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**Paper Two: Fuller Character**

We have observed how “objective correlatives” signify ideas, emotions, psychological states, or metaphysical notions. The most obvious change was from *Lanval*’s lady to any of Chaucer’s pilgrims. In *Lanval*, the lady was an allegory, and not intended to realistically portray a three-dimensional person. We can almost read Chaucer’s pilgrims like allegories, especially in the *General Prologue*. But with each of the *Tales*, Chaucer illustrates the complexity of the individual pilgrim, and makes moral judgments a little more difficult.

Chaucer manages this by offering competing motives behind actions. He adds details, and thick description. He tells the stories unreliably, so that we can’t always trust the voices of his narrators. In short, he mimics the situations each of us faces in daily life—unaware of others’ motives, unsure of all the facts, and so forth. In *The Pardoner’s Tale*, Chaucer makes the distinction between life and art even more obvious. He shows us a Pardoner who is worthy of compassion, and who is portrayed in all the ambiguity and confusion of everyday life. But he juxtaposes this to a story with cut-and-dried moral lines. You only need to compare the character of the Pardoner to the character of one of the thieves to see this.

In this paper, explore the characters of Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* **or** Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. Which model do they fit—are they more like those in *Lanval*, or more like the pilgrims of the *Canterbury Tales*? Why?

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(Please note: this is an opinion essay. It requires your opinion and the evidence on which it is based. You do not need to prove a thesis: rumination is fine.)