CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Lais of Marie de France (Mason's English)

Marie de France · *Mason's translation, 1911 · Eugene Mason (1911), Project Gutenberg #11417*

Those to whom God has given the gift of comely speech, should not hide their light beneath a bushel, but should willingly show it abroad. So Mason's English gives Marie's prologue. Hearken, oh gentles, to the words of Marie. Eugene Mason, 1911, PG #11417, French Mediaeval Romances from the Lays of Marie de France. Mason does not profess them to be a complete collection of her stories in verse. Name the limit. For grades 9–12. Tact later; no prurience. Quote Marie in Mason, not only the introduction.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read this file as Mason's 1911 English from the Lays, a selection rather than a complete Marie, opening with a gift of comely speech and a call to hearken to her words?

"Those to whom God has given the gift of comely speech, should not hide their light beneath a bushel, but should willingly show it abroad. If a great truth is"

Prologue, by way of dedication

Eugene Mason, 1911, Project Gutenberg #11417, French Mediaeval Romances from the Lays of Marie de France. Not a complete collection: Mason says he does not profess them to be a complete collection of her stories in verse. The prologue says: Those to whom God has given the gift of comely speech, should not hide their light beneath a bushel, but should willingly show it abroad. Then: Hearken, oh gentles, to the words of Marie. For grades 9–12. Name the limit. Tact later; no prurience. Quote Mason, and Marie in Mason, not only the introduction.

KEY CHARACTERS

Marie
Whose words the hearers are asked to hearken to, and who will not hide a gift of comely speech under a bushel

Eugene Mason
The 1911 translator; he does not profess this to be a complete collection

HOW TO BEGIN THESE LAYS

> *"Those to whom God has given the gift of comely speech, should not hide their light beneath a bushel, but should willingly show it abroad. If a great truth is"*
>
> Prologue, by way of dedication

> *"Hearken, oh gentles, to the words of Marie. When"*
>
> The Lay of Gugemar

Grades 11–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

Not a Complete Collection

MASON'S INTRODUCTION

I do not profess them to be a complete collection of her stories in verse. Mason names the limit before a tale is told.

- Keep "not profess them to be a complete collection."
- 9–12.
- Name Mason, 1911.
- Quote the introduction, then turn to Marie.

> *"I do not profess them to be a complete collection of her stories in verse. The"*
>
> Mason's introduction

02

The Gift of Comely Speech

PROLOGUE, BY WAY OF DEDICATION

Those to whom God has given the gift of comely speech, should not hide their light beneath a bushel, but should willingly show it abroad. The prologue begins with a gift, and with a duty to show it.

- Keep "God has given" and "hide their light beneath a bushel."
- 9–12.
- Marie in Mason, not only the introduction.
- Quote this wording.

> *"Those to whom God has given the gift of comely speech, should not hide their light beneath a bushel, but should willingly show it abroad. If a great truth is"*
>
> Prologue, by way of dedication

03

Hearken, oh Gentles

THE LAY OF GUGEMAR

Hearken, oh gentles, to the words of Marie. The first lay, as Mason titles it, calls the hearers by name.

- Keep "Hearken, oh gentles" and "the words of Marie."
- 9–12.
- The Lay of Gugemar, as this file spells it.
- Quote Mason.

> *"Hearken, oh gentles, to the words of Marie. When"*
>
> The Lay of Gugemar

04

The Folk About the Fire

THE LAY OF GUGEMAR

When the minstrel tells his tale, let the folk about the fire heed him willingly. Hearing is asked as a willingness, at the fire.

- Keep "folk about the fire" and "heed him willingly."
- 9–12. Tact later; no prurience.
- One opening, not every lay.
- Quote this wording.

> *"When the minstrel tells his tale, let the folk about the fire heed him willingly. For his"*
>
> The Lay of Gugemar

05

Mason, 1911, From the Lays, Not Complete

THE EDITION

Eugene Mason, 1911, PG #11417, French Mediaeval Romances from the Lays of Marie de France. Not a complete collection of her stories in verse. For grades 9–12. Name the limit. Tact in later lays; no prurience. Quote Mason, and Marie in Mason, not only the introduction. One map cannot teach every lay.

- Name Mason, 1911, and the incomplete selection.
- 9–12. Tact, no prurience.
- A prologue about comely speech, then Gugemar.
- Quote this English.

> *"Those to whom God has given the gift of comely speech, should not hide their light beneath a bushel, but should willingly show it abroad. If a great truth is"*
>
> Prologue, by way of dedication

A gift of comely speech | A light not hidden under a bushel | Hearken to the words of Marie | Folk about the fire | A selection, not a complete Marie

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 11–12

1. Mason says, of his book: "I do not profess them to be a complete collection of her stories in verse." Name the limit.
2. The prologue: "Those to whom God has given the gift of comely speech, should not hide their light beneath a bushel, but should willingly show it abroad."
3. The Lay of Gugemar, as this file spells it, begins: "Hearken, oh gentles, to the words of Marie."
4. Eugene Mason, 1911, Project Gutenberg #11417. For grades 9–12. Tact in later lays; no prurience. Quote Marie in Mason, not only the introduction. One map cannot teach every lay.

Quotations are verbatim from the Eugene Mason (1911), Project Gutenberg #11417, Project Gutenberg #11417, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/the-lais-of-marie-de-france/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.