Eloquent peasant

Parkinson (R)
Created on 2009-08-17 by Mark-Jan Nederhof. Last modified 2009-08-18.
Hieroglyphic following Parkinson (1991) for version R from line 1.1 to the point in line 8.5 where version B1, starting at line 33, can be considered to be the 'main' version. After that, only occasional snippets are included where version R differs significantly from the other versions.

Bibliography

Parkinson (B1)
Created on 2009-08-17 by Mark-Jan Nederhof. Last modified 2009-08-30.
Hieroglyphic following Parkinson (1991) for version B1 from line 33 to the end of line 357.

Bibliography

Parkinson (B2)
Created on 2009-08-17 by Mark-Jan Nederhof. Last modified 2009-08-30.
Hieroglyphic following Parkinson (1991) for version B2 from line 91 to the end of line 142.

Bibliography

Nederhof (R) - English
Created on 2006-11-04 by Mark-Jan Nederhof. Last modified 2015-08-06.
Transliteration and translation for The Eloquent Peasant, following the transcription of Parkinson (1991). Version R is given where it is the main version, or where it differs substantially from the other versions.
The transliteration throughout follows Hannig (1995).

Bibliography

Nederhof (B1) - English
Created on 2006-11-04 by Mark-Jan Nederhof. Last modified 2015-08-06.
Transliteration and translation for The Eloquent Peasant, following the transcription of Parkinson (1991). Version B1 is given where it is the main version, or where it differs substantially from the other versions.
The transliteration throughout follows Hannig (1995).
For published translations, see Lichtheim (1975), pp. 169-184; Parkinson (1997), pp. 54-88; Simpson (1972), pp. 31-49. Further, Goedicke (1998) covers the second petition (the text from B1 119 to B1 170); Zonhoven (1992), pp. 271-272, covers the text up to B1 119. Also considered

Bibliography


Nederhof (B2) - English


Transliteration and translation for The Eloquent Peasant, following the transcription of Parkinson (1991). Version B2 is given where it is the main version, or where it differs substantially from the other versions.

The transliteration throughout follows Hannig (1995).

Bibliography


There was a man called Khunanup\(^1\). He was a peasant of the Wadi Natrun,\(^2\) and he had a wife called Meret\(^1\).

This peasant said to this wife of his:

'Look, I am going to Egypt to fetch provisions there for my children. Go and measure for me the barley that is in the barn as the remainder of yesterday's barley.'
Then he measured for her six heqat of barley.

Then this peasant said to this wife of his:

'Look, [...] two heqat of barley for rations to you and your children.

But prepare for me the six heqat of barley as bread and beer for every day,

so that I shall live on it.'

Then this peasant left for Egypt,

after he had loaded his donkeys

1 Uncertain.
2.2 purple nutsedge, natron, salt, sticks from [...],
1 Uncertain.

2.6 pieces of wood from Farafra, hides of panthers,

3.1 skins of golden jackals, pondweed,
1 Uncertain.
2 Uncertain.

3.7 wild carrot, serpentine,
1 Uncertain.

4.4 uncertain.

4.5 hedge plants, pigeons

4.6 uncertain.

4.7 uncertain.

1 Uncertain.

2 Uncertain.

5.1 gutted fish and plucked fowl, wbn-plants, tbsw-shrubs, gngnt-beans,

5.2 wbn

5.3 tbsw

5.4 gngnt

5.5 fenugreek, and anise;

1 Following Faulkner (1962); not confirmed by Hannig (1995).

2 Uncertain.

6.1 abound with all good products of the Wadi Natrun.

6.2 This peasant then went south to
Herakleopolis, and he arrived in the district of Per-\textsuperscript{1}Fefi, to the north of Mednit.  
\textsuperscript{1} Transcription following Parkinson (1997).

He came across a man standing on the embankment.  
\textsuperscript{1} Transcription following Parkinson (1997).  
\textsuperscript{2} Transcription following Parkinson (1997).

His name was Nemtinakht\textsuperscript{1} and he was the son of a man called Isry\textsuperscript{2}.  
\textsuperscript{1} Transcription following Parkinson (1997).  
\textsuperscript{2} Transcription following Parkinson (1997).

These were liegemen of the high steward Rensi\textsuperscript{1}, son of Meru\textsuperscript{2}.  
\textsuperscript{1} Transcription following Parkinson (1997).  
\textsuperscript{2} Transcription following Parkinson (1997).

