

# Open Iberia/América: Teaching Anthology

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## Juan Ruiz, *Book of Good Love (Libro de buen amor)* (1330/1343)

### The *Book of Good Love*, selections 2:

1. The Prophecies for the Son of King Alcaraz
2. Greed and the Fable of the Dog and his Reflection
3. The Properties of Money
4. The Encounter with the Mountain Woman (*serrana*)
5. Characteristics of Small Women

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### Introduction:

The *Book of Good Love (Libro de buen amor)* (also known as the *Libro del Arcipreste*) was written in the fourteenth century by Juan Ruiz, the Archpriest from Hita, a town located to the northeast of Madrid, Spain. Little is known about the author and we have only three manuscripts (two from 1330 and one, a more elaborate version, from 1343, plus various fragments) that have been preserved and have come down to us through the centuries. We know, from various references to it, that it was popular in its time but basically forgotten in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century, when Spain was becoming interested in her cultural past, that it was rediscovered and published as a printed book. After that, hundreds of editions and numerous translations have been produced by distinguished scholars. Some even refer to Juan Ruiz as “The Spanish Chaucer;” indeed the *Book of Good Love* is one of the most important works of literature ever written in Spanish and has thus been the subject of thousands of articles and books written by scholars from around the world.

Perhaps the key to the *Book of Good Love*'s popularity lies in its complexity. It contains a curious mixture of sacred and profane poetry (with a prose prologue) that displays a vast knowledge of European literature (especially in French and Latin), religion (especially medieval Christianity), and law, along with a familiarity with the Islamic and Jewish cultures that were part of life at that time in Spain. It is a didactic text, with moral messages for Juan Ruiz's audience, the latter a mixture of both learned and unlettered people, some who read the text, and others who listened to it in oral performance. Intertwined, one can observe a keen sense of devotion along with a wild sense of humor and a playful display of the dualities of life through puns and ambiguities. In addition, the *Book of Good Love* reflects popular literature and customs of the times and displays a significant amount of originality and creativity. It contains 1728 rhymed stanzas of at least four verses each, in a number of poetic styles.<sup>1</sup> The book is organized in an unusual way with its various segments

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<sup>1</sup>The prevalent style in the *Book of Good Love* is known as *cuaderna vía*, with rhymed stanzas of four verses, each containing 14-16 syllables.



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complementing one another and with a number of elements repeating themselves throughout the book, interweaving themselves in a pattern much like that of the interlace of some of the illuminations found in Medieval manuscripts. It can best be viewed as a performance text from which various segments can be taken and recited or dramatized for different occasions.

Many of the passages in the *Book of Good Love* deal with advice about love and are illustrated via amusing and captivating tales. There is a lengthy narrative, based on the Medieval Latin *Pamphilus de Amore*, about a love affair between a man known as Sir Melon (*don Melón*) and a woman called Lady Sloe (*doña Endrina*).<sup>2</sup> Much of the fruit imagery of this tale is original with Juan Ruiz. Also of note is the character named Convent-trotter (*Trotaconventos*), who is the first go-between to appear in literature written in Spanish and is a precursor to another famous go-between, Celestina, a major character in the famed *Celestina*, a work that appeared about a century and a half after the *Book of Good Love*.

Another lengthy story, based on a French text, is simultaneously a mock-epic and an allegorical battle between Sir Carnal (*don Carnal*) and Lady Lent (*doña Cuaresma*), where the armies are composed of land animals and sea creatures. First, just before Lent, Sir Carnal is defeated in a surprise battle and then, at the end of Lent, Lady Lent is defeated by a well-nourished Sir Carnal (thanks to the help of his Jewish friends who free him from prison and feed him on Palm Sunday).

There is a total of twenty-five Aesopic fables located principally in two segments of the book. The first is a diatribe against the evils of love that cause the Seven Deadly Sins, with each sin exemplified by a fable. Later in the book, Lady Garoza<sup>3</sup> (a nun) and Convent-trotter (the Archpriest's go-between) hold a debate via fables on a proposed love affair between the nun and the Archpriest. Interspersed in other sections of the book are more fables and tales of various attempted love affairs with a variety of women as well as religious poems to the Virgin Mary plus parodies and a number of religious satires.

