

There also was a **Nun**, a head of a convent of nuns.

Her way of smiling very simple and shy [A nun wouldn't usually smile at a man at all]

Her greatest oath was only "By St. Loy!" [Chaucer Pilgrim has heard her lose her temper, but she didn't use a curse word! Should a nun be losing her temper at all?]

And she was known as Madam Eglantyne. [We only know the name of one other pilgrim]

And well she sang a service, with a fine
singing through her nose, as was most fitting,
And she spoke daintily in French, extremely,
After the school of Stratford-atte-Bowe;
French in the Paris style she did not know. [She is speaking French, the language of the royal courts. We would expect to hear Middle English, the language of the common people that she should have been ministering to.]

At mealtime her table manners were well taught withal;
No morsel from her lips did she let fall,
Nor dipped her fingers in the sauce too deep;
But she could carry a morsel up and keep
The smallest drop from falling on her breast.
For the manners of the royal court she had a special enthusiasm,
And she would wipe her upper lip so clean
That not a trace of grease was to be seen
Upon the cup when she had drunk; to eat,
She reached a hand sedately for the meat.

She certainly was very entertaining,
Pleasant and friendly in her ways, and straining
To counterfeit a courtly kind of grace, [Notice the irony here.
Chaucer says that she's faking courtliness. This nun certainly
seems to be a little too entertaining for a typical nun. Why
would she even want to seem to be courtly?]

A stately bearing fitting to her place,
And to seem dignified in all her dealings.
As for her sympathies and tender feelings,
She was so charitably caring
She used to weep if she but saw a mouse
Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bleeding. [She made a show
of crying over a mouse in a trap. But, it doesn't say anything
about tears for the poor or the sick.]

And she had little dogs she would be feeding
With roasted flesh, or milk, or fine white bread.
And bitterly she wept if one were dead
Or someone took a stick and made it hurt; [She has little dogs
that she treats like children]

She was all sentiment and tender heart.
Her veil was gathered in a seemly way,
Her nose was elegant, her eyes glass gray;
Her mouth was very small, but soft and red,
Her forehead, certainly, was fair of spread,
Almost a span across the brows, I own;
She was indeed by no means undergrown. [Chaucer Pilgrim
notices that she has a nice figure, something a nun wouldn't

make obvious.]

Her cloak, I noticed, had a graceful charm.

She wore a coral trinket on her arm, [Nun's take a vow of poverty, but this one is wearing a coral bracelet.]

A set of beads, the gaudies tricked in green,

Whence hung a golden brooch of brightest sheen

On which there first was graven a crowned A

and lower, Love conquers all.