And this Nemtinakht said, when he saw the donkeys of this peasant,
which were desirable to his heart: "Would that I had some divine image with which I could rob the goods of this peasant!"

Now, the house of this Nemtinakht was at a waterside path that was narrow, it was not broad:

It measured the width of a loincloth.

Its one side was under water, the other under barley.

This Nemtinakht then said to a servant of his:
Ne R  'Hurry, I and bring me a cape from my house!'

Ne R  And it was brought to him immediately.

Ne R  Then he spread it out on the waterside path,

Ne R  so that its hem came to rest on the water, and its selvage on the barley.

Ne R  And this peasant came on the public path.

Ne R  This Nemtinakht then said: 'Beware, peasant,'
you will not step on my clothes!' And this peasant said:

'I shall do what you wish; my way is good.'

And he went up higher. Then this Nemtinakht said:

'Is my Upper-Egyptian barley to be a path for you?' And this peasant said:

'My ways are good;

the bank is steep, and

the ways are under barley

for you block our path with your clothes!'
Pa B1

Ne B1

Ne B1 Will you then not allow us to pass on the path?'

Ne R

As he had finished saying I [...] words,

Ne B1

Then one of the donkeys filled its mouth with a wisp of barley. And this Nemtinakht said:

Ne R

'm But look, your donkey is eating my barley!'

Ne B1

'Look, I shall take away your donkey, peasant, because it ate my barley.

Ne B1 It will tread (grain) for its offence.'
My ways are good! A single thing has been destroyed;

What Parkinson (1991;1997) reads as 10 is here taken as 8.

I will buy my donkey back for 10 times the value

If you take it away for filling its mouth with a wisp of barley.

Now, I know the lord of this district;

It belongs to the high steward Rensi, son of Meru.

He is the one who restrains every thief in this entire land.

Shall I now be robbed in his district?
Then this Ne detriment said:

"Is this not the proverb that people say: "One mentions the name of a commoner only on account of his lord."?"

I am the one who is speaking to you, and it is the high steward whom you are referring to.

Then, he took a rod of fresh tamarisk to him, and he thrashed all his limbs with it,
took his donkeys away and drove them to his district.

Then this peasant proceeded to wail very loudly on account of the wickedness of what was done to him.

But this Nemtinakht then said: 'Do not raise your voice, peasant, or you will go to the abode of the Lord of Silence.'

Then this peasant said: 'You beat me, you rob my goods,'
and you even deprive me of the lament from my mouth!

Lord of Silence, may you give me back my things, so that I need not scream.

Then this peasant spent a period of 10 days

pleading with this Nemtinakht, but he did not pay attention to it.

This peasant then went to Herakleopolis in order to plead
ne B1 with the high steward

ne B1 He found him emerging from the door

ne B1 to step into his official boat.

ne B1 And this peasant said: 'May I be allowed to inform you

ne B1 about this grievance.

ne B1 Perhaps

ne B1 come to me, so that I may have him report to you about it.'
And the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, had a servant of his choice go to him,

and this peasant had him report back

about this entire matter.

Then the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, accused this Nemtinakht to the officials who were with him.

But then they said to him:

'Perhaps it is a peasant of his who went to someone else beside him.'
Look, that is what they do to peasants of theirs who have gone to others beside them. That is what they do.

Is this a cause for punishing this Nemtinakht, on account of a little natron and a little salt?

If he is ordered to replace it, then he will replace it.' But the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, remained silent.
Pa B1  82

Ne B1  n wšb=f

Ne B1  He did not answer these officials, nor did he answer this peasant.

---

Pa B1  83

Ne R  14.1

Ne R  Then this peasant came to plead with him

Ne B1  Then this peasant came to plead with

---

Pa B1  84

Ne R  14.1

Ne R  sp tpj for the first time.