The *Book of Good Love*'s many amusing and entertaining stories can be viewed as part of the medieval *exemplum* tradition, which focus on tales about situations to be avoided by those who wanted to lead good lives. The moral purpose in these tales and in passages about life in general is essential to an understanding of the *Book of Good Love*.

This brief anthology contains some representative samples from the *Book of Good Love* as well as suggestions for further reading about the book.

## 1. The Prophecies for the Son of King Alcaraz.

This passage reflects the Islamic presence in fourteenth-century Spain through its depiction of the importance of astrology within the confines of Christian beliefs.

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<sup>2</sup> The *endrina* is the fruit of the wild European plum, or "sloe."

<sup>3</sup> *Garoza* means "bride" in Arabic (*ʿarusa*), hence here we have an allusion to the nun in her proverbial role as the "bride of Christ."

**Aquí fabla del juyzio que los cinco  
ssabios naturales dieron en el  
nasçemiento del fijo del Rey Alcaraz**

**Here we have the story of the  
pronouncement that the five wise natural  
scientists made upon the birth of the son of  
King Alcaraz<sup>4</sup>**

Era un rey de moros, Alcaraz nonbre avía:  
Nasçióle un fijo bello, más de aquél non tenía;  
Enbió por sus sabios, dellos saber querría  
El signo é la planeta del fijo que l' nasçía.

129 Once upon a time there was a Moorish king known as King Alcaraz who had only one son, a handsome lad. Upon his son's birth, he consulted with his wise men in order to obtain information about the sign and planet under which his son had been born.

Entre los estrelleros, que l' vinieron á ver,  
Vinieron çinco dellos de más conplido saber;  
Desque vieron el punto en que ovo de nasçer,  
Dixo el un maestro: "Apedreado ha de ser."

130 Among the astrologers who came to see him, there were five who were experts in their field. After finding out the moment at which the son had been born, one master said, "He will be stoned."

Judgó el otro é dixo: "Este ha de ser quemado."  
Diz' el terçero: "El niño ha de ser despeñado."  
Diz' el quarto: "El infante ha de seer colgado."  
El quinto diz': "Morrá en agua afogado."

131 The other, relying on his own judgment, said, "He will be burned." The third said, "The child will fall from the rocks." The fourth said, "The prince will be hanged." The fifth said, "He will die by drowning in water."

Quando vido el rey juyzios desacordados,  
Mandó que los maestros fuesen muy bien guardados;  
Fízolos tener presos en logares apartados,  
Dió todos sus juyzios por mintrosos provados.

132 When the king saw how widely varied the predictions were, he ordered that the masters be securely guarded. He imprisoned them in separate locations because he thought that it was obvious that all their predictions were false.

Desque fué el infante á buena hedat llegado,  
Pidió al rrey su padre que le fuese otorgado  
De yr á correr monte, caçar algún venado;  
Rrespondióle el rrey que l' plazía de grado.

133 When the prince was old enough, he asked his father the king to give him permission to go hunt deer in the mountains. The king answered him that he was very pleased with the idea.

Cataron día claro para ir á caçar;  
Desque fueron en monte, óvose á levantar  
Un rrevatado nublo: començó de agranizar,  
É á poca de ora començó d' apedrear.

134 They chose a clear day for the hunt; but as soon as they were in the mountains, a storm cloud arrived and it began to hail and then soon the hailstones were the size of rocks.

Acordóse su ayo de como lo judgaron  
Los sabios estrelleros, que su signo cataron:  
"Señor," diz', "acogamonos, que los que vos fadaron  
Non sean verdaderos en lo que adevinaron."

135 The prince's tutor remembered how the wise astrologers had pronounced their judgment according to their observations about his sign: He said, "Sir, let's return so that the predictions of the wise men do not become true."

<sup>4</sup> Numbers next to each stanza refer to the number of the stanza, a convention followed in editions of the *Book of Good Love*.

