
  
**II PUELLA**     
Joseph, ye shall not \*trowe (\*trust, believe)  
In her no \*feeble fare. (\*i.e. moral weakness)  
  
**JOSEPH**     
\*Trowe it not harm? Leave wench, \*\*do way. (\*trust) (i.e. get away)  
Her sides shows she is with child.  
Whose is’t, Marie?  
  
**MARIA**

Sir, Goddis and youres.

**JOSEPH**

                                                   Nay, nay,  
Now \*wate I well I am beguiled, (\*know)  
And reason why?  
With me fleshly was thou never (de)filed,  
And I forsake it here \*forthy. (\*therefore)  
Say, maidens, how is this?  
Tell me the \*sothe, \*\*rede I, (\*truth) (\*\*advise)  
And \*but ye do, \*\*iwisse, (\*unless) (\*\*surely)  
The bargain shall ye \*aby. \*(buy, pay for)  
  
**II PUELLA**     
If ye threat as fast as ye can,  
There is nought to say theretill,  
For truly her come never no man  
To wait her body with none ill  
Of this sweet \*wight. (\*soul, person)  
For we have dwelt \*ay with her still, (\*ever, always)  
And was never from her day nor night.  
Her keepers have we been  
And she \*ay in our sight, (\*ever, always)  
Come here no man between  
To touch that bird so bright.  
  
**I PUELLA**     
Na, here come no man in there \*wanes, (\*walls)  
And that ever witness will we,  
Save an angel \*ilke a day once (\*each, every)  
With bodily food her fed has he,  
Other come none.  
Wherefore we ne \*wate how it should be, (\*know)  
But through the Holy Ghost alone.  
For truly we \*trowe this, (\*trust, believe)  
Is grace with her is gone,  
For she wrought never no \*mys, (\*misdeed, misery)  
We witness ever \*ilkane. (\*everyone)  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Then see I well your meaning is:  
The angel has made her with child.  
Nay, some man in angel’s likeness  
With \*somekyn \*\*gawde has her beguiled, (\*some-kind) (\*\*trick)  
And that \*trow I. (\*believe, trust)  
\*Forthy needs not such words wild (\*Therefore)  
At carp to me deceivingly.  
Wey, why \*gab ye me so (\*talk, deceive)  
And feigns such fantasy?  
Alas, me is full woe,  
For \*dule why ne might I die? (\*dolour, sadness)  
  
To me this is a \*careful case. (\*i.e. full of cares)  
Reckless I rave, (be)reft is my \*rede, (\*advice)  
I dare look no man in the face,  
\*Derfely, for \*\*dole why ne were I dead. (\*cruelly) (\*dolour, sadness)  
Me loathes my life!  
In Temple and in other \*stede (\*place)  
\*Ilke man to \*hethyng will me drive. (\*every) (\*\*hating, scorn)  
Was never \*wight so woe, (\*soul, person)  
For ruth I all too rife,  
Alas, why wrought thou so,  
Marie, my wedded wife?  
  
**MARIA**     
To my witness great God I call,  
That in mind wrought never no \*mysse. (\*misdeed, misery)  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Whose is the child thou art withall?  
  
**MARIA**     
Yours, sir, and the kings of bliss.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Ye, and who \*then? (i.e. who else?)  
Na \*selcouthe tidings then is this, (\*miraculous)  
Excuse them well there women can.  
But, Marie, all that sees thee  
May \*wit thy works are wan: (\*know) (\*\*wrong, lies)  
Thy womb always it (bet)rays thee  
That thou has met with man.  
  
Whose is it, as fair must thee befall?  
  
**MARIA**     
Sir, it is yours and God’s will.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Nay, I ne have nought ado withall.  
Name it na more to me, be still.  
Thou \*wate as well as I (\*wit, know)  
That we two same fleshly  
Wrought never such works with ill.  
Look thou did no folly  
Before me privily  
Thy fair maidenhead to spill.  
  
But who is the father? tell me his name.  
  
**MARIA**     
None but yourself.  
  
**JOSEPH**                                  Let be, for shame.  
I did it never, thou \*dotist, dame, by books and bells, (\*becomes silly)  
Full \*sakles should I bear this blame after thou tells, (\*innocent)  
For I wrought never in word nor deed  
Thing that should mar thy maidenhead  
To touch me till.  
For of such note were little need,  
Yet for mine own I would it feed,  
Might all be still.   
Therefore the father tell me, Marie.  
  
**MARIA**     
But God and you, I know right none.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Ah, such \*sawes (a)maze me full sorry (\*sayings, words)  
With great mourning to make my moan;  
Therefore be not so bold  
That no such tales be told,  
But hold thee still as stone.  
Thou art young and I am old,  
Such works if I do \*walde, (\*would)  
Those games from me are gone.  
  
Therefore, tell me in priveté, (\*private, privacy)  
Whose is the child thou is with now?  
\*Sertis, there shall none \*\*wit but we; (\*surely) (\*\*know)  
I dread the law as well as thou.  
  
