

## THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

(adapted from Chaucer)

At the front of the stage, the Dreamer lies curled up, with his head on a pile of books. He half rises, propping himself on one arm, and speaks to the audience.

Dreamer. This morning I found an old book, written in old writing, and I liked it so much that I read and read all day. Then night came, when all the little beasts stop working and playing, and, because there was no light, I had to stop reading and get ready for bed. When the weary hunter sleeps he dreams of the woods; the judge of the cases he tries; the carter of how his carts rattle along; the rich man of gold. The knight dreams of fighting with his foe, and the lover of his lady. And so it is quite natural that I should dream of the man in the book I had been reading and reading and reading all day. He came and stood by my bed and said he was very glad I loved the old torn book so much, and that he would like to give me a reward. So he took my hand and brought me to this garden, with a green stone wall round it. It is always spring in this garden. Some of the boughs are green with fresh little leaves; some are all blossomy. There are white, blue, yellow and red flowers growing in the grass, and a river, and cold running streams where swim small fish, silver, with red fins. Wee beasts, rabbits and squirrels, play about. [Drowsily.] The birds sing, and the wind makes a soft noise in the green leaves - [More and more drowsily.] The birds - sing - and the wind-together-this is-my dream-about-the birds.

[Drops back on his book-pillow with his cheek on his hand, and sleeps]