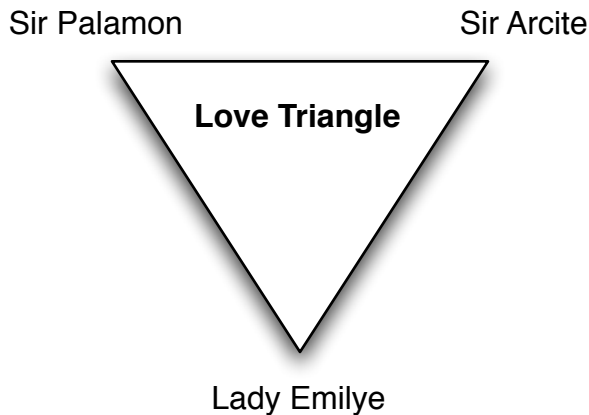


CONNECTIONS: "THE KNIGHT'S TALE" AND "THE MILLER'S TALE."

Tragic, Idealized Courtly Love among Nobility

Genre: Medieval Epic or Epic Romance

Setting: Grandeur of the Classical World
(occupied only by noblemen)



Elderly Authority Figure: Duke Theseus
(tries and fails to control Emilye's sexual future)

Divine Plans and Predestination: The Greek gods intervene in human affairs with omens, miracles, and disasters. The universe is ordered and fate is inescapable.

Love at First Sight: Palamon and Arcite fall in love with Emilye from afar when they are war-prisoners. They spend dangerous years trying to be near her--all sighs and tears.

Conventions of Courtly Lover: Emilye is blond, gray-eyed, demure, and of aristocratic *mien*--always proper, appropriate, and helpless.

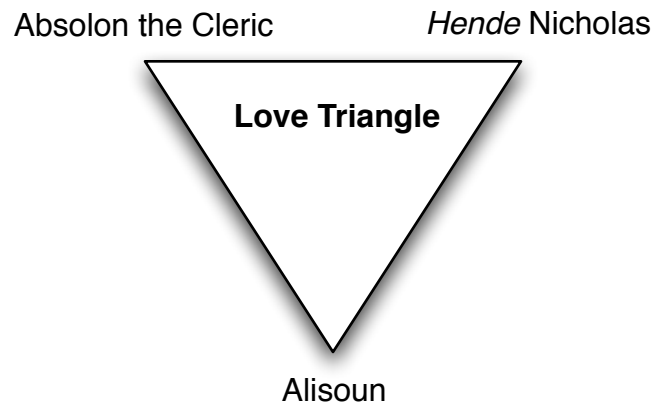
Fierce Combat: Two suitors face off with sword and shield to engage in lengthy ritualized combat with hundreds of knights in an orderly tournament arena. Men die and are injured.

Tragic Ending: Community gathers to hear solemn sermon on predestination, mourns the death of Sir Arcite and his broken body.

Comic, Slapstick Affair among *Bourgeoisie*

Genre: *Fabliau*

Setting: Oxford village (occupied by bourgeois students and landlords)



Elderly Authority Figure: John the Carpenter (tries to hold Alisoun "narwe in a cage," as the text says)

Mockery of Divinity and Predestination: The "prophecies" of another flood merely a scam to get sex. The universe works by random chaos and trickery.

Love at First Sight: Nicholas sees Alisoun, propositions her, and grabs her by the "queynt." She instantly gives in to his lecherous advances --all gropings and sex in tubs.

Inversions of Courtly Lover: Alisoun is dark-haired, slender as a weasel, earthy, vivacious, fun-loving, and mischievous.

Slapstick Combat: Two suitors face off with "thonder dent" farts and poke the enemy in the rear with hot iron implements.

Comic Ending: Community gathers to laugh at John and make fun of the situation.