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Fragment of a Semi-Saxon Poem

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BODY: A FRAGMENT OF A SEMI-SAXON POEM \*\*\*

**THE  
DEPARTING SOUL'S  
ADDRESS TO THE BODY**

**A FRAGMENT OF**

**A SEMI-SAXON POEM,**

**DISCOVERED AMONG THE ARCHIVES OF WORCESTER CATHEDRAL,**

**BY SIR THOMAS PHILLIPPS, BART.**

**WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION,**

**BY**

**S. W. SINGER.**

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*The student of our early literature and language is indebted to the zeal of Sir Thomas Phillipps, for the discovery of the following interesting Fragment, which appears to have formed part of a volume that contained Ælfric's Grammar and Glossary, probably of the Twelfth Century. The fragments were discovered among the archives of Worcester Cathedral; and in 1836 Sir Thomas Phillipps printed the whole of them in folio. I know not whether the form or the typographical arrangement has been the cause of the neglect of this publication; but it has escaped both Mr. Wright and Mr. Thorpe. The former, in his interesting edition of "The Latin Poems of Walter de Mapes," where he has given the literary history of this legend with extracts, has not even referred to our fragment; nor has Mr. Thorpe adverted to it in his publication of the "Codex Exoniensis," which contains an Anglo-Saxon poem of the same kind, with which it is interesting to compare this later version of the legend. There is a portion of another semi-Saxon poem, entitled "The Grave," printed in Mr. Conybeare's "Illustrations," and by Mr. Thorpe in his "Analecta*

*Anglo-Saxonica," which appears to be by the same hand, or at any rate of the same school and age. Indeed some of the lines and thoughts are identical with passages of the following poem. Mr. Thorpe has justly called "The Grave" a singularly impressive and almost appalling fragment; expressions equally characteristic of that with which the reader is here presented.*

*This impressive character, coupled with the interest which the fragment possesses, as a specimen of the moral poetry of our ancestors, and as throwing light upon the transition of our language from Saxon to English, has been the motive for producing it in a more legible form than that in which it first appeared.*

*In one of the smaller poems (No. V.), printed by Mr. Wright with the Owl and the Nightingale, from the Cottonian MS. Calig. A. ix. "The sorie sowle maketh hire mone," in language not dissimilar to that used in the following fragment; and the dreary imagery of the house appointed for all living, and the punishment which awaits a wicked life at its close, are painted in an equally fearful manner.*

*Mr. Thorpe points to an Anglo-Saxon prose Homily as the original of the poem on the same theme in the Exeter MS., which is repeated, with some variation, in the Vercelli Codex. In a rude and simple age this dramatic way of awakening the sinner to a sense of his perilous state, was perhaps the most effective that could have been chosen, and it was naturally a favorite with the moral and religious teachers for some centuries. M. Karajan, in a very pleasing little publication (*Frülingsgabe für freunde Alterer Literatur, Wien 1839*) has printed the "Visio Philiberti," a Latin poem in dialogue on this subject, with two old German versions; and the notes contain some interesting information relating to similar compositions; but Mr. Wright's volume, before referred to, contains ample illustrations of the legend in all languages.*

*The fragment here given, it will be seen, is very defective. An attempt has been made to supply words which were wanting, from the mutilation of the MS. leaves; but what is engrafted on the original is scrupulously distinguished by the Italic character. A version has also been added, the imperfections of which those who are acquainted with the difficulties of such renderings will best know how to excuse.*

*The language of this poem seems to have a striking resemblance to that of one of the MSS. of *Lazamon*, and we may hope, when the lovers of our early lore shall be favoured with the long and anxiously expected edition of that work by Sir Frederick Madden, that much light will be thrown upon the history of the transitions of our language.*

*For what has been already done by Conybeare, Price, Kemble, Thorpe, Madden, Stevenson, Wright, Way and others, the present writer is most grateful; but he would wish to see the same spirit and enthusiasm, the same unwearied zeal displayed in the elucidation of the noble remains of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, and of the interesting stores of our early literature and language, which has been so long a distinguishing feature of Germany, whose example has of late years lighted up a similar patriotic flame in France and Belgium.*

*Mickleham, August 20, 1844.*

## THE

### DEPARTING SOUL'S ADDRESS TO THE BODY.

* * * * en earde.	* * * *
and alle theo isceæfestan.	* * * *
the him to * * *	* * * *
and mid muchele <i>wisdom</i> .	and with much <i>wisdom</i>
<i>thome</i> mon he idihte.	5 then man he framed,
and him on ileide.	bestowed on him
lif and soule.	life and soul,
softliche he heo isomne.	tenderly he united them;
ac thær bith sor idol.	but there is a sad portion
that bodeth that bearn.	10 which awaits that child.
thonne hit iboren bith.	When it is born;
hit <i>woaneth</i> and mæneth theo weowe.	it wailleth, and bemoans the woe,
and thene seoruhfule sith.	and the sorrowful time,
and that sori idol.	and that sad lot,
that soule schal <i>hire licame</i> .	15 that shall the soul from her body
sorliche idælen.	sadly separate.
Forthon hit cumeth weopinde.	Therefore it cometh weeping,
and woniende iwiteth.	and wailing departeth,
<i>thonne</i> Death mid his pricke.	when Death, with his dart,
pineth thene licame.	20 pineth the body.

