You're in for a treat! The poem you've shared is "Pos de chantar m'es pres talentz" by William IX, Duke of Aquitaine. It's one of his most famous works, expressing his sorrow at leaving for exile.

Here's a translation that tries to capture the spirit of the original Occitan:

The Desire to Sing

The desire to sing has taken hold of me,

I'll make a verse about my pain,

But no longer will I be love's servant,

Neither in Poitou nor Limousin.

For now I must go into exile,

In great fear and great peril,

In war I leave behind my son,

And his people will do him harm.

The parting from the realm of Poitiers

Weighs heavy on my heart!

I leave Foucon of Angers in charge

Of all the land, his cousin too.

If Foucon of Angers does not aid him,

And the king to whom I owe my honor,

Many will do him ill,

Those treacherous Gascons and Angevins.

If he is not wise and strong,

When I have departed from you,

They will quickly bring him down,

For they will see him young and weak.

Mercy I ask of my companion,

If I have wronged him, may he pardon me.

I pray to Jesus on the throne,

In French and Latin, both.

Of prowess and joy I was full,

But now we must all part,

And I will go to the One

Where all sinners find their peace.

Full of merriment and joy I've been,

But Our Lord desires it no more.

Now this burden I can't bear,

So near I am to the end.

All I've left behind that I once loved,

Chivalry and pride;

Since it pleases God, I accept all this

And pray He'll keep me by His side.

To all my friends I pray at my death

That they come and honor me well,

For I have known joy and pleasure,

Near and far, within my realm.

Thus I renounce joy and delight,

And furs of brown, grey, and black.

Notes on the Poem:

Context: William IX wrote this poem while leaving for exile, likely due to his conflict with the Church over his scandalous behavior and unorthodox views.

Themes: The poem explores themes of sorrow, loss, the burden of leadership, the fleeting nature of earthly pleasures, and seeking divine forgiveness.

Style: William IX is known for his direct and often humorous style, which contrasts with the more idealized and refined language of later troubadours.

This poem offers a glimpse into the mind of a powerful medieval duke grappling with exile, regret, and the desire for redemption. It also showcases the early development of the troubadour tradition, a vital part of medieval European literature and music.

“Companho, faray un vers . . .covinen”

My friends, I’m making a verse that’s nice,

with more of craziness than sense

all mixed with love and joy and youth.

Whoever cannot understand’s a jerk,

whoever doesn’t learn it in his heart.

It’s a heavy thing to give up love, love that fits his soul.

My saddle fits two fine and gentle horses,

good, dexterous in battle, valiant as well;

but I can’t hang on to both, one won’t live with the next.

If I could just domesticate the pair,

I’d never deploy my equipage any other place,

for I’d be mounted better than any man around.

The one was racing champ of the hills,

and it has long been high-spirited and wild,

so savage and wary, it cannot be brushed.

The other grew up around Confolens,

and you never saw one lovelier, I know.

No gold or silver purse could buy that horse from me.

I gave it to its master in its youth,

but I retained the right, that every year

he rode, I rode a hundred or more.

Oh knights, give me advice, I’m in tight straits,

I’ve never felt so torn in a dilemma,

I can’t tell if I should keep Milady Agnes or Arsen.

I hold the castle of Gimel,

with Niol I show off my pride,

for both are bound to me and pledged by oath.

 “Companho, tant ai agutz d’avols conres”

My friends, I have had a lot of bad stuff.

I can’t keep from singing and feeling so blue.

But I don’t want to let out quite all my affairs.

So I’ll tell you how things seem now to me:

I hate a guarded cunt and a lake without fish,

and the boasting of jerks who never will act.

Almighty God, my captain and king,

he who first guarded his cunt should have died.

Pretending to serve, he hurt his beloved.

Let me give you the rules of the laws of cunt,

for I used to go wrong and I’ve suffered a lot:

Most things get less when you take some away, cunt grows.

And to those who will not believe what I say,

let him look in the park near the woods:

cut down a tree, two or three grow instead.

The more that it’s cut, the more that grows there,

the owner will end with more than before!

He’d be mad to complain when he’s suffered no loss.

 It’s wrong to cry out in that case.

Posted by William Seaton at 10:43 AM

Labels: occitan, poetry, translation, troubadour, William IX

Companho, farai un vers qu'er covinen (Comrades, I shall write a fitting poem) With original melody

Companho, farai un vers qu'er covinen,

Et aura-i mais de foudatz no-y a de sen,

Et er totz mesclatz d'amor e de joy e de joven.

E tenguatz lo per vilan qui no-l enten,

O dins son cor voluntiers non l'apren:

Greu partir si fai d'amor qui la troba a talen.

Dos cavalhs ai a ma sselha, ben e gen,

Bon son et adreg per armas e valen,

E no-ls puesc amdos tener, que l'us l'autre non cossen.