Ne B1  jmj-r³ pr wr Mrw s³  Rnsj  dd=f

Ne B1  the high steward Rensi, son of Meru. He said:

---

Pa B1  14.2

Ne R  14.2

Ne R  'High steward, my lord, great one, lord of the great,

Ne B1  jmj-r³ pr wr nb=j wr nb wrw

Ne B1  'High steward, my lord, greatest of the great,

---

Pa B1  85

Ne B1  ššmw n jwtt ntt

Ne B1  leader of all that is not and all that is,
ne B1 jr hꜷ=k r š n
ne B1 if you go down to the Lake of Truth, you will sail on it with a fair wind,

ne B1 nn kf ndbyt ḫꜹ=k
ne B1 I the bunt will not strip away your sail,

ne B1 nn jḥm dpwt=k nn jyt jyt m ḫt=k
ne B1 your ship will not lag, no disaster will befall your rudder stock,

ne B1 nn swꜷ sgrgw=k nn šhm=k ḫꜷꜷꜷ=k ḥꜷ tꜷ
ne B1 your yards will not break, you will not founder when you land,

ne B1 nn jṯ tABSPATH nwt
ne B1 I no wave will carry you off,

ne B1 nn dp=k dwt
ne B1 you will not taste the evil of the river,
Ne B1 you will not see the face of fear, but shy fish will come to you

Ne B1 and you will catch fatted fowl.

Ne B1 For you are a father to the orphan,

Ne B1 a husband to the widow, a brother to the divorced

Ne B1 and an apron to the motherless.

Ne B1 Let me make your name in this land according to every good

Ne B1 rule: leader free of greed, great one free of arrogance,
Pa B1

Ne B1

Ne B1

Ne R

Ne R

Ne B1

Ne B1

Ne B1

Ne R

Ne R

Ne B1

Ne B1

Ne R

Ne R

Ne B1

Ne B1

Ne R

Ne R

Ne R

Ne R

Ne R

Ne R
Ne B1 Examine | me, I am at a loss!'  
Ne B1 Now, | this peasant said these words  
Ne B1 justified. | The high steward Rensi, son of Meru, then went  
Ne B1 'My lord, | I have found one of these peasants who is truly eloquent.
by a man who is my peer,

His goods have been robbed

And His Majesty said: As you wish to see me in health,

you will delay him here without answering anything he says.

So that he keeps speaking, remain silent.
n-mrwt jn.tw n=n mdw=f m sš
so that his speech will be brought to us in writing.

Then it will be brought to us in writing so that we may hear it.

jr swt 'nh hmt šhtj pn
But provide sustenance for the wife of this peasant
But provide sustenance for his wife and children.

mk jw w'c m nš šhtj r šwt pr=f r tš
That one of these peasants comes here is because his house is empty.

Furthermore, provide sustenance for this peasant himself.
Furthermore, provide sustenance for this peasant himself.

You will let the provisions be given to him without letting him know
They were given to friends of his, that it is you who gave them to him.'

And he was given ten loaves of bread and two jars of beer every day.

The high steward Rensi, son of Meru, gave them, but he gave them to a friend of his, and it was he who gave them to him.

Then the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, sent a message
to the mayor of the Wadi Natrun

about making provisions for the wife of this peasant,

consisting of three gallons of barley every day.

Then the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, gave provisions to this peasant, consisting of [...] jars of beer and fifty loaves of bread.

He gave them to friends of his, and his friends gave them to him.

Then this peasant came to plead with him for a second time,

and found him emerging from [...]
and said: 'High steward, my lord, greatest of the great, richest of the rich,
whose great ones have one greater, whose rich ones have one richer,
rudder of heaven,
beam of earth,
plumb-line that carries the weight! Rudder, do not deviate!
Beam, do not tilt! Plumb-line, do not swing awry!
A great lord takes what is without owner
and robs only that. Your possessions are in your house.
Half a litre of beer and three loaves of bread,

What is it you expend to satisfy your dependants?

A mortal man dies along with his underlings, or will you be a man of eternity?

Is it not wrong, a balance that is crooked, the pointer of a balance that errs,

A truly correct man who strays? Look, justice is fleeing from you,

expelled from its place. Officials are doing evil,

the norm of speech is biased
130
Pa B1 I sdmyw hr ḫnp jtt=f
Ne B1 I and judges are carrying off what it seizes.