He walketh and wendeth.  
and woneth *his sithes*.  
he sæith on his bedde.  
wo me that ic libbe.  
that æffre min lif dawes.  
thus *longe* me ilesteth.  
for heui is his greoning.  
and seohrful is his woaning.  
and all *reowliche* his sith.  
mid seorwe biwunden.  
him deaueth tha æren.  
him dimmeth *tha eizen*.  
him scerpeth the neose.  
him scrincketh tha lippen.  
him scorteth *the tunge*.  
him truketh his iwit.  
him teoreth his miht.  
him coldeth his *heorte*.  
*him* leggeth the ban stille.  
thonne bith that soule hus.  
seoruhliche bereaved.  
*of* also muchele wunne.  
the ther inne wunede  
thus bith thæs bearnes.

mid *pinunge* ifulled.  
theo moder greoneth.  
and that bearn woaneth.  
so bith theo *heardtid*.  
mid balewen imenged.  
So bith eft the feorthsith.  
*sorhliche* to *dæled*  
mid seoruwen al bewunden.  
thonne the licame and the sowle.  
*soriliche* to *dæleth*.  
thonne bith that wræcche lif.  
iended al mid sori sith.  
thonne bith the *bodige*.  
iflut to then flore.  
he bith eastward istreihht.  
he bith sone stif.  
he *heardeth* also clei.  
hit is him ikunde.  
mon hine met mit on *zerde*.  
and tha *molde* seoththen.  
ne mot he of thære molde.  
habben namore.  
thonne that rihte imet.  
*rihtliche* tæcheth.  
Thonne lith the clei clot.  
cold on then flore.  
and him sone from *fleoth*.  
theo he ær freome dude.  
nulleth heo mid honden.  
his heafod riht wenden.  
heom thuncheth that hore honden.  
swuthe beoth ifuled.  
gif heo hondleth the *dæde*.  
Seoththen his deazes beoth igon.  
sone cumeth that wrecche wif.  
*forhoweth* thene earfeth sith.  
forbindeth thæs dædan muth.  
and his dimme eizen.  
\* \* \* *ie* thet riche<sup>[A]</sup> wif.

He walketh and goeth,  
and bewails his destiny;  
he saith, on his bed,  
Wo me! that I live;  
25 that ever my life  
so long endureth.  
For heavy is his groaning,  
and sorrowful his wailing.  
and all rueful his lot,  
30 with sorrow encompassed.  
His ears deafen,  
his eyes become dim,  
his nose sharpens,  
his lips shrink,  
35 his tongue shorteneth  
his sense faileth,  
his strength wasteth,  
his *heart* chilleth,  
his bones lie still;  
40 then is that soul-house  
wofully bereaved  
of as much delight  
as therein dwelled.  
Thus are these children  
45 filled with torment;  
The mother groaneth,  
and the child wailleth;  
so is that hard hap  
with torment mingled.  
50 So is oft the departure,  
miserably apportioned,  
with sorrow all surrounded,  
when the body and the soul  
sorrowfully separate.  
55 Then is that wretched life  
ended all with sad departure;  
then is the body  
banished to the floor;  
he is stretcht eastward;  
60 he is soon stiff;  
he hardens like clay;  
it is of kin to him.  
They measure him with a yard,  
and that dust, thenceforth,  
65 may not of the earth  
have any more  
than that right measured  
rightly teacheth.  
Then lies the clay clod  
70 cold on the floor,  
and soon from him *flee*  
those he before help did;  
nor will they, with *their* hands,  
lay his head straight;  
75 they think that their hands  
are much defiled  
if they handle the dead.  
After his days are gone,  
soon cometh the wretched wife,  
80 lamenteth the woeful time,  
binds up the mouth of the dead,  
and closes his dim eyes.  
\* \* \* that wretched wife

forhoweth thene earueth sith.  
for ufel is that wrecche lufe.  
*thome* theo unblisse cumath.  
Thonne besihth theo soule.  
sorliche to then lichame.  
\* \* \* \* \*

*hwi noldest bethenchen* thu me.  
theo hwule thet ic wunede inne the.  
for thu were leas and lutiz.  
and *umriht* lufedest.  
godnesse and riht.  
æfre thu onscunedest.  
hwar is nu the *mōdinesse*.  
swo muchel the thu lufedæst.  
hwar beoth nu theo pundes.  
thurh \* \* \* newes igædered.  
heo weren monifolde.  
bi markes itolde.  
hwar beoth *nu* theo goldfæten.  
theo the guldene.  
comen to thine honden.  
thin blisse is *nu* al igon.  
min seoruwe is fornon.  
hwar beoth nu thin wæde.  
the *thu* wel lufedest.  
hwar beoth the.  
seten sori ofer the.  
beden swuthe Ʒeorne.  
*that* the come bote.  
heom thuthte alto longe.  
that thu were on live.  
for heo wæren grædie.  
to gripen thin æiht.  
nu heo hi dælith heom imang.  
*heo* doth the withuten.  
ac nu heo beoth fuse.  
to bringen the ut of huse.  
bergen the ut æt thire dure.  
Of weolen thu art bedæled.  
Hwui noldest *thu bethenchen* me.  
theo hwile ic was innen the.  
ac scendest me mid sunne.  
*forthi* ic seoruhful eam.  
weile that ic souhte.  
so seoruhfulne buc.  
noldest *thu lōkien* lufe.  
with ilærede men.  
Ʒiven ham of thine gode.  
that heo the *fore* beden.  
heo mihten mid salm songe.  
thine sunne acwenchen.  
mid \* \* \* *reīnesse*.  
thine misdeden forebiddan.  
heo mihten offrian loc.  
*leofliche* for the.  
swuth deor thurthe lac.  
licame Cristes.  
thurh thære thu wære.  
alesed from helle wite.  
and mid his reade blode.  
that he Ʒeat on rode.  
the *thu weren* ifreoed.  
to farene into heouene.  
ac *thu fenge* to theowdome.

