**Reader:** A schizophrenic personification of fate, fortune is neither a good nor evil character but rather offers man opportunities to rise and fall according to chance. Fortune: An individual must accept the “changeability” of Fortune. “Transience is Fortune’s nature.”

Nature: Nature’s highest concern is with the “divinely established order over which she presides, the order that humans violate, in her view, when they fail to follow the law of nature.”

Reason: Reason appears as a figure almost as changeable as Fortune, in this way “Reason [is] somewhat immoral, evinced in [the] frequently quoted assertion that it is ‘better to deceive than to be deceived’.”

Rhetoric: According to Socrates “Rhetoric is the counterpart of cookery...for just as cookery provides pleasure for the body with no regard for what truly benefits it, rhetoric gratifies the soul without considering its good. Consequently, rhetoric is ignoble flattery rather than art, both because it aims at the pleasant and also because it cannot give a rational account of its own activity.”

Prompt: Critically analyze all of these characters and their uniquely allegorical nature within the medieval texts of “Consolation of Philosophy” and “The Romance of the Rose” to make an analytical assertion about the question “What is happiness?”

**Reader:** I have to finish this paper tonight, it’s already late and this question is so hard, “What is happiness?” Ah how am I supposed to know, I’m only twenty! Aw, I’m so tired… [falls asleep at desk]

**SCENE 1: Introduction**

[ *Wheel of Fortune music* Advisors spin onstage to indicate Dream Sequence. Fortune enters stage arm-in-arm with herself – talking to herself. Reader is already on the stage waiting to start the game-show]

**Fortune** [Speaking to Audience] Welcome to Wheel of Fortune. Let’s go ahead and introduce our contestant: this is Reader, he comes from the land of cozy chairs and fireplaces and is a connoisseur of all written word, from Dr. Seuss to the Metamorphosis.

Tell us a little bit about the key to your success Reader
Reader Well, Fortune, I’m a strategic procrastinator, you see, I just schedule time the night before the paper is due to write it! So that’s not really procrastinating. Wait wait, who are you?

Fortune I’m fortune of course, you know that. The schizophrenic personification of fate?

BFortune Well now I know why you're paper isn't going so well.

Reader Ok fine so you're fortune but where am I?

Fortune well you really need to start paying better attention. You’re on my game show wheel of fortune remember? Trying to an answer a question for an essay, ring any bells? no? Oh well, let’s get going. It’s my game, it’s named after me, so you’re going to play by my rules. If you win you’ll achieve all of my good graces. The rules are as follows:

There will be a specifically crafted question which you must answer, utilizing only your own mental prowess and the expertise of our three predetermined Advisors. At the end of the round, regardless of whether you’ve answered the question correctly, you’ll spin my wheel and take your chances with Fate.

Reader: Wait, is this rigged? What’s the point of all of this anyways?

BFortune: Hey, it’s your question. So. Are you ready to spin my Wheel of Fortune OR NOT?

Reader: I guess…

SCENE TWO:

Fortune: Alright then, let’s begin! First let me introduce you to your three advisors!

First up we have Nature- don’t be fooled by her wild looks, this down-to-earth gal has
seen the sights and has a wealth of organic knowledge to share. Her motherly instinct is to provide and nurture.

**BFortune:** Watch out, she’s a fickle friend- her anger is indiscriminate.

**Fortune:** Next up let me introduce the illustrious Reason. His sound thinking is sure to be useful as you ponder this question.

**BFortune:** And bore you to tears.

**Fortune:** Finally… Rhetoric-

**Rhetoric:** [interjects] I! I am Rhetoric, your regal, ready representative for the requisition of the right result; I’m your ticket to the correct conclusion, your ultimate undulater…

**BFortune:** IE, nerd!

**Fortune:** Thank you for that ah, personal statement Rhetoric. But time is of the essence so we must be moving on! Alright Reader, your question for the night is: What is happiness? A) Love and Sex B) Comfort and safety C) Power and Wealth

**BFortune:** Remember there is only one right answer to this question and the stakes are high.

**Reader:** There is only one answer? Ok let me think. Happiness… well if you had money, you could buy power and maybe even sex, but not love… You probably wouldn’t be safe because everyone would be after you, but you could buy some knights to protect you, but then you lose your privacy with some big dude following you around all day… This is a hard question… Wait how can there just be one answer to this?

**Fortune:** My game, my rules

**Reader:** ok I think I need to call on help from my advisors… Let’s start with you Nature- what are your thoughts?
**Nature:** Good choice going to me first sweetie, I know the answer to this one its easy… obviously its love and sex, more sex, lots of sex, with a dash of love.

**Reader:** Well I was pretty happy when I was with Stacey, until she broke my heart and left me for my brother Ron… There is a lot of risk in love, and Too much sex can lead to all kinds of well “issues”  But then again without risk there really isn’t any reward… what do you think Reason?

**Reason:** To be really happy you must draw upon your past experience to be certain of tomorrow. Thus, my opinion is safety and comfort. At the base level there can’t be so many variables and what ifs, you have to be safe and comfortable in love, and in power to really have happiness in them. They are borne from comfort and not the other way around. You have to build a foundation and a framework before you add decorations or else they are destined to be temporary, life is fragile.

**Reader:** You make a good point Reason, What is love and power if tomorrow is uncertain and you cannot enjoy them… But on the other hand...how do you grow without struggles? Looking back on my own life honestly it is the hardest times and the least comfortable things that I have overcome that really have made me who I am today… So I don’t think I would want to get rid of the hardships in my life, is comfort really the way to true happiness… What do you think Rhetoric?

**Rhetoric:** [clears throat] Alright, now that we have heard from the alleged experts I shall endeavor to clarify this pedestrian debate for you my friend. Whatsoever do you think contentment draws from if not the admiration of your subordinate peers [chuckles]
[*Awkward Pause* everyone looks at each other and shrugs]

**Buttocks:** I shall endeavor to direct my borborygmus in your general direction

**Reader:** I am not sure I follow you Rhetoric… what are you saying?

**Rhetoric:** Merely that true happiness is in the captivation of an audience through eloquent speech… For that is the wielding of true Power and in power, happiness becomes imminent.

**Nature:** I am not sure about all of that “eloquence”… As I was trying to say before the answer is love and sex, which apparently is less obvious to some people than I thought so let me clarify. Honey, it don’t mean thing if it ain’t got that swing. What is life without love, love is the most innate element of humanity. Reproduction is beautiful a gift, and all life depends on it.

[Everyone starts jumping in with their opinions and arguing, Rhetoric tries to talk over Nature]

**Reason:** Now you two, let’s be reasonable, if you-

**Reader:** Alright, I think I’ve heard enough from you Rhetoric… what are you thinking Reason?

**Reason:** Essentially, all of life comes down to self-preservation. The unknowns in life will always strip you of your happiness- lovers die, sex fades, power corrupts, and wealth is only borrowed. The comfort of certain safety is unparalleled by all of these fleeting distractions/ideals.

**Reader:** [pondering, nodding, reflecting- Rhetoric tries to talk but he shushes him]

**Fortune:** You’re starting to run out of time…
**BFortune**: [starts beeping for the alarm clock]

**Reader**: [flustered, confused] But wait just a second, I’m not ready yet! What’s that noise, fortune why are you doing that?

[Spinning, craziness, falling simultaneous to the person waking up, BFortune follows Reader continuing beeping- Reader hits top of head to turn off alarm clock they fall over]

[Wake up scene, groggy, confused]

**Reader/Dreamer**: Oh crap, I fell asleep! I have a class in ten minutes and didn’t answer the question! There’s no way I can finish my paper!