Abandoned Women: Rewriting the Classics in Dante, Boccaccio, and Chaucer
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☞ Abandoned Women ☜
Für meine Großmutter

Anna Seifried Hagedorn

mit Liebe und Herzlichem Dank.
Ora mi avvedevo che non di rado i libri parlano di libri, ovvero è come si parlassero fra loro. Alla luce di questa riflessione, la biblioteca mi parve ancora più inquietante. Era dunque il luogo di un lungo e secolare sussurro, di un dialogo impercettibile tra pergamena e pergamena, una cosa viva, un ricettacolo di potenze non dominabili da una mente umana, tesoro di segreti emanati da tante menti e sopravvissuti alla morte di coloro che li avevano prodotti, o se ne erano fatti tramite.

—Umberto Eco, Il Nome della Rosa

Now I realized that not infrequently books speak of books; it is as if they spoke among themselves. In the light of this reflection, the library seemed all the more disturbing to me. It was then the place of a long, centuries-old murmuring, an imperceptible dialogue between one parchement and another, a living thing, a receptacle of powers not to be ruled by a human mind, a treasure of secrets emanated by many minds, surviving the death of those who had produced them or had been their conveyors.

—trans. William Weaver
Acknowledgments

This book has been written in the course of a long intellectual journey, and, naturally, I have incurred many debts along the way. In its earliest form, a dissertation at Cornell University, it benefited from the insights and criticisms of my committee members: Thomas D. Hill, Marilyn Migiel, and last but certainly not least, my chairman, Winthrop Wetherbee. My decision to explore this topic in the first place owes a great deal both to Pete Wetherbee, whose intertextual approach to Chaucer and classical erudition has stimulated and influenced my own thinking in graduate school and beyond, and to Marilyn Migiel, who encouraged my interests in Italian and feminist studies.

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Tradition appeared too late for me to take account of it in my own work on Chaucer, Dante, and Boccaccio. Chapter 2 appeared in an earlier form as “A Statian Model for Dante’s Ulysses” in Dante Studies 105 (1997); I thank the editor, Christopher Kleinhenz, for permission to reprint it in a modified form.

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