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| Wose wole of love be trewe, do lystne me!       *Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,* *A bountyng other a lavercoke,*         *Swete bryd!* *Bituene hire curtel ant hire smoke*         *Y wolde ben hyd!*   ¶ **A wayle whyt ase whalles bon; A grein in golde that godly shon; A tortle that min herte is on,        In tounes trewe!** **Hire gladshipe nes never gon        While Y may glewe!**               *Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,*               *A bountyng other a lavercoke,*                       *Swete bryd!*               *Bituene hire curtel ant hire smoke*                       *Y wolde ben hyd!*  When heo is glad, Of al this world namore Y bad Then beo with hire, myn one, bistad        Withoute strif. The care that Ich am yn ybrad        Y wyte a wyf.               *Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,*               *A bountyng other a lavercoke,*                       *Swete bryd!*               *Bituene hire curtel ant hire smoke*                       *Y wolde ben hyd!*  A wyf nis non so worly wroht! When heo ys blythe to bedde ybroht, Wel were him that wiste hire thoht,        That thryven ant thro! Wel Y wot heo nul me noht;        Myn herte is wo.               *Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,*               *A bountyng other a lavercoke,*                       *Swete bryd!*               *Bituene hire curtel ant hire smoke*                       *Y wolde ben hyd!*  Hou shal that lefly syng, That thus is marred in mournyng? Heo me wol to dethe bryng        Longe er my day! Gret hire wel, that swete thing        With eyenen gray.               *Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,*               *A bountyng other a lavercoke,*                       *Swete bryd!*               *Bituene hire curtel ant hire smoke*                       *Y wolde ben hyd!*  **Hyre heye haveth wounded me ywisse, Hire bende browen that bringeth blisse! Hire comely mouth that mihte cusse —        In muche murthe he were! Y wolde chaunge myn for his        That is here fere.**               *Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,*               *A bountyng other a lavercoke,*                       *Swete bryd!*               *Bituene hire curtel ant hire smoke*                       *Y wolde ben hyd!*  **Herkneth me! Y ou telle, In such wondryng for wo Y welle! Nys no fur so hot in helle        Al to mon That loveth derne ant dar nout telle        Whet him ys on.**               *Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,*               *A bountyng other a lavercoke,*                       *Swete bryd!*               *Bituene hire curtel ant hire smoke*                       *Y wolde ben hyd!*  **Ich unne hire wel ant heo me wo; Ych am hire frend and heo my fo; Me thuncheth min herte wol breke atwo        For sorewe ant syke. In Godes greting mote heo go,        That wayle whyte!**               *Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,*               *A bountyng other a lavercoke,*                       *Swete bryd!*               *Bituene hire curtel ant hire smoke*                       *Y wolde ben hyd!*  Wolde hyre fere beo so freo, Ant wurthes were, that so myhte beo, Al for on Y wolde geve threo,        Withoute chep! From helle to hevene, ant sonne to see,        Nys non so yeep,        Ne half so freo.               *Ich wolde ich were a threstelcok,*               *A bountyng other a lavercoke,*                       *Swete bryd!*               *Bituene hire curtel ant hire smoke*                       *Y wolde ben hyd!* | Who would of love be true, do listen to me!       *I wish I were a throstle-cock,* *A bunting or a laverock,*         *Sweet bird!* *Between her kirtle and her smock*         *I would be hid!*   ¶ A beauty white as whale’s bone; A gem in gold that radiantly shone; A turtledove my heart’s set on,        Truest one in town! Her blissfulness will never be gone        While I can sing!               *I wish I were a throstle-cock,*               *A bunting or a laverock,*                       *Sweet bird!*               *Between her kirtle and her smock*                       *I would be hid!*  When she is blissful, Of all this world I ask no more Than to be with her, my own, lodged        Without argument. The distress I’m entangled in        I blame upon a woman.               *I wish I were a throstle-cock,*               *A bunting or a laverock,*                       *Sweet bird!*               *Between her kirtle and her smock*                       *I would be hid!*  No other woman’s so splendidly formed! When she’s merrily brought to bed, He’s well who knows her thought,        That excellent one! I know well she doesn’t want me;        My heart is woeful.               *I wish I were a throstle-cock,*               *A bunting or a laverock,*                       *Sweet bird!*               *Between her kirtle and her smock*                       *I would be hid!*  How shall a desirous lover sing, Who’s so marred by grief? She’ll bring me to death        Long before my day! Greet her well, that sweet thing        With eyes of gray.               *I wish I were a throstle-cock,*               *A bunting or a laverock,*                       *Sweet bird!*               *Between her kirtle and her smock*                       *I would be hid!*  Those eyes have certainly wounded me, Her curved eyebrows bringing bliss! Her comely mouth that might kiss —        He’d be in ecstasy! I would change my lot for his        Who is her companion.               *I wish I were a throstle-cock,*               *A bunting or a laverock,*                       *Sweet bird!*               *Between her kirtle and her smock*                       *I would be hid!*  Hearken to me! I tell you, In such anxious distress I suffer! There’s no fire so hot in hell        As burns for him Who loves in private and dares not say        What afflicts him.               *I wish I were a throstle-cock,*               *A bunting or a laverock,*                       *Sweet bird!*               *Between her kirtle and her smock*                       *I would be hid!*  I wish her well and she wishes me woe; I am her friend and she’s my foe; I think my heart will break in two        For sorrow and longing. In God’s favor may she go,        That beauty white!               *I wish I were a throstle-cock,*               *A bunting or a laverock,*                       *Sweet bird!*               *Between her kirtle and her smock*                       *I would be hid!*   Would that her companion be so generous, And worthy were, that it might happen, All for one woman I’d give three,        Without haggling! From hell to heaven, from sun to sea,        There’s no one so beguiling,        Nor half so gracious.               *I wish I were a throstle-cock,*               *A bunting or a laverock,*                       *Sweet bird!*               *Between her kirtle and her smock*                       *I would be hid!*  Translated by Susanna Greer Fein, U Rochester  Source: https://d.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/text/fein-harley2253-volume-2-article-36 |