[Pg 4]

[Pg 5]

lamenteth the woeful time;  
85 for evil is that wretched love  
when adversity cometh.  
Then saith the soul  
sadly to the body,  
\* \* \* \* \*  
90 *why wouldst thou not think of me*  
while that I dwelt in thee,  
for thou wert false and deceitful,  
and iniquity didst love;  
goodness and justice  
95 ever thou didst shun.  
Where is now the pride  
thou so much didst love?  
Where are now the pounds  
by \* \* \* gathered?  
100 they were manifold,  
counted by marks.  
Where are now the vessels of gold  
that thou idolized,  
as they came to thy hands?  
105 Thy bliss is now all gone;  
my sorrow is near.  
Where are now thy clothes  
that thou well didst love?  
Where are they  
110 that sate sorry over thee,  
praying right earnestly  
that help *might* come to thee?  
They thought it all too long  
that thou wert alive,  
115 for they were greedy  
to gripe thy property.  
Now they divide it among them,  
they do without thee,  
eke now they are prompt  
120 to bring thee out of house;  
bearing thee out at the door.  
Of wealth thou art deprived.  
Why wouldst thou not think of me  
while I was within thee?  
125 but blemished me with sin.  
Therefore I sorrowful am;  
alas! that I sought  
such a miserable body.  
Nor wouldst thou observe love  
130 with learned men,  
give them part of thy wealth  
that they *might* pray for thee,  
that they might with psalm sung  
thy sin extinguish,  
135 with \* \* \*  
pray for thy misdeeds;  
that they might offer gifts  
acceptable for thee,  
through the most dear sacrifice  
140 of Christ's body;  
by which thou were  
redeemed from pains of hell;  
and with his red blood,  
that he shed on the cross,  
145 by which thou wert freed  
to enter into heaven.  
But thou took to thraldom

thurh thæs deoffles lore.  
 Bi the hit is iseid.  
 and soth hit is on boken.  
*Qui custodiat divitias.*  
*Servus est divitiis.*  
 Thu were theow.  
 thines weolan.  
 noldest thu nouht.  
 thærof *dælen*.  
 for Drihtenes willæn.  
 ac æfre thu grædiliche,  
 gæderdest the more.  
 lutherliche eart thu forloren.  
 from al that thu lufedest.  
 and ic scal wræcche soule.  
*ece* we nu driæn.  
 eart thu nu loth and unwurth.  
 alle thine freonden.  
 nu ham *thuncheth* alto long.  
 that thu ham neih list.  
 ær thu beo ibrouht.  
 thær thu *begrafen* scalt.  
 on deope sæthe.  
 on durelease huse.  
 thær wurmes wældeth.  
 alle that wurthest was.  
 fuweles quale holde.  
 the thu icwemedest ær.  
 mid alre *kunde* swetnesse.  
 theo thu swuthe lufedest.  
 theo swetnesse is nu al agon.  
 that *bittere* the bith fornon.  
 that bittere ilæsteth æffre.  
 that swete ne cumeth the *næffre*.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
*thuncheth* that thu hire *bileiben*.  
 3et sæith theo sowle.  
 soriliche to then licame.  
 sæ *ne thearft* thu on stirop.  
 stonden mid fotan.  
 on nenne goldfohne bowe.  
 for thu *scalt* faren alto howe.  
 and thu scalt nu ruglunge.  
 ridæn to thære eorthe.  
 ut *sceot* æt thære dure.  
 ne thearft thu næffre on3ean.

cumæn reowliche riden.  
*nu alle* beræfed.  
 ac thene eorthliche weole.  
 the thu iwold ohtest.  
 nu mon mæi *seggen* bi the.  
 thes mon is iwiten.  
 nu her weila.  
 and his weolæn beoth her belæfed.  
*nolde* he nefre thær of don.  
 his drihtenes wille.  
 ac æfre thu gæderest.  
*gærsumen* thine feonde.  
 nulleth heo nimen gete.  
 hwo hit bi3ete.  
 nafst thu bute *welawei*.  
 that thu weole heuedest.  
 al is reowliche thin sith.  
 efter thin wrecche lif.

through the devil's lore.  
 Concerning thee it is said  
 150 in books, and true it is:  
*Qui custodiat divitias,*  
*Servus est divitiis.*  
 Thou wert slave  
 to thy wealth,  
 155 nor wouldst thou ought  
 thereof distribute  
 for God's pleasure;  
 but thou ever greedily  
 didst gather the more.  
 160 Miserably art thou separated  
 from all that thou lovedst,  
 and I, wretched soul, shall  
 now suffer everlasting woe.  
 Thou art now loathsome and contemptible  
 165 to all thy friends.  
 Now they think it all too long  
 that thou liest nigh them,  
 ere thou be brought  
 where thou shalt be buried  
 170 in a deep pit,  
 in a doorless house,  
 where worms possess  
 all that was most honoured  
 of the foul dead carcass,  
 175 that thou formerly delightedst  
 with all kind of sweetness,  
 that thou much didst love.  
 The sweetness is now all gone,  
 the bitter is thee near,  
 180 that bitter lasteth ever,  
 that sweet cometh to thee never.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 thinketh that thou here remain.  
 Yet saith the soul  
 185 sadly to the body:  
 see, thou canst not on stirrup  
 stand with thy feet,  
 on no gold-glittering saddle;  
 for thou shalt journey all to woe,  
 190 and thou shalt now backwards  
 ride to the earth;  
 shut out at the door,  
 nor canst thou ever again  
 come fiercely riding.  
 195 Now all bereaved,  
 eke the earthly wealth,  
 that thou possessed power *over*.  
 Now they may say of thee,  
 this man is departed,  
 200 Alas! now here,  
 and his wealth is here left behind.  
 he would never do therewith  
 his Lord's will.  
 But ever thou didst gather  
 205 riches of thine enemies.  
 Yet will they not take  
 who procured it?  
 nor hast thou but well away!  
 that thou hadst wealth.  
 210 All ruefull is thy lot,  
 after thy wicked life.