- Pensaron muy ayna todos de se acojer;  
Mas como es verdat é non puede fallesçer,  
Que lo que Dios ordena en como ha de ser,  
Segund natural curssso, non se puede estorçer,
- Ffaciendo la grand piedra, el infante aguijó;  
Pasando por la puente, un gran rrayo le dió,  
Fforadóse la puente, por allí se despeñó,  
En un árbol del rrío de sus faldas se colgó.
- Estando asy colgado ado todos lo vieron,  
Afogóse en el agua, acorrer non lo pudieron:  
Los çinco fados dichos todos bien se conplieron.  
Los sabios naturales verdaderos salieron.
- Desde vido el rey conplido su pessar,  
Mandó los estrelleros de la presión soltar:  
Fízoles mucho bien é mandóles usar  
De su astrología, que non avie que dubdar.
- Yo creo los estrólogos verdad naturalmente;  
pero Dios, que crió natura é açidente,  
Puédelos demudar é fazer otramente,  
Segund la fe cathólica: yo desto so creyente.
- 136 Everyone planned to return soon, but since it is always true and without fail, that one cannot escape from what God orders to be the natural course of events,
- 137 while the hailstones were falling, the prince continued on. While he was going over a bridge, a large lightning-bolt struck and demolished the bridge. Next, the prince fell from the rocks and his clothing became caught in a tree along the river.
- 138 While the prince was hanging there, everyone saw him drowning in the water but they were unable to reach him in order to help him. Thus all five of the predictions were completely accurate. It turned out that the wise natural scientists had told the truth.
- 139 Since the king saw that his son's sad destiny had been fulfilled, he ordered his men to release the astrologers from their imprisonment. He treated them very well and ordered them to practice their astrology, now that no one could doubt their predictions.
- 140 I believe that astrologers tell the truth according to natural laws, but God, who created nature and accidents, can change them and make them into something different. I believe this, according to the Catholic faith.

## 2. Greed and the Fable of the Dog and his Reflection.

In the *Book of Good Love* this fable is used to illustrate the deadly sin of Greed, the root sin<sup>5</sup> for all the Seven Deadly Sins, according to Juan Ruiz, and blame Sir Love as the cause of all deadly sins.

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<sup>5</sup> Often Medieval representations of the Seven Deadly Sins actually list eight sins, with one of them (usually Pride) being the root sin of all the others. In the *Book of Good Love* the root sin is Greed. These seven sins are listed in stanza 219.

**El pecado de la cobdiçia e ensienplo del alano, que llevaba la pieça de carne en la boca**

Contigo syenpre trahes los mortales pecados:  
Con la mucha cobdiçia, los omes engañados,  
Ffázesles cobdiçiar é ser muy denodados,  
Passar los mandamientos, que de Dios fueron dados.

De todos los pecados es rrayz la cobdiçia:  
Esta es tu fija mayor; tu mayordoma,<sup>8</sup> ambiçia:  
Esta es tu alférez é tu casa offiçia,  
Esta destruye el mundo, sostienta la justiçia.

La soberbia é ira, que non falla do quepa,  
Avarizia é loxuria, que arden más que estepa,  
Gula, envidia, açidia, que s' pegan como lepra:  
De la cobdiçia nasçen, es ella rrayz é çepa. . . .

Alano carniçero en un río andava,  
Una pieça de carne en la boca passava;  
Con la sonbra del agua dos tanto l' semejava;  
Cobdiçiola abarcar, cayósele la que levava.

Por la sonbra mintrosa é por su coydar vano  
La carne que tenía, perdióla el alano;  
Non ovo lo que quiso, non l' fué cobdiçiar sano,  
Coydó ganar; perdió lo que tenía en su mano.

Cada día contesçe al cobdiçiosso atal:  
Coyda ganar contigo é pierde su cabdal;

**The sin of greed and fable of the mastiff who was carrying a piece of meat in his mouth**

217 You<sup>6</sup> always bring the deadly sins<sup>7</sup> with you. With much Greed men are deceived and you make them greedy, irresponsible, and force them to ignore the commandments given to us by God.

218 Greed is the root of all sin. She is your oldest daughter. Her ambition is to govern you. She is your standard-bearer, the one who administers in your home. She destroys the world and corrupts justice.