131
Pa B1 sjxj pw n mdt m cq=s
Ne B1 This means that he who twists speech from its correct sense

131
Pa B1 hr jrt rf nwjw jm=s
Ne B1 is I acting corruptly thereby.

132
Pa B1 srfw hr rdjt nšp.tw psšw m cwnw
Ne B1 he who should rest I is making people pant, the arbitrator is a cheat,

133
Pa B1 dr sšl\{r\} m wd jrt=f dmj m wdnw=f
Ne B1 he who should relieve distress is ordering its creation, the harbour is flooded,

134
Pa B1 hsf jw hr jrt jyt
Ne B1 he who should punish injustice is doing evil.'
Then the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, said:

But this peasant said:

'He who measures heaps (of corn) is pilfering for himself;

he who fills for another is withholding from his amount;

he who should govern according to the laws is ordering theft.

Who then will repel evil?
He who should dispel weakness is acting corruptly;

He who should correct another is being crooked;

He who should reproach another is an evildoer. Do you find anything for yourself?

Redress is short but evil is long. A good deed returns to its place of yesterday.

This is the precept: act for him who acts, to make him act;

It is thanking him for what he does; it is parrying a thing before shooting;

It is commissioning something from a craftsman.
Would that a moment would destroy, havoc in your vineyard,

decimation of your birds, destruction among your water-fowl!

He who should see has turned blind, one who should hear deaf,

and one who should lead has gone astray.

Basket! Have you (not) gone too far?

Look, you are strong and powerful, your arm is strenuous,
but your heart is greedy and mercy has left you.

How lamentable is the poor man you ruin!

You are like the messenger of Khenty.

Look, you surpass the Lady of Pestilence;

if something is not for you, it is not for her;

if something is not against her, it is not against you;

if you won't do it, she won't do it. Who possesses bread should be merciful
Ne B1 whereas brutality is for the criminal. Theft suits those without belongings,

Ne B1 things are robbed by a criminal.

Ne B1 But an evil act of someone without need, is he not to be rebuked?

Ne B1 and drunk with your beer, and you are rich in every respect.

Ne B1 While the face of the helmsman is forward, the ship deviates as it pleases.
While the king is in the stateroom and the helm is in your hand,

evil is placed near you.

My plea is long, and the division is difficult.

"What's with him there?" people say.

Create shelter so that your shore will be safe,

for look, your harbour is surrounded by crocodiles! May your tongue be truthful.

so that you won't go astray! That organ in a man is his canker-worm.
Don't speak falsehood! Beware of officials!

The judges are a fattened basket; Meant figuratively: "rich from bribes".

speaking falsehood is their herbage, it lies light on their hearts.

O wisest of all mankind,

are you unaware of my case? Relieve all distress on the water!

Look, I am laden with sorrow. Look, I am in your hands,

Look, I am under way without a ship.
Ne R  so you should take account of me! Look, I am in distress.

Ne B1  Rescue all who are drowning, I save the shipwrecked,

Ne R  Šd wj | m ḫw ḍr[...]=k

Ne R  save me | in the domain within your reach!

Ne B1  ḥdr=k wj m ḫw | jrj ḍr=k

Ne B1  rescue me in the domain | that is within your reach!

Ne B1  And this peasant came to plead with him for a third time.

Ne B1  He said: I 'High steward, my lord, you are Re, lord of heaven, with your courtiers.

Ne B1  Everyone has a need for you, like | water.

Ne B1  You are Hapi, who makes the meadows green
and restores mounds that have been ravaged. Punish theft.

and protect the poor! Don't become a flood against the suppliant!

Beware of the approach of eternity. Desire to last, as is said:

"Doing justice is breath for the nose."

Inflict punishment on him who ought to be punished,

and none will surpass your rectitude. Does the 'hand'-balance err?

"Handwaage".
Ne B1 | mḥ$t ḥr rdjt ḥr gs
Ne B1 | Is the 'stand'-balance\(^1\) biased?
\(^1\) "Standwaage".

Ne B1 | jn-jw ḫḏwtj
Ne B1 | Is Thoth
Ne B1 | lenient? Then may you do evil!
\(^1\) To be emended to (Parkinson, 1991).

Ne B1 | rdj=ḥ tw snnw n
Ne B1 | You should set yourself equal to these three;

Ne B1 | jr sfn 3 ḫr=k sfn=k
Ne B1 | m ḡwš b nft m bjnt
Ne B1 | if the three are lenient, then you must be lenient. Do not answer good with bad.

Ne B1 | m rdj kt m st kt
Ne B1 | Do not put one thing in place of another.