theo men beoth the blithre.  
 the arisen ær with the.  
 that thin muth is betuned.  
*the* theo teone ut lettest.  
 the he heom sore grulde.  
 thet ham gros the a3an.  
*dæth* hine haveth bituned.  
 and thene teone aleid.  
 Soth is iseid.  
 on then salme *bec*.  
*Os tuum habundavit malitia*,  
 was on thine muthe.  
 luthernesse ripe.  
*noldest* thu on thine huse.  
 herborwen theo wrecchen.  
 ne mihten heo under *thine* roue.  
 none reste finden.  
*noldest* thu næfre helpen.  
 tham orlease *wrecchen*.  
 ac thu sete on thine benche.  
 underleid mid thine bolstre.  
 thu wurpe *cneow* ofer *cneow*.  
 ne icneowe thu the sulfen.  
 that thu scoldest mid wurmen.  
*husien* in eorthan.  
 nu thu hauest neowe hus.  
 inne bethrungen.  
 lowe beoth the helewewes.  
 unheize beoth the sidwoves.  
 thin rof liith on thin breoste ful *nei*.  
 colde is the ibedded.  
 clothes bidcled.  
 nulleth thine hinen.  
 clothes the sen \* \* \*  
 for heom thuncheth alto lut.  
 that thu heom bilefdest.  
 that thu hefdest on *horde*.  
 theo hit wulleth heldan.  
 thus is iwitan thin weole.  
 wendest thet hit thin were.  
 thus *reowliche* nu thin sith.  
 efter thin wrecche lif.  
 the sculen nu waxen.  
 wurmes besiden.  
*thene* hungrie feond.  
 theo the freten wulleth.  
 heo wulleth the freliche freten.  
 for *heo* thin flæsc liketh.  
 heo wulleth freten thin fule hold.  
 theo hwule heo hit *findeth*.  
 thonne hit al bith agon.  
 heo wulleth gnawen thin bon.  
 theo orlease *wurmes*.  
 heo windeth on thin armes.  
 heo breketh thine breoste.  
 and borieth the ofer al.  
*heo* reoweth in and ut.  
 thet hord is hore open.  
 and so heo wulleth waden.  
 wide in thi *wombe*.  
 todelen thine thermes.  
 theo the deore weren.  
 lifre and thine lihte.  
*lodliche* torenden.

Those men are the blither  
 that formerly jangled with thee,  
 that thy mouth is closed,  
 215 with which thou reproach uttered,  
 which sorely provoked them;  
 that they raged against thee;  
 death hath closed it,  
 and the anger taken away.  
 220 Truly it is said  
 in the Psalm book,  
*os tuum habundavit malitia*,  
 wickedness ripe  
 was in thy mouth.  
 225 Thou wouldst not in thy house  
 shelter the poor,  
 nor might they under thy roof  
 find any rest;  
 nor wouldst thou ever help  
 230 the unhappy wretches;  
 but thou sate on thy bench,  
 underlaid with thy bolster,  
 thou threw knee over knee,  
 nor knew thou thyself  
 235 that thou shouldst with worms  
 dwell in the earth.  
 Now thou hast a new house,  
 a crowded dwelling;  
 low is the covering,  
 240 unhigh the sidewalls,  
 thy roof lieth on thy breast full *nigh*.  
 Cold art thou embedded,  
 beclad in clothes  
 thy hinds would refuse.  
 245 Clothes the sen \* \* \*  
 for they think all too little  
 that thou didst leave them;  
 that thou hadst in hoard  
 they will it keep.  
 250 Thus is departed thy wealth,  
*thou* thoughtest that it thine were.  
 Thus ruefull now thy lot,  
 after thy wretched life.  
 Now wormes shall grow  
 255 beside thee,  
 the hungry enemy  
 that will devour thee,  
 they will thee greedily devour;  
 for they like thy flesh,  
 260 they will devour thy foul carcase,  
 as long as they find it;  
 when it is all gone  
 they will gnaw thy bone;  
 those vile worms,  
 265 they wind on thy arms,  
 they break up thy breast,  
 and perforate thee all over;  
 they rove in and out,  
 that hoard is open to them,  
 270 and so they will wade  
 wide in thy stomach;  
 parting thy entrails  
 that were dear to thee.  
 Thy liver and thy lights  
 275 loathfully rending,

and so scal formelten.  
mawe and thin milte.  
and so scal win \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

[Pg 9]

wurmes of thine flæsc.  
thu scalt fostren thine feond.  
thet thu beo al ifreten  
*thu* scalt nu herborwen.  
unhol wihte.  
noldest thu ær gode men.  
for lufe *gode sellan*.  
heo wulleth wurchen hore hord.  
on thine heaued ponne.  
*moton* heo bileafen.  
thine lippen unfreten.  
ac thu scalt grisliche grennien.  
*that* hwo so hit iseizge.  
he mihte beon offered.  
Reowliche bith so thin sith.  
efter *thin* wercche lif.  
nu me wule swopen thine flor.  
and thet flet clensien.  
for hit is *heom* lothre.  
the thu theron leizge.  
heo wulleth mid holiwatere.  
beworpen ec theo *pædas*.  
blecsien ham zeorne.  
to burewen ham with the.  
beren ut thin bed strau.  
*brennen* hit mid fure.  
thus thu ert nu ilufed.  
seoththen thu me forlure.  
al hit is reowliche thin sith.  
efter thin wrecche lif.  
zet sæith the soule.  
*soriliche* to hire licame.  
*noldest* thu la erming.  
her o to wunienne.  
nes hit the no wiht icunde.  
that thu icoren *me* hefdest.  
nes hit icunde the.  
more then thine cunne biuoren the.  
ne heold is thin *æizge* opene.  
theo hwule ic the inne was.  
hwi noldest thu lefen.  
[Pg 10]  
tha thu hi iseizge.  
hu thin *fordferen*.  
ferden biforen the.  
nu heo wunieth on eorthe.  
wurmes ham habbeth todæled.  
*isceorf hore* sorhfulle bones.  
the theo sunne wrohten.  
tha zet seith theo soule.  
*soriliche* to hire *lichame*.  
æfre thu were luther.  
theo hwile thu lif hæfdest.  
thu were leas and luti.  
and unriht lufedest.  
*and* luthere deden.  
deredest cristene men.  
and mid worde and mid werke.  
so thu wurst mihte.  
*ic was* from Gode clene.  
to the isend.

