



## **Miracles of the Virgin in Middle English: A Broadview Anthology of British Literature edition**

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During the Middle Ages, Mary was the most powerful of saints, and the combination of her humanity and her proximity to the divine captured the medieval imagination. Her importance is nowhere more clearly reflected than in the genre of “Miracles of the Virgin,” short narrative accounts of Mary’s miraculous intercessory powers. These stories tend to fit a basic narrative pattern in which Mary saves a devoted believer from spiritual or physical danger?but beneath this surface simplicity, the Miracles frequently evoke fine or revealing theological, social, and cultural distinctions. They are remarkably various in tone, ranging from the darkly serious to the comically scandalous, and many display anti-Semitism to a greater degree or with greater punch than do other medieval genres. Mary herself takes on a variety of characteristics, appearing as dominant and persuasive more often than she appears as gentle and maternal.

This volume offers a small but representative sampling of what survives of this literature in the English language. The Middle English has been helpfully glossed and annotated, and is lightly modernized for ease of reading; one particularly challenging story is translated in facing-page format. The “In Context” sections provide relevant biblical passages and medieval versions of the Christian prayers frequently evoked in the miracles; additional samples of Marian poetry and medieval illustrations of Marian miracles are also included.

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