219 Pride and Anger cannot be contained. Avarice and Lust burn more easily than dry grassland. Gluttony, Envy, and Laziness are contagious, like leprosy. Wherever Greed is born, she takes root firmly. . . .

226 A meat-eating mastiff dog was wading in a river while carrying a piece of meat in his mouth. But when he looked at his reflection in the water, it seemed to him that there were two pieces of meat and when he tried to get the second one, he dropped the first.

227 Because of the deceptive reflection and his vain desire, the mastiff lost the meat he had. He did not get what he wanted and his greed did him no good. He tried to gain but lost what he already had in his hand.<sup>9</sup>

228 Every day the greedy man has similar experiences. He desires to win with you, [Sir Love], and loses his

<sup>6</sup> The person referred to here is Sir Love (*don Amor*), the recipient of the narrator's criticisms.

<sup>7</sup> Here the best translation is the "Deadly" not "Mortal" sins, given the fact that Ruiz is talking about the famous "Seven Deadly Sins," also known as the "Seven Capital Sins" or "Seven Cardinal Sins." These sins can lead to mortal sins (which send the perpetrator straight to Hell) but in themselves are not necessarily mortal. It is a curious fact that all the deadly sins are feminine in Spanish, in a subtle way linking them to sins caused by women, as implied in this section of the *Book of Good Love*.

<sup>8</sup> Note the play on words with *mayor* in *fija mayor* and *mayordoma*, where the control indicated by *domar* overshadows the meaning of *mayordoma*.

<sup>9</sup> Ruiz has humanized this animal by using *mano* (hand) instead of *pata* (paw). Furthermore, it is amusing to note that if the protagonist were human he would indeed have had the meat in his hand but in reality the dog had it in a totally different place, in his mouth, as Ruiz tells us in stanza 226.

De aquesta rrayz mala nasce todo el mal:  
Es la mala cobdiçia un pecado mortal.

money and his fortune. From this bad root-sin is  
born all evil. Greed is bad and it is a deadly sin.

### 3. The Properties of Money

This passage focuses on various aspects of money and includes a satire on its power to procure undeserved social and religious status.

#### Enxienplo de la propiedat que'l dinero há

Mucho faz' el dinero, mucho es de amar:  
Al torpe faze bueno é ome de prestar,  
Ffaze correr al coxo é al mudo fablar,  
El que non tiene manos, dyneros quier' tomar.

Sea un ome nesçio é rudo labrador,  
Los dyneros le fazen fidalgo é sabydor,  
Quanto más algo tiene, tanto es de más valor;  
El que non há dineros, non es de sy señor.

Sy tovyeres dyneros, avrás consolaçión,  
Plazer é alegría é del papa ración,<sup>10</sup>  
Conprarás parayso, ganarás salvaçión:  
Do son muchos dineros, es mucha  
bendición. . . .

Faze perder al pobre su casa é su vyña;  
Sus muebles é rayzes todo lo desalyña,  
Por todo el mundo cunde su sarna é su tyña,  
Do el dinero juzga, ally el ojo guiña. . . .

En suma te lo digo, tómallo tú mejor:  
El dinero, del mundo es grand rrebolvedor,  
Señor faze del syervo é del señor servidor,<sup>13</sup>  
Toda cosa del siglo se faze por su amor.

#### On the properties of money

490 Money does a lot; it demands a lot of love. It converts the clumsy, worthless man into one who is good and respected. With money the lame can run and the mute can speak. He who has no hands wants to acquire money.

491 With money an ignorant man or a crude laborer is transformed into a gentleman and a wise man. If he has more money, he has more value. He who does not have money has no mastery over his own life.

492 If you have money you will be consoled; you will have pleasure and happiness and a prebend<sup>11</sup> from the Pope; you will buy Paradise and you will win salvation. Where there is lots of money there are blessings galore. . . .

499 Money makes the poor man lose his house and his vineyard, his furniture and his land; it upsets everything. It spreads itching and ringworm over the entire world as if it were a disease. Where money is the judge, the judgment comes with a wink of an eye. . . .<sup>12</sup>

510 In sum, I say unto you; listen well. Money makes the world go 'round. It transforms the servant into a lord and the lord into a servant. Everything in the world is done for the love of money.