and so shall waste away  
thy maw and thy melt,  
and so shall win \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

280 worms of thy flesh,  
thou shalt nourish thine enemy  
until thou art all devoured;  
thou shalt now harbour  
hateful creatures,  
285 (heretofore thou wouldst not, good men,  
for love, give *of thy* goods;)  
they will work their hoard  
in thy skull.  
Should they leave  
290 thy lips undevoured,  
eke thou shalt grin horribly,  
that whosoever sees it  
he might be frightened;  
so rueful is thy lot,  
295 after thy wicked life.  
Now men will sweep thy floor,  
and cleanse the dwelling;  
for it is the loather to them  
that thou liest thereon.  
300 They will, with holy water,  
sprinkle eke the vestments,  
cleansing them carefully  
to bury them with thee;  
bear out thy bed-straw  
305 to burn it with fire.  
Thus thou art now beloved  
since thou lost me.  
All rueful is thy lot,  
after thy wicked life.  
310 Yet saith the soul  
sadly to the body,  
Alas! miserable, wouldst thou not  
here for ever dwell?  
it was no whit known to thee  
315 that thou hadst chosen me;  
it was not known to thee  
more than to thy kin before thee,  
nor was thine eye held open  
while I was within thee.  
320 Why wouldst thou not believe,  
though thou saw it,  
how thy forefathers  
went before thee.  
Now they dwell in the earth,  
325 worms have shared them,  
gnawed their miserable bones  
with which they wrought sin.  
Again saith the soul,  
sorrowfully to the body,  
330 thou wert ever wicked  
whilst thou hadst life,  
thou wert false and deceitful,  
and loved injustice  
and wicked deeds,  
335 and injured Christian men  
with word and with work,  
as thou worst might.  
I was sent to thee  
innocent from God,

ac thu hauest unc fordon.  
mid thine luthere deden.  
*æfre* thu were gredi.  
and mid gromen the onfulled.  
unneathe ic on the.  
eni wununge ha*uede*.  
for hearde nithe.  
and ofer mete fulle.  
for thin wombe was thin god.  
and thin wulder *thu* iscend.  
forloren thu havest theo ece blisse.  
binumen thu havest the paradis.  
binumen the is that holi lond.  
then deofle thu bist isold on hond.  
for noldest thu nefre *habben* inouh.  
buten thu hefdest unifouh.  
Nu is that swete al agon.  
thet bittere the *bith* fornnon.  
that bittere ilest the efre.  
thet gode ne cumeth the nefre.  
thus ageth nu *thin sith*.  
*æfter* thin wrecce lif.  
thu wendest that thin ende.  
nefre ne cuman scolde.  
to long \* \* \* lede death the.  
that he nolde nimen the.  
for efre thu arerdest sake.  
and unseihte \* \* \*  
and ic was with innen the.  
biclused swuthe fule.  
thu were wedlowe.  
and mon sware.  
and \* \* \* hund inouh.  
for thu were mid sunne.  
ifulled al with inne.  
for the deofle *lored the all*.  
ord fulneih thine heorte.  
efre thu woldest fullen.  
al that was his wille.  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* *thu* nefre th.  
*drihtenes* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* *iwold* ahte.  
The 3et seith theo soule.  
soriliche to hire licame.  
clene bith the eor*the*.  
*ær* thu to hire to cume.  
ac thu heo afulest.  
mid thin fule holde.  
thet is that *fulnesse*.  
afursed from monnen.  
nu thu bist bihuded.  
on alre horde fulest.  
on *deope* seathe.  
on durelease huse.  
thu scalt rotien.  
and brostnian.  
thine bon beoth bedæled.  
*from thære* wæde.  
the heo weren to iwunede.  
breketh lith from lithe.  
liggeth the bon stil.  
*tha* ure drihten eft.  
of deathe heo aræreth.

[Pg 11]

[Pg 12]

340 but thou hast undone us,  
with thy wicked deeds.  
Ever thou wert greedy,  
and filled thyself with fierceness,  
I hardly in thee  
345 had any dwelling,  
for hard covetousness,  
and foul gluttony;  
for thy belly was thy god,  
and thou spoiled thy glory.  
350 Lost thou hast everlasting bliss,  
thou hast deprived thee of Paradise.  
Taken from thee is that holy land;  
thou art given into the devil's hand,  
for thou wouldst never have enough,  
355 unless thou hadst repletion.  
Now is the sweet all gone,  
the bitter is near thee,  
that bitter lasteth thee ever,  
that good cometh to thee never.  
360 Thus goeth now thy lot,  
after thy wicked life.  
Thou thoughtest that thine end  
should never come.  
Too long \* \* \* death thee,  
365 that he would not take thee,  
for thou ever raised up strife  
and discord, \* \* \*  
and I was within thee  
most foully enclosed;  
370 thou wert faithless  
and perjured,  
and \* \* \* enough;  
for thou wert with sin  
filled all within,  
375 for the devil taught thee all,  
chief full nigh thy heart.  
Ever thou wouldst fulfil,  
all that was his will.  
\* \* \* \* \*  
380 \* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Again, saith the soul,  
sadly to the body,  
385 the earth is pure  
e'er thou come to it,  
but thou defilest it  
with thy foul carcass;  
only that foulness is  
390 removed from men;  
now thou art hidden  
in foulest hoard,  
in a deep pit,  
in a doorless house.  
395 Thou shalt rot  
and corrupt;  
thy bones will be separated  
from the clothing  
in which they were inhabited;  
400 limb breaks from limb;  
the bones lie still,  
until our Lord again  
from death raiseth them,