Ne B1 | rwd\(^1\) mdt r snmyt
Ne B1 | The spoken word is more persistent than weed\(^2\),
\(^1\) Or rd, "grow".
\(^2\) Lit. "snmyt-plants".
Pa B1

Ne B1 r

Ne B1 to

reach the smeller with its retort.

Pa B1

Ne B1 ntf jyt

Ne B1 The one who waters mischief

to make deception grow,

1 Uncertain.

Pa B1

Ne B1 spw 3

Ne B1 this is three times

to induce him to act!

1 Steer according to the sail.

I.e. “this is already the third time that I induce him to act!”

Pa B1

Ne B1 šd wdnw r jrt m³t

Ne B1 Withdraw the flood, so as to do justice.

Pa B1

Ne B1 sŵw

Ne B1 Be careful that

you do not run aground, while at the tiller.

Pa B1

Ne B1 ʾqyyt nt tî

Ne B1 To straighten out the land

is to do justice.
Ne B1 m dd grg jw=k wr.tj
Ne B1 Do not speak falsehood, for you are mighty.

Ne B1 m js jw=k dns.tj
Ne B1 Do not be light-hearted, for you are weighty.

Ne B1 m dd grg ntk jws w
Ne B1 Do not speak falsehood, for you are the balance.

Ne B1 m tnhw ntk tp
Ne B1 Do not be careless, for you are the key.

Ne B1 mk tw m tp wn c jwsw
Ne B1 You are just like the balance:

Ne B1 jr gs=f hr=k g{w} si=k
Ne B1 if it is crooked, then you must be crooked.

Ne B1 m sbn jr rk hmw šd hr nfrtyt
Ne B1 Do not deviate, but operate the rudder, pull on the tiller rope.
Do not rob, but act against the robber.

A great one who is greedy is not (really) great.

Your tongue is the pointer (of the balance),

Your heart is the weight, and your lips are its arms.

But if you shut your eyes to the impudent, then who will repel evil?

Look, you are a dishonourable washerman

who is keen on destroying friendship,
one who wrongs his confidant for his client;

anyone who comes and supplies to him is his brother.

Look, you are a ferryman who ferries across anyone who has the fare,
a righteous man whose righteousness has crumbled.

Look, you are the chief of a workhouse

who won't let an unemployed person through at once.

Look, you are a hawk to the people,
Pa B1

Ne B1  cănḥ m ḥwrww nw

Ne B1 one who lives on defenceless birds.

Pa B1

Ne B1  mk ṭw Ṽdpw rš=f pw ṭḥs

Ne B1 Look, you are a cook whose joy is to slaughter,

Pa B1

Ne B1  nn jšjw jř ṭ=f  mk ṭw m mnjw

Ne B1 and who is not touched by the gruesomeness thereof. Look, you are a herdsman;

Pa B1

Ne B1  n Ṽdw=s js ṭ=j  n ḫp.n=k

Ne B1 is it not bad for me then that you cannot be prudent?

Pa B1

Ne B1  jḥ ḥr=k nhw m ṣmḥ ṭ skn

Ne B1 May you become less like a ravenous crocodile,

Pa B1

Ne B1  jbw Ṵš(.w) Ṽ dmj n ṭ ś Ṿ-r-dř=f

Ne B1 for shelter has vanished from the harbour of the entire land.

Pa B1

Ne B1  Ṽdmw n Ṽ Ṽdm.n=k ṭm=k Ṽ Ṽdm ḥr-m

Ne B1 Hearer, you do not really hear. But why do you not hear?
Now I have spoken out against the aggressor,

and the crocodile retreats. But what is the gain thereof to you?

The secret of the truth will be found, and falsehood will be cast on the ground.

Do not make provision for the following day before it has come,

since one cannot know what is going to happen in it.'

When this peasant had said these words, the high steward Rensi, son of Meru,

went to the entrance of the portal,
and made two guards turn against him with whips,

and they thrashed all his limbs therewith. Then this peasant said:

'So the son of Meru must go astray, since his face is blind to what he sees and deaf to what he hears,

and is straying from what it is reminded of.

Look, you are a town without a mayor, like a meeting without a chairman,
Pa B1 mj dpt  nn shry jm=s
Ne B1 like a ship without a captain,

Pa B1 smyt nn  sšmwš=s
Ne B1 like a gang without a leader.