<sup>10</sup> *Ración* refers to a prebend.

<sup>11</sup> A prebend is a stipend furnished by a church to a clergyman.

<sup>12</sup> In other words, money is used to bribe judges.

<sup>13</sup> The last two words of this verse also appear as *siervo señor* in some editions of the *Book of Good Love*, something that does not make sense, given the obviously intended comparison between the lord and his servant.



Por dineros se muda el mundo é su manera,  
 Toda muger, codiciosa del algo, es falaguera.  
 Por joyas é dineros salyrá de carrera:  
 El dinero quiebra peñas, fyende dura madera.

511 For money the world and its ways are changed. All women, if they desire something, become flatterers; they will drop what they are doing in order to get jewels and money. Money shatters rocky mountain crags and splits apart hard wood.

#### 4. The Encounter with the Mountain Woman (*serrana*).

This segment is part of a longer passage in which the narrator (the Archpriest) goes on a pilgrimage in the mountains to renew himself spiritually and physically after several failed love affairs. Ironically, he encounters women who are interested in him, but they are unattractive, aggressive mountain women all too eager to dominate this man. The selection here contains a detailed description, from head to toe, of the ugliest of all the women encountered and is humorous in its exaggerated parody and caricature of the typical medieval descriptions of the ideal woman.<sup>14</sup>

##### De lo que contesçió al Arçipreste con la sserrana é de las figuras della

Nunca desdeque nascí pasé tan grand' periglo:  
 Descendy al pie del puerto, falléme con un vestiglo:  
 La más grant fantasia, que yo vy en este siglo:  
 Yeguerisa trefuda, talla de mal çeñiglo . . . .

Ssus miembros é su talla non son para callar,  
 Ca byen creed que era grand yegua cavallar:  
 Quien con ella luchase, no s' podría bien fallar;  
 Sy ella non quessiese, non la podrí' aballar.

En el Apocalisi Sant Juan Evangelista  
 Non vido tal figura nin espantable vista;  
 En grand hato daríe gran lucha é grand conquista;  
 Non sé de quá diablo es tal fantasma quista.

Avía la cabeça mucho grande syn guisa;  
 Cabellos chicos, negros, como corneja lysa;

##### About what befell the Archpriest with the mountain woman and her characteristics

1008 Never since I was born did I ever experience such great danger. I descended to the foot of the mountain pass and I found myself with a monster: the largest apparition I had ever seen in this world: a female mare-herder, who was robust and scruffy, like a dirty bush . . . .

1010 Her limbs and her size are something to be mentioned because, believe me, she was a horse-sized mare. Whoever wrestles with her will not be in good shape afterwards. Without her consent, no one can tame her.

1011 In the Apocalypse, St. John the Evangelist never saw such a figure nor did he see anything as frightful. With her strength she could defeat an entire flock<sup>15</sup> in a magnificent battle. I do not know if a devil exists who could love such an apparition.

1012 Her head was very large and disproportionate, with short, black hair like that of a sleek raven. Her eyes

<sup>14</sup> This passage can be compared and contrasted with Juan Ruiz's own description of its opposite, the ideal woman (stanzas 431-435 and 444-449) and with the description of the Small Woman (stanzas 1606-1617). The latter passage is included in this anthology.

<sup>15</sup> *Hato* refers both to a "flock of animals" and a "flock of (human) parishioners."

Ojos fondos é bermejos: poco é mal devisa;  
Mayor es que de osa su pisada do pisa.

were sunken and red; she saw little and not very well. Her footprint was larger than that of a female bear.

Las orejas tamañas como d' añal borrico;  
El su pescueço negro, ancho, velloso, chico;  
Las narices muy luengas, semejan de çarapico;  
Bevería'n<sup>16</sup> pocos días caudal de buhón<sup>17</sup> rico.

1013 Her ears were like those of a yearling donkey. Her neck was black, wide, and full of hair, short. Her nostrils were long, like a curlew's beak. She could drink in a few days all the water in a large lake (or could consume the entire fortune of a rich merchant).<sup>18</sup>

Su boca de alana, grandes rrostros é gordos;  
Dyentes anchos é luengos, cavallunos,  
maxmordos;  
Las sobreçejas anchas é más negras que tordos:  
¡Los que quieran casarse, non sean aquí sordos!