so he alle men deth.  
 thonne domes daie *cumeth*.  
 thonne scalt thu erming.  
 up arisen.  
 imeten thine morth deden.  
 theo the murie *weren*.  
 seoruhful and sorimod.  
 so thin lif wrouhte.  
 nu beoth thine earen fordutte.  
*non dreame* ihereth.  
 theo leorneden theo listen.  
 tha luthere weren.  
 [mid] wowe domes.  
 and gultes *feole*.  
*thu* othre beræfedest.  
 rihtes istreones.  
*thurh* thæs deofles lore,  
 theo the likede wel.  
 the *deofle* tuhte his hearpe.  
 and tuhte the to him.  
 thu iherdest thene dream.  
 he was drihtene fulloth.  
 he swefede the.  
 mid then sweize.  
 swote thu sleptest.  
 longe on thine bedde.  
*nis* the to chirche.  
 ne mostes thu iheren.  
 theo holie dræmes.  
 theo bellen rungen.  
*that* siker becnunge wæs.  
 ne holie lore.  
 the unker helpe wære.  
 ac efre he tuhte the.  
*andnu* beo the iwold ahte.  
 ac nu beoth fordutte.  
 thine dream thurles.  
 ne ihereth heo *ne* more.  
 non herunge of the.  
 ær theo bemen blowen.  
 the unc becnien *scullen*.  
*from* deathes dimnesse.  
 to drihtenes dome.  
 thonne thu scalt iheren.  
 thene *lauerde* dom.  
 the thu on thisse life.  
 lutherliche of eodest.  
 Thet et seith the sowle.  
*soriſche* to hire licame.  
 nu thu bist afursed.  
 from alle thine freonden.  
 nu is thin muth forscuttet.  
 for death hine haueth forduttet.  
 ne bith he *ne mare* undon.  
 ær cume thæs heize kinges dom.  
 thonne hit bith isene.  
*thet* on Psalme seith.  
*Reddituri sunt de factis propriis rationem*.  
 thonne sculen theo wæile.  
 seggen hore deden.  
 wisliche thurh wisdom.  
 for drihten hit wot.  
*thome* heo onfoth hore dom.  
 of drihtenes muthe.

[Pg 13]

[Pg 14]

as he doth all men,  
 405 when doomsday cometh.  
 Then shalt thou, miserable!  
 up arise,  
 thy deadly sins measured,  
 that were so pleasant to thee;  
 410 sorrowful and melancholy,  
 the crimes of thy life.  
 Now are thine ears closed,  
 no pleasant sounds they hear;  
 they learned, they listened  
 415 to those that were wicked.  
 With unjust judgments,  
 and many trespasses,  
 thou others bereaved  
 of rightful wealth,  
 420 through the devil's lore,  
 that thou liked well.  
 The *devil* touched his harp,  
 and enticed thee to him;  
 thou heardest the harmony;  
 425 it was hateful to the Lord.  
 He lulled thee  
 with the sound;  
 sweetly thou sleptest  
 long in thy bed;  
 430 nor art thou at church,  
 nor canst thou hear  
 those holy sounds,  
 the bells tolling,  
 that a sure beckoning was;  
 435 nor holy lore  
 that should be our help.  
 But ever he enticed thee,  
 and now thou art in his power;  
 eke now are closed  
 440 thy doors of sound,  
 nor hear they more  
 any praise of thee,  
 until the trumpets blow  
 which shall summon us  
 445 from death's dimness  
 to the Lord's doom.  
 Then thou shalt hear  
 the Lord doom,  
 that thou in this life  
 450 wickedly walked.  
 Again saith the soul  
 sadly to the body,  
 now thou art separated  
 from all thy friends;  
 455 now is thy mouth prevented,  
 for death has closed it;  
 nor will it be ever opened  
 before the high King's doom.  
 Then it will be seen,  
 460 as the Psalm sayeth,  
*Reddituri sunt de factis propriis rationem*.  
 Then shall those servants  
 tell their deeds,  
 truly through wisdom,  
 465 for the Lord knoweth them;  
 then they receive their doom  
 from the Lord's mouth,

also hit is awriten.  
of *drihtenes* muthe.  
*Ite maledicti in ignem eternum.*  
thonne sculen wit *sithien*.  
to alre seoruwe mest.  
faren mid feondes.  
in thet eche fur.  
beornen *æfre*.  
ende nis ther nefre.  
*Et quia bona egerunt ibunt in vitam eternam.*  
thonne *gon* theo goden.  
mid Gode *sithian*.  
echeliche wunien.  
in alre wuldre.  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* me suke to the.  
*Osmeum aperui, et attraxi ipsum.*  
thu \* \* \* et drowe me to the.  
walawa! and wa is me.  
that ic *efre* com to the.  
for noldest *thu* mid thine muthe.  
bimænen thine neode.  
ac *æfre* diȝelliche.  
thu woldest *ham* bidernan.  
noldest thu *ham* siggen.  
biforen none preosten.  
ther *alle* men secheth *ham* ore.  
bimæneth hore misdeden.  
and seoththen milts*unge* foth.  
thurh sothne scrift.  
sithieth to Criste.  
seggeth hore sunnen.  
and hor *soules* helpith.  
thurh sothe bireousunge.  
theo soule reste onfoth.  
ac ne the *scalt* nefre resten.  
thurh thine bireousunge.  
ac altogædere ic am forlor*en*.  
*thurh* thine luthere deden.  
noldest thu mid muthe.  
bidden me none milts*unge*.  
nu thu ert adumbed.  
and death haueth the keiȝe.  
mid clutes thu ert for*ligden*.  
and loth alle freonden.  
*efre* ma eft.  
on to lokienne.  
thus is reoulliche *thin* sith.  
efter thine wrecche lif.  
for thu were beset.  
thicke mid sunne.  
and alle *theo* weren prickiende.  
so wiles on ile.  
he bith thicke mid wiles.  
ne prikieth he*om* no wiht.  
for al bith that softe.  
iwend to him sulfen.  
that ne mawen his wiles.  
*prkien* him sore.  
for al bith that scearpe.  
him iwend fromward.  
  