Pa B1 mk tw m šnt jš  ḥqš-ḥwt šspw
Ne B1 Look, you are a policeman who steals, a major who accepts (bribes),

Pa B1 jmj-rš w ḥsf ḥḏš
Ne B1 a district overseer who should restrain robbery

Pa B1 ḥpr m jmj-ḥšt n jrr
Ne B1 but who has become a pattern for the criminal.'

Pa B1 jw.jn rf šḥtj pn r spr n=f 4nw sp
Ne B1 And this peasant came to plead with him for a fourth time,

Pa B1 gm.n sw ḥr  prt m sbš n ḥwt-nṯr nt Ḥṛj-šš=f
Ne B1 and found him emerging from the gate of the temple of Arsaphes.
He said: 'Praised one, may Arsaphes, from whose temple you have come, praise you!

Goodness has been harmed; there is no accumulation of it,

nor is there casting of falsehood on the ground. Has the ferry sunk?

Who can be ferried across

when the one who should bring about the deed is unwilling?

Crossing the river on foot: a good crossing, or not?
Now, who can sleep till dawn?

For obstructed are going by night, travelling by day,

and letting a man attend his truly good cause.

Look, it is no use to tell you this,

for mercy has left you. How lamentable is the poor man you ruin!

Look, you are a hunter who slakes his desire,
Ne B1 wdd r jrt mrt=f  ḫḫ dbw  ḫ st smw
Ne B1 bent on doing what he wants, who harpoons hippopotami,  ḫ shoots wild bulls,

Ne B1 ph rmw sḥt  ḫḥ pdw
Ne B1 catches fish and snares  ḫ birds.

Ne B1 nn ḫḫ ṣw m ḫrw
Ne B1 Yet there is none hasty of speech who is free of spluttering,

Ne B1 nn js-jb dns sḥr ḫt
Ne B1 and none light of heart who is weighty of thought.

Ne B1 wẖ́ḥ  ḫḥ=ḫ ṭḥ ṭt
Ne B1 Be tender-hearted, so that you will learn justice!

Ne B1 dṛ stpt=k r  ḫṛ bss ṣrw
Ne B1 Suppress your choice for  ḫ the good of him who enters
For there is no brute who attains excellence, 
and there is no impatient man whom one turns to.

Don't be haughty in proportion to your might, 
so that evil doesn't reach you.

Tolerate one misdeed, and it will become two.

It is the eater who tastes, so one who is questioned replies;

It is the sleeper who dreams.
As for a judge who ought to be punished, he is a pattern for the criminal. Fool, look, you are found out! Ignoramus, look, you are questioned! Bailer of water¹, look, you are noticed! Helmsman, don't let your ship go off course! Giver of life, don't let people die!

¹ Meant figuratively: "someone urinating".
Ne B1 _Destroyer, don't let people perish!

Ne B1  _Shade, don't be as the blazing sun!

Ne B1  _Shelter, don't let the crocodile snatch!

Ne B1  _The fourth time already of pleading with you; shall I spend all day at it?'

Ne B1  _And this peasant came to plead with him for a fifth time.

Ne B1  _He said: 'High steward, my lord, the netter is [...] [fish],

1 Following the suggestion by Parkinson (1991).
nlyw₁ ḫr smjy

the nyw-fisherman² is killing jy-fish,

₁ Uncertain.
² Uncertain.

rmḫw ḫr ḫḥw ḫbbw

the fish-spearer is harpooning ḫbbw-fish,

ḏḏḥw ḫr ḫḥw

the ḏḏḥw-fisherman

is after ḫḥw-fish.

jw ḫḥ ḫḫ=f

jṯ ṭw ṭw ṭw ṭw ṭw ṭw

The fisherman ravages the river. Look, you are the same.

m ḫwḫ

ḥ ḫḥ=f

Do not defraud a poor man

of his property,

fn ḫn=k ṭw ṭw ṭw ṭw ṭw ṭw ṭw

a slight man whom you know. The belongings of a pauper are his breath,
to take them away is to stop up his nose.

You were appointed to hear cases, to judge between litigants, and to punish the robber.

But look, what you are doing is supporting the thief.

You are trusted, yet you have become a transgressor.

You were appointed to be a dike for the pauper, so take care that he doesn't drown!
But look, you are the lake that pulls him under.'

