

Flawless:

A Modern Boccaccio Retelling

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Preface

The Decameron is a collection of stories written by Giovanni Boccaccio and is regarded as a masterpiece of medieval literature. I chose to rewrite Day 6, Story 1 as a modern poem because it presents an interesting take on the importance of using words well. Furthermore, it is very relevant to current times, when we emphasize the importance of communication. The original tale details an exchange between an intelligent and well-spoken Madonna Oretta and a knight who turns out to be an extremely poor storyteller.

Oretta was the perfect student
Kind, observant, very prudent
Some could say, a bit uptight
Doing homework till midnight

It was on such dull occasion
She received an invitation
To an online dating site
Which gave her a solid fright

But her friends, how they insisted!
And their attitudes persisted
Thinking this was very stupid
She downloaded OKCupid

After that ten days went by
It seemed love would not be nigh
When on Friday, 5 past 8
She discovered something great

The message came from Mr. Knight
Oretta was shocked at the sight

Of his large poetry collection
His love of words: it was perfection

Each time he wrote, Oretta laughed
His jokes, they truly were a craft
His words, they were divine and nice
His stories, detailed and precise

After all that Knight had written
Oretta was extremely smitten
So she insisted on a date
For which she could so barely wait

Cancelling her homework plans
She set out to meet her mans
Very soon, Sir Knight arrived
In a way a bit contrived

The limo added extra flair
Too much? Oretta didn't care
She sat down next to Knight in awe
Having not seen a single flaw

He was perfect, she was sure
And had a wonderful allure
"Tell a story," asked Oretta
Knight replied with a "You betta"

Knowing how well Knight could write
Her expectations were not slight
But then, when he began to talk
Poor Miss Oretta was in shock

There he mumbled, here he stalled
Coughed, and stumbled, spat, and drawled
"Oh dear, I haven't got it right"
"Perhaps this? No, not this, not quite"

After what felt like an eternity
Of something far from taciturnity

Oretta cried, "Enough's enough!"
"This car ride has been very rough!"

"I still have homework... I can't stay,"
"Please let me out, that's all I'll say"
Knight realized what her words meant
And that she was not quite content

Laughing, he got out his phone
(To which, quite frankly, he was prone)
And said, "Perhaps it will work best"
"If we give verbal speech a rest"

And in a way that's unperplexed
They vowed to talk only through text
With this I end this bizarre tale
Where silence happened to prevail