So thu *weren* mid sunne.  
iset alle with inne.

[Pg 15]

as it is writen;  
from the Lord's mouth:  
470 *Ite maledicti in ignem eternum.*  
Then shall we depart  
into uttermost sorrow,  
go with fiends  
in that everlasting fire,  
475 to burn for ever;  
end is there never.  
*Et quia bona egerunt ibunt in vitam eternam.*  
Then go the good,  
departing with God,  
480 to dwell everlastingly  
in ever-during glory.  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
*Osmeum aperui, et attraxi ipsum.*  
485 thou \* \* \* drew me to thee,  
well away! and woe is me!  
that I ever came to thee;  
for thou wouldst not with thy mouth  
bewail thy infirmities;  
490 but ever darkly  
thou wouldst hide them;  
nor wouldst thou confess them;  
before any priest,  
where all men seek pardon,  
495 bewail their misdeeds,  
and afterwards obtain mercy;  
through true shrift  
depart to Christ;  
confess their sins  
500 and help their souls,  
through true repentance.  
the soul acquires rest;  
but thou shalt never rest,  
through thy repentance.  
505 Eke I am altogether lost  
through thy wicked deeds;  
thou wouldst not with thy mouth  
pray for mercy to me;  
now thou art bedumbed,  
510 and death has caught thee;  
thou art laid out with rags,  
and loath to all thy friends,  
for ever and ever  
to look on.  
515 Thus rueful is thy lot,  
after thy wicked life;  
for thou wert beset  
thick with sin,  
and they all were pricking  
520 like quills on porcupine;  
he is thick *set* with quills;  
they prick him not,  
for the soft part is all  
turned to himself,  
525 that his quills cannot  
prick him sore,  
for the points are all  
turned him fromward.  
  
Thus thou wert with sin  
530 beset all within;

theo sunfule pikes.  
 prikieth me fulsore.  
*ac thu al that* softe was.  
 iwend to the sulven.  
 and efre thet scerpe.  
 scored me touard*des*.  
 heo weren iwend.  
 so me wurst was.  
 ich was mid thine prickunge.  
 ipined *fulsore*.  
 ac nu me wulleth prikien.  
 theo pikes inne helle.  
 pinion me ful sore.  
 for thine sunne.  
 Ic was on heihnes isceapen.  
 and soule ihoten.  
 Ic was the seof*othe* isceaft.  
 So theo bec seggeth.  
 the the Almihti God.  
 mildeliche iwrouhte.  
 wisliche mid worde.  
 so hit al iwearth.  
 heouene and eorthe.  
 luft and engles.  
 wind and *watere*.  
 thæs monnes soule.  
 this beoth theo seouene.  
 the ic ær foreseide.  
 this was *makede*.  
 thæs Almihties fæder.  
 of thissen andweorke.  
 alle thing he iwrouhte.  
 and thus hit is iwriten.  
 on holie wisdom.  
*Fiat et facta sunt omnia*.  
 He seide iwur*the*.  
*and* alle thing iworthen.  
 thus mid one worde.  
 al hit was iwurthen.  
 he iscop th*onne* thene sune.  
 alle isceafte wisliche.  
 thurh wisdom.  
 and efre he hit wiseth.  
*Imaginem et similitudinem*.  
 and ic deorewurthe.  
 drihtenes onlic*nesse*.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* of God.  
 and ic the imæne.  
 mid lothre lufe.  
 and ic thin wale iwearth.  
 hu so *thu noldest*.  
 weila thine fule iwill.  
 wo haveth hit me idon.  
 Thu fule mathe *mæte*.  
 hwi hauest thu me biswiken.  
 For thine fule sunne.  
 ic scal nu *in helle*.  
 dreizæn ther wrecche sith.  
 all for thine fule lif.  
 3et ic wulle the ætwin*ne*.  
*and thine* wea sithes.  
 Nu ic scal soriliche.  
 sithien from the.

those sinful pikes  
 prick me full sore,  
 but thou all that was soft  
 turned to thyself,  
 535 and ever the sharp  
 scored me towards,  
 they were turned  
 as was worst for me,  
 I was with the pricking  
 540 pained ful sore:  
 but now will prick me  
 those pikes in hell;  
 punish me full sore  
 for thy sin.  
 545 On high was I created,  
 and named soul.  
 I was the seventh creation,  
 as the book says,  
 that Almighty God  
 550 mercifully wrought.  
 Truly by his word  
 thus it all came to pass:  
 heaven and earth,  
 air and angels,  
 555 wind and water,  
 the soul of man,  
 these are the seven  
 that I before mentioned.  
 These were made  
 560 by the Almighty Father;  
 of this substance  
 all things he wrought;  
 and thus it is written  
 in holy wisdom,  
 565 *Fiat et facta sunt omnia*.  
 He said, let be,  
 and all things were;  
 thus with one word  
 was all created;  
 570 he made then the sun,  
 all truly created  
 by his wisdom,  
 and he guides it ever,  
*Imaginem et similitudinem*.  
 575 And I, in the dear  
 Lord's likeness.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* of God,  
 and me between,  
 580 with pure love,  
 and I thy bliss decreed;  
 how so thou wouldst not;  
 alas! thy foul will  
 hath wrought my woe.  
 585 Thou foul food for worms,  
 why hast thou deceived me?  
 For thy wicked sin  
 I shall now in hell  
 suffer there a wretched time,  
 590 all for thy wicked life;  
 yet I will flee thee  
 and thy dreary fate.  
 Now I shall sorrowfully  
 depart from thee;