1014 Her female mastiff-like mouth, with large, fat lips, contained teeth that were wide and long, like those of a horse, strewn about in a disorganized fashion. Her eyebrows were wide and blacker than a thrush's. Anyone who plans to get married should pay attention!

De pelos mucho negros tiene boço de barvas,  
Yo non vy ál en ella; mas si en ella escarvas,  
Fallarás, segun creo, de las chufetas darvas;<sup>19</sup>  
Pero más te valdría trillar en las tus parvas.

1015 The fuzz of her beard contained hairs that were very black. I did not see anything in it, yet I believe that you will find in her beard some roots of plants (jokes)<sup>20</sup> from Arvas, although it would be better for you to do a harvest from your own grain reserve (collection of jokes).

Mas en verdat, sy bien vy fasta la rrodilla,  
Los huesos mucho grandes, la çanca non  
chiquilla,  
De las cabras del fuego una grand manadilla;  
Sus tovillos mayores que d' una añal novilla.

1016 But truly, I actually did observe her down to her knee and saw very large bones and a shank that was not small. She had some scars (goats)<sup>21</sup> there from a fire (from a large flock). Her ankles were larger than those of a yearling calf.

Más ancha que mi mano tyene la su muñeca.  
Velloso, pelos grandes, pero non mucho seca;  
Boz gorda é gangosa, á todo ome enteca;  
Tardía como ronca, desdonada é hueca.

1017 Her hairy wrist was wider than my hand and those hairs were long and her wrist moist. She had a loud, nasal voice that makes all men sick; it was slow, hoarse, unpleasant and hollow.

El su dedo chiquillo mayor es que mi pulgar,  
Pienssa de los mayores si te podrias pagar;

1018 Her little finger was larger than my thumb. Imagine what the other fingers, larger ones, are like, and if

<sup>16</sup> 'n is an abbreviation for "en."

<sup>17</sup> *Buhón* can mean both "merchant" and "lagoon." This kind of ambiguity is commonly found in the *Book of Good Love* and enriches its meaning.

<sup>18</sup> These two translations (the second in parenthesis) of this verse reflect an ambiguity found frequently in the *Book of Good Love*, which enriches its meaning.

<sup>19</sup> from Arvas. Some editions replace *darvas* with *parvas*, which doesn't make sense.

<sup>20</sup> These two meanings ("roots" and "jokes") for one word are another example of ambiguity.

<sup>21</sup> These two meanings ("scars" and "goats") for one word are another example of ambiguity.



Sy ella algúnd día te quisiese espulgar,  
Sentiría tu cabeça qu' eran vigas de lagar.

you wish to have her remove lice<sup>22</sup> from your own  
hair, be aware that it will be like having several  
winepress beams on your head.

Traía por el garnacho las sus tetas colgadas;  
Dávanle a la çinta, pues qu' estaban dobladas;  
Ca estando sencillas darl' yen so las yjadas:  
Á todo son de çítola andarían syn ser mostradas.

1019 Her breasts were hanging inside her jacket. They  
went all the way down to her waistline and they  
were folded over because otherwise they would  
have hung below her flanks and danced around,  
wildly, at the sound of a zither.

Costillas mucho grandes en su negro costado,  
Unas tres veses contélas estando arredrado:  
Dígote que non vy más nin te será más contado,  
Ca moço mesturero non es buen' para mandado.

1020 Her ribs were huge, bulging out of her black, dirty  
side. I counted them three times from a distance. I  
tell you that I did not see anything more nor will I  
tell you anything more, because a boy who gossips  
is not a good messenger.

## 5. Characteristics of Small Women.

This passage extols the virtues of small women by poetically associating them with wide variety of small things.

### De las propiedades que las dueñas chicas han

### On the properties of small women

Quiero abreviarvos, señores, la mi predicación,  
Ca sienpre me pagé de pequeño sermón  
E de dueña pequeña é de breve rrasón:  
Ca lo poco é bien dicho finca en el coraçón. . . .