**MARIA**     
Now great God of his might,  
That all may \*dresse and \*\*dight, (\*undertake) (\*\*do)  
Meekly to thee I bow.  
\*Rewe on this \*\*weary \*\*\*wight (\*Have pity) (\*\*sad) (\*\*\*person, soul)  
That in his heart might light  
The \*soth to \*\*ken and \*\*\*trowe. (\*truth) (\*\*know) (\*\*\*trust)  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Who had thy maidenhood, Marie? Has thou ought \*mind? (\*memory)  
  
**MARIA**     
Forsooth, I am a maiden clean.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Nay, thou speaks now against \*kynde. (\*nature)  
Such thing might never no man of \*mene, (\*argue?)  
A maiden to be with child!  
\*Thase works from thee are wild, (\*those, these)  
She is not born, I \*wene. (\*think)  
  
**MARIA**     
Joseph, ye are beguiled:  
With sin was I never (de)filed,  
God’s \*sande is \*\*on me seen. (\*sound, message, mission) (\*\*in)  
  
**JOSEPH**     
God’s \*sande, ya Marie, God help, (\*sound, message, mission)  
But \*certis, that child was never ours \*\*twa. (\*certainly, surely) (\*\*two)  
But womankind if them \*list help, (\*desire, want)  
Yet would they no man \*wiste their \*\*wa. (\*know) (\*\*woe)  
  
**MARIA**     
\*Sertis, it is God’s \*\*sande, (\*Certainly, surely) (\*\*sound, message, mission)  
*…LINE MISSING. . .*   
That shall I never go \*fra. (\*from)  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Ya, Marie, (with)draw thine hand,  
For further yet will I \*fande, (\*go)  
I \*trowe not it be \*\*swa. (\*trust) (\*\*so)  
  
The \*soth from me if that thou \*layne, (\*truth) (\*lie, conceal)  
The childbearing may thou not hide;  
But sit still here (un)til I come again,  
Me \*bus an errand here beside. (\*must)  
  
**MARIA**     
Now, great God he you \*wise (\*teach, reveal)  
And mend you of your \*mysse (\*mistake)  
Of me, what so betide.  
As he is king of bliss,  
Send you some sign of this,  
In truth that ye might bide.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Now, Lord God, that all thing may  
At thine own will both do and \*dresse, (\*prepare)  
\*Wise me now some ready way (\*teach, reveal)  
To walk here in this wilderness.  
But ere I pass this hill,  
Do with me what God will,  
Either more or less;  
Here must me bide full still  
Till I have sleeped my fill.  
Mine heart so heavy it is.  
  
**ANGELUS**     
Waken, Joseph, and take better keep  
To Marie, that is thy fellow \*fest. (\*close, fastened)  
  
**JOSEPH**     
A, I am full weary, leave, let me sleep,  
Forwandered and walked in this forest.  
  
**ANGELUS**     
Rise up and sleep no more,  
Thou makest her heart full sore  
That loves thee \*alther best. (\*all the? Above all other?)  
  
**JOSEPH**     
We, now is this a \*farly fare, (\*miraculous matter)  
For to be \*cached both here and there, (\*chased)  
And nowhere may have rest.  
  
Say, what art thou, tell me this thing?  
  
**ANGELUS**     
I, Gabriell, God’s angel full even,  
That has \*ta’en Marie to my keeping (\*taken)  
And sent is thee to say with \*steven (\*shout, forceful speech)  
In loyal wedlock thou lead thee;  
Leave her not, I forbid thee,  
Na sin of her thou \*neven, (\*name)  
But to her fast thou speed thee  
And of her nought thou dread thee,  
It is God’s sande of heaven. (\*sound, message)  
  
The child that shall be born of her,  
It is conceived of the Holy Ghost.  
All joy and bliss then shall be after  
And to all mankind now all the most.   
Jesus his name thou call,  
For such \*happe shall him (be)fall (\*fortune, destiny)  
As thou shall see in haste.  
His people save he shall  
Of evils and angers all  
That they are now embraced.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
And is this \*soth, angel, thou says? (\*truth)  
  
**ANGELUS**     
Ya, and this to taken right,  
Wend forth to Marie thy wife always:  
Bring her to \*Bedlem this ilke night. (\*Bethlehem) (\*\*same, very)  
There shall a child born be,  
God’s Son of heaven is he,  
And man \*ay most of might. (\*ever, always)  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Now, Lorde God, full well is me  
That ever that I this sight should see;  
I was never ere so light.  
  
For \*for I would her have thus refused (\*since)  
And \*sakles blame that \*ay was clear, (\*innocent) (\*always)  
Me must pray her hold me excused  
As some men does with full good cheer.  
Say, Marie, wife, how fares thou?  
  
**MARIA**     
The better, sir, for you.  
Why stand ye there? Come near.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
My back \*fayne would I bow (\*joyfully, eagerly)  
And ask forgiveness now,  
\*Wiste I thou would me hear. (\*Wish)  
  
**MARIA**     
Forgiveness, sir, let be for shame;  
Such words should all good women lack.  
  
**JOSEPH**     
Ya, Marie, I am to blame,  
For words long ere I to thee spak(e).  
But gather same now all our gear,  
Such poor \*weed as we were, (\*clothes)  
And prick them in a pack.  
To \*Bedlem must me it bear, (\*Bethlehem)  
For little thing will women \*dere. (\*harm?)  
Help up now on my back.