nu beoth thine teth atru.  
*thin* tunge is ascorted.  
 theo the facen was.  
 and then feonde icweme.  
 Mid wowe *dreames*.  
 and mid gultes feole.  
*thu* othre birefedest.  
 rihtes istreones.  
 gæderest to \* \* \* ime.  
 ac hit is nu all igon.  
 thurh thæs deofles lore.  
 the the licode wel.  
 Nu lith thin *bodige* stille.  
 on ful colde denne.  
 nafest thu gaersume themo.  
 the heo was spekinde.  
*for* heo was faken biforen.  
 and atterne bihinden.  
 heo demde feole domes.  
 the drihten *was* lothe.  
 Iseid hit is on psalme.  
 and ful sothe hit is bihire.  
*Lingua tua concinnabat dolos*.  
 Heo 3eothede fakenliche.  
 and then feonde icwemde.  
 heo heou mid hearde worde.  
 and *icwemde* tha wrecches.  
 scarpe heo was and kene.  
 and cwemde then deofle.  
 mid alle then sunne.  
*that* efre was his wille.  
 A wurthe hire wa.  
 that heo spekinde was so.  
 heo haueth unc *domned*.  
 to deoppere helle.  
 Nis hit non sellic.  
 thauh ic segge of boken.  
 thauh ic *thonne* that sothe repie.  
 for ic was ilered.  
 of mine leoue fæder.  
 feire on frumthe.  
 aer ic *fordferde*.  
 ic was Godes douhter.  
 ac thu amerdest that foster.  
 ic sceolde lif holden.  
*me sellethe* he wolde.  
 Sone thu were lifleas.  
 seoththen ic the forleas.  
 Ic was thin imake.  
*so so* bec seggeth.  
*Uxor tua sicut vitis habundans*.  
 Ic was the biwedded.  
 wurthliche \* \* \* e.  
 et then fontstone.  
 that thu haucst ifuled.  
 mid thine fule othes.  
 Thu hafest thin full*uht* forloren.  
 behinden and biuoren.  
 Feire thu were imerked.  
 heie on thine heafde.  
*mid then* holie ele.  
 Thu hauest kine merke.  
 thu scoldest beon on heouene.  
 heih \* \* \* under Gode.

[Pg 18]

[Pg 19]

595 thy teeth are now poisonous;  
 thy tongue is shortened,  
 which was so deceitful  
 and pleasing to the fiend.  
 With unjust judgments,  
 600 and with many trespasses,  
 thou bereaved others  
 of their rightful wealth,  
 gatheredest \* \* \*  
 but it is now all gone  
 605 through the devil's lore,  
 that thou liked so well.  
 Now lieth thy body still  
 in full cold den;  
 nor hast thou the treasure  
 610 of which she spake;  
 for she was deceitful before,  
 and envenomed after;  
 she pronounced many judgments  
 that were hateful to the Lord.  
 615 It is said in the Psalm,  
 and full true it is of her:  
*Lingua tua concinnabat dolos*.  
 She poured out deceitfully,  
 and pleased the fiend;  
 620 she hewed with hard words,  
 and delighted the wretches.  
 Sharp she was and keen,  
 and pleased the devil  
 with all the sin  
 625 that ever was his will.  
 Wo be to her!  
 that she spake so;  
 she has damned us  
 to deeper hell.  
 630 Is it not wonderful,  
 though I read in books,  
 though I then the truth gathered,  
 for I was taught  
 by my dear father  
 635 beautifully in the beginning,  
 before I departed,  
 I was God's daughter,  
 but thou didst hinder that fostering.  
 I might life have held,  
 640 that he would have given me.  
 Soon thou wert lifeless,  
 sithence I left thee.  
 I was thy wife,  
 as the book says:  
 645 *Uxor tua sicut vitis habundans*.  
 I was wedded to thee  
 honourably,  
 at the fount stone,  
 that thou hast defiled  
 650 with thy foul oaths.  
 Thou hast forfeited thy baptism  
 here and hereafter.  
 Fair thou wert marked,  
 high on thy head,  
 655 with the holy oil  
 Thou hadst the mark of royalty;  
 thou mightst have been in heaven,  
 high \* \* \* under God,

3if thu hit ne forlure.  
thuruh thæs deofles lore.  
Thine godfæderes *ihaten*.  
ær heo the forleten.  
that thu me scoldest holden.  
thuruh holie lufe Cristes.  
and *drihtene* lawe.  
ledene me to Criste.  
Thu withsoke thene deofel.  
efter drihtenes *cwiththe*.  
*his* modes and his wrænches.  
and his wiewles thæerto.  
Seoththen thu hine lufedest.  
and forwinne drihten.  
for thu lufedest theo lawen.  
the drihten weren lothe.  
unker team *forloren*.  
the wit scolden teman.  
so ic was the betæiht.  
that wit scolden teman.  
Thu *hauest* beon bearne fæder.  
and ic hore moder.  
wit scolden fostrien bearn.  
and bring *ham* to Criste.  
Thet beoth theos bearn.  
so so bec mæneth.  
*Filii tui sicut novell* \* \* \*

if thou hadst not forfeited it  
660 through the devil's lore.  
Thy godfathers promised,  
before they relinquished thee,  
that thou shouldst keep me  
in Christ's holy love  
665 and the law of God,  
and lead me to Christ.  
Thou renounced the devil,  
(after the Lord's word,)  
his moods, and his deceits,  
670 and his wiles thereto.  
Afterwards thou lovedst him,  
and rebelled against the Lord,  
for thou lovedst the traitors  
that were hateful to God;  
675 our progeny lost  
that we should bring forth;  
as I was given to thee  
that we might propagate.  
Thou hast been father of children,  
680 and I their mother;  
we should foster our progeny,  
and bring them to Christ.  
These are the children  
that the book mentions:  
*Filii tui sicut novell* \* \* \*

*Cetera desunt.*

[A] Wrecche?

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**Nº 5**

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BODY: A FRAGMENT OF A SEMI-SAXON POEM \*\*\*

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