

CELESTIAL NAVIGATION

Philippa of Lancaster to her Tutor:

You taught me as a girl to see the stars
Not as a mass of beauty, but as lights,
Which guide the wretched sailor in the night,
And lead him where the ports of safety are.

You did not have to teach me things like this:
I was a girl, and yet you saw a light,
A tiny burning like a star at night,
And shared the secret science of your bliss.

Now my son's captains navigate the earth:
The stars to them speak words that I once learned
From you, dear Tutor, and within me burned
Unused, forgotten until Henry's birth.

O, Geoffrey, what in me you had begun
Has found fruition in this man, my son.

Margaret Hardy

Philippa of Lancaster (1359-1415) the daughter of John of Gaunt and mother of Prince Henry the Navigator, was tutored as a girl by Geoffrey Chaucer.

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