1606 Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to shorten my  
preaching to you, because I have always preferred a  
brief sermon, a small woman and a brief  
conversation, since a few words well said will  
remain in one's heart. . . .

En pequeña girgonça yase grand rresplandor,  
En açúcar muy poco yase mucho dulçor:  
En la dueña pequeña yase muy grand amor:  
Pocas palabras cunple al buen entendedor.

1610 In a small hyacinth (jewel)<sup>23</sup> lies great brilliance; in a  
very small amount of sugar lies much sweetness; in  
the small woman lies great love. Just a few words  
suffice for a man of good understanding (a good  
lover).<sup>24</sup>

Es pequeño el grano de la buena pimienta;  
Pero más que la nués conorta é más calyenta:  
Asy dueña pequeña, sy todo amor consienta,

1611 The grain of a good pepper is small but it provides  
more comfort and warmth than a nut. Thus the

<sup>22</sup> Gybbon-Monypenny in his edition of the *Book of Good Love* points out that it was common in medieval times for women to delouse their husbands and lovers.

<sup>23</sup> This word has been identified as “*jacinto*” (“hyacinth,”) or some kind of precious stone.

<sup>24</sup> The original word in Spanish (“*Entendedor*”) means both “an understanding man” and “a lover” and is another example of one word that has two meanings.

Non há plaser del mundo, qu' en ella non se sienta.		small woman, if she accepts all your love, gives you all the pleasure that one can find in the world.
Como en chica rrosa está mucha color, E en oro muy poco grand preçio é gran valor, Como en poco balsamo yase grand buen olor: Ansy en chica dueña yase muy grand amor.	1612	As there is much color in a small rose; in a little bit of gold there is a high price and value. In a little bit of perfume lies a lot of good fragrance; so too, in the small woman, lies a lot of love.
Como rroby pequeño tyene muncha bondad, Color, virtud é preçio, noblesa e claridad: Asy dueña pequeña tyene mucha beldad Fermosura é donayre, amor é lealtad.	1613	Since a small ruby contains a lot of goodness, color, virtue and price, nobility and clarity, so too, the small woman has a lot of beauty, loveliness and grace, love and loyalty.
Chica es la calandria é chico el rroysyñor; Pero más dulce canta, que otra ave mayor: La muger, por ser chica, por eso non es pior; Con doñeo es más dulce, que açúcar nin flor.	1614	The lark is small and so is the nightingale but they sing more sweetly than other larger birds. The woman is not worse if she is small. With a bit of courting she becomes sweeter than sugar and flowers.
Son aves pequenueles papagayo é orior; Pero cualquiera dellas es dulce gritador, Adonada, fermosa, preçiada, cantador: Bien atal es la dueña pequeña con amor.	1615	The parrot and the oriole are very small birds but any one of them sings sweetly. Gifted, lovely, precious, musical, so too is a small woman with love.
En la muger pequena non ha comparación: Terrenal parayso es é consolaçión, Solás é alegría, plaser é bendiçión, ¡Mijor es en la prueba, qu'en la salutaçión!	1616	The small woman is beyond compare. She is an earthly paradise and a consolation. She brings solace and happiness, pleasure and blessing. She is better when you test her than when you first greet her!
Ssyenpre quis' muger chica, más que grand' nin mayor: ¡Non es desaguisado de grand mal ser foydor! Del mal, tomar lo menos: díselo el sabidor: ¡Por end' de las mugeres la menor es mijor!	1617	I have always preferred a small woman to one that was large or older (larger). <sup>25</sup> It is not a bad idea to flee from a great evil! Choose the least of all evils, says the wise man. Thus among women, the smaller (the younger) the better!

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<sup>25</sup> Note that "mayor" means both "larger" and "older."

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### **Online resources:**

- For a rap in Spanish using Ruiz's words about money, go to:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pwFUrwV7-k>
- Paco Ibañez has put an adaptation of Ruiz's words on money to music which can be found at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gf1NRdjvhFw>
- For a extensive bibliography along with further information on the Book of Good Love, go to:  
<http://my-lba.com>