And this peasant came to plead with him for a sixth time, and he said: 'High steward, my lord, lord who eradicates falsehood, who creates truth and creates all goodness, who destroys [evil],

like when satiety comes and ends hunger,

and clothes end nakedness,
like when the sky becomes calm after a heavy storm

and warms all who are chilled,

like fire that cooks what is raw,

like water that quenches thirst! See with your own eyes:

the arbitrator is a cheat,

the appeaser is causing misery,

and he who should mitigate is causing suffering.

Cheating diminishes justice, so render good account,
and justice will be neither insufficient nor excessive.

So act accordingly!

If you acquire, then give to your fellow man, for chewing is without merit.

and your share of the cargo will be what you seize,

My anguish leads to separation

and my accusation brought departure;

one cannot know what is in the heart.

Don't be negligent, act at the accusation! If you sever, who will join?
The sounding rod is in your hand,

A rod that makes waters accessible that have stayed behind (during low tide).

If a ship goes down, it is looted and its cargo perishes on the ground.

It is known:

You are educated, enlightened and accomplished,

but not for cheating! You act the same as everyone,
Ne B1 I and your environment is corrupt.
Ne B2 jw h₃w=k m nwdw "q³ n bw-nb
Ne B2 and every man in your environment is corrupt.

Ne B1 Molester of the entire land!

Ne B1 The cultivator of wickedness is watering his garden with

Ne B1 evil, to make his garden grow with falsehood

Ne B1 and to water everlasting doom.'

Ne B1 And this peasant came to plead with him for a seventh time,
and he said: 'High steward, my lord, you are the helm of the entire land, you are the equal of Thoth, who judges without being partial. My lord, may you condone that a man calls upon you concerning his just cause. Don't be outrageous, it is not for you!' One who was happy becomes anxious. Do not scheme for what has not yet come,
I do not rejoice in what has not yet happened! Considerateness extends friendship.

I shth sp hpr

I and dismisses an offence that happens;

one cannot know what is in the heart. Subverter of the law, destroyer of rectitude!

There will be no poor man alive

If justice does not attend to him when he is robbed.

Now, my body is full (of misery) and my heart is laden (with grief).

It comes from my body because of the condition thereof:
it is the breach of a dike, its waters pouring through, as my mouth opens to speak.

So, I have now plied my sounding rod, bailed my water,
given vent to what was on my mind and washed my dirty linen.

My speech is done and my misery has ended up before you,
what (more) do you need? Your neglect will lead you astray,
your avarice will befool you and your greed will make you acquire enemies.
Ne B1 I Will you even find another peasant like me?

Ne B1 I Or will the lazy petitioner be waiting at the door of his house?

Ne B1 I There is none silent whom you let speak, none sleeping whom you roused,

Ne B2 none speechless whose mouth you opened,

Ne B1 none ignorant whom you let know, none foolish whom you educated.

Ne B2 | uneducated whom you instructed.
Yet officials should be people who dispel injustice, lords of goodness,
craftsmen in creating what is, people who mend a severed head.'
And this peasant came to plead with him for an eighth time,
and said: 'High steward, my lord, one sinks low through greed.
A greedy man is without achievement,
he achieves only failure. You are greedy but it does nothing for you,
you steal but it's of no benefit to you.
You who should let a man attend his truly good cause!

In fact, your possessions are in your house and your stomach is full;

the barley brims over since it is so abundant

and its excess perishes on the ground. Thief, robber, snatcher!

The officials who were appointed to repel evil

1 Error by Parkinson (1991) or scribal error?

2 I assume the repetition of the is an error by Parkinson (1991).

should be shelters from the aggressor;
the officials who were appointed to eradicate falsehood!

And the fear of you wouldn't permit appealing to you?

You do not perceive my heart! The humble man who returns

to make a complaint to you, he cannot fear him to whom it is submitted,

you cannot fear him who submits it to you.

though no brother of his can be fetched to side against you in the street.

Your plots of land are in the country, your earnings are in the estate
and your provisions in the storehouse. Officials are giving to you,

Officials are giving gifts to you,

Are you a thief? Are people ushered in to you,

troops being with you, for the division of plots of land.

troops being with you, for the division of plots of land?

Do justice for the Lord of Justice,

whose justice has justice!
Pen, papyrus, palette of Thoth, beware of doing evil!

The goodness of a good man is good to him, but justice is for eternity.

When goodness is good, goodness is good indeed,

It goes down with him who does it to the necropolis.

When he is buried, and earth envelops him,

his name is not effaced on earth

and he is remembered on account of the goodness.
This is the norm of the divine word. If it is a 'hand'-balance,
then it is not crooked. If it is a 'stand'-balance,
then it is not biased. Look, I will come, and another will come,
so you should inquire!

But do not respond as one who questions a humble man.

Do not attack one who cannot attack. You show no mercy, you are not troubled,
Ne B1  n  skskl.n=k
Ne B1  you do not destroy,
Ne B2  n bh₃.n=k
Ne B2  you do not flee,

Ne B1  n rdj.n=k  n=j ḏb⟩w n mdt
Ne B1  nor do you give me a reward for this good speech

Ne B1  prrt m rḥ n R³ ḏs=f
Ne B1  that comes forth from the mouth of Re himself!

Ne B1  ḏd m³ct jr m³ct
Ne B1  Speak justice and do justice!
Ne B1  For it is mighty,

Ne B2  jr rk n=j m³ct
Ne B2  Do justice to me!

Ne B1  ḏr-nṭt wr sj
Ne B1  it is great, it is enduring, one will find its trustworthiness,
Ne B2  It will lead to blessedness. Can a balance be crooked?
Ne B2  A balance cannot be crooked.

Ne B1  When it is its pans that weigh things?

Ne B1  There can be no excess of rectitude.

Ne B1  An evil deed cannot reach harbour,
Ne B1  but the hindermost will reach land.'

Ne B2  And this peasant came to plead with him for a ninth time,
and said: 'High steward, my lord, the tongue of people is their 'stand'-balance,
and it is the 'hand'-balance that detects deficiency and inflicts punishment on him who ought to be punished.

One sets the standard after you. Falsehood [...] when its need arises,
but the truth returns to correct it. Truth is an aspect of falsehood,
which means it is made to thrive but it is not gathered in.

When falsehood sets out, it goes astray.
It cannot cross in a ferry and it cannot row.  

As for him who is enriched by it, he has no children and no heirs on earth.  

As for him who sails with it, he cannot reach land, his boat cannot moor in its harbour.

Don't be heavy, you haven't been light!
Don't delay, you haven't been swift! Don't be partial!

Don't listen to the heart! Don't disregard someone you know!

Don't be blind to someone who looks to you!

Don't fend off someone who appeals to you! May you abandon this neglect,

and may your verdict be accounced! Act for him who acts for you

and don't listen to anyone who is against him!
Summon a man concerning his just cause! There is no yesterday for the negligent, no friend for him who is deaf to truth, and no holiday for the greedy.

The accuser becomes wretched, wretched to be a suppliant, and the opponent becomes a murderer.
Look, I am pleading with you but you do not hear it.

I will go and plead concerning you with Anubis.'

Then the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, sent two guards to bring him back. And this peasant was afraid, thinking it was done to punish him on account of these words that he had said. And this peasant said:
A thirsty man’s approach of water,

the reach of a nurseling’s mouth for milk,

such is death for him who prays to see it come

when his death comes tardily for him.

Then the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, said: 'Don’t be afraid, peasant!

Look, you will arrange the matter with me.' But this peasant swore an oath:
So I will eat your bread and drink your [beer] forever!"

The high steward Rensi, son of Meru, said: 'Now wait here and hear your petitions!'

And from a new papyrus roll he had every petition read out according to [its] content.

Then the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, delivered them to the majesty of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Nebkaure, justified,
and they pleased his heart more than anything in this entire land.

Then His Majesty said: ‘Pass judgement yourself, son of Meru!’

And the high steward Rensi, son of Meru, sent two guards to [fetch Nemtinakht].

Then he was brought and an inventory was made of [...] He found six persons as well as [...] his barley, his emmer, his donkeys,
his swine, [his] small cattle, […]

[...] Nmtj-nḥt pn n sḥtj pn […] […] […]=f nbt […]

this Nemtinakht […] to this peasant […] […] all his […]

[...] n Nmtj-nḥt pn […]

of this Nemtinakht […]

jw=f pw [ḥt=f r pḥwj=fj mj gmyt m sš]

This was copied [from start to finish as found in writing].