Si-ls pogues adomesjar a mon talen,

Ja no volgr'alhors mudar mon garnimen,

Que meils for'encavalguatz de nuill ome viven.

Launs fon dels montaniers lo plus corren,

Mas aitan fer' estranhez'a longuamen

Et es tan fers e salvatges, que del bailar si defen.

L'autre fon noyritz sa jus part Cofolen

Ez anc no-n vis bellazor, mon escien:

Aquest non er ja camjatz ni per aur ni per argen.

Qu'ie-l donei a son senhor polin payssen,

Pero si-m retinc ieu tan de covenen

Que, s'ilh lo tenia un an, qu'ieu lo tengues mais de cen.

Cavalier, datz mi cosselh d'un pessamen:

-Anc mays no fuy issaratz de cauzimen- :

Res non sai ab qual me tengua, de n'Agnes o de n'Arsen.

De Gimel ai lo castel e-l mandamen,

E per Niol fauc ergueill a tota gen:

C'ambedui me son jurat e plevit per sagramen.

Comrades, I shall write a fitting poem,

one with more folly than sense,

all laden with love, joy and youth.

And let he be called a knave, who doesn't understand it,

or learn it, for that matter, by heart:

people who like poetry hardly part from love.

I have two horses I can saddle well and gladly

they are good and brave and fit for fighting,

and I can't keep them both because they can't stand each other.

If I could tame them as I wish,

I wouldn't take my gear elsewhere,

because I would be mounted better than anyone else.

The one is the fastest of the mountaineers

but it has been acting fiercely oddly for a long time

and it is so fierce and savage that it refuses to be bridled.

The other was reared around Confolens

and you never saw a prettier one, by my troth:

such one can't be traded for gold nor for silver.

Because I gave it to its master as a filly

but we agreed to the condition

that, if he had it for one year, I would have it for a century.

Knights, advise me about this conundrum:

-never was I [so] troubled by a choice-

I don't know which one to keep to, that of dame Agnes or that of dame Arsen.

I hold the castle of Gimel and its land,

and I boast about Nieul with everybody

since both are sworn faithful to me.

Compagno, non puesc mudar qu'eo no m'effrei (Comrades, I don't know where to turn without being upset)

Compagno, non puesc mudar qu'eo no m'effrei

De novellas qu'ai auzidas et que vei:

Qu'una domna s'es clamada de sos gardadors a mei.

E diz que non volo prendre dreit ni lei,

Ans la teno esserrada quada trei:

Tant l'us no-ill larga l'estaca que l'altre plus no la-ill plei.

Et aquill fan entre lor aital agrei:

L'us es compains gens a foc mandacarrei,

E meno trop major nausa que la mainada del rei.

Et eu dic vos, gardador, e vos castei:

e sera ben grans folia qui no-m crei:

Greu verretz neguna garda que ad oras non sonei.

Qu'eu anc non vi nulla domn'ab tan gran fei,

Qui non vol prendre son plait o sa mercei,

S'om l'aloigna de proessa, que ab malvestatz non plaidei.

E si-l tenez a cartat lo bon conrei,

Adoba-s d'aquel que troba viron sei:

Si non pot aver caval, ela compra palafrei.

Non i a negu de vos ia-m desautrei,

S'om li vedava vi fort per malavei,

Non begues enanz de l'aiga que-s laissez morir de sei.

Chascus beuri'ans de l'aiga que-s laises morir dessei

Comrades, I don't know where to turn without being upset

about a case I am called to judge:

because a woman complains to me about her wardens.

And she says that they don't acknowledge either custom or law;

instead, they keep her locked, all the three of them,

so much that when one loosens her snares, the others tighten them more.

And they behave in such a way

(one is as courtly as a hangman's noose)

and they make more noise than the King's gang.

And I tell you, wards, and I admonish you,

and it shall be a proper fool he who doesn't believe me:

there hardly is a warden who doesn't sometimes doze.

Since I never saw a woman so steadfast

that she wouldn't want to take what she likes or deserves,

and who, if kept from worth, wouldn't turn to depravity.

And if you keep her from proper harness

she'll do with what she finds around herself

and if she can't have a steed, she'll buy a palfrey.

None of you would contradict me if I said

that, if one were forbidden to drink strong wine because of an illness,

he would rather drink water than let himself die of thirst.

Everyone would rather drink water than die of thirst!

Companho, tant ai agutz d'avols conres (Comrades, I have had so many bad receptions)

Companho, tant ai agutz d'avols conres

Qu'ieu non puesc mudar no-n chan e que no-m pes;

Enpero no vueill c'om sapcha mon afar de maintas res.

E dirai vos m'entendensa, de que es:

No m'azauta cons gardatz ni gorcs ses peis,

Ni gabars de malvatz homes com de lor faitz non agues.

Senher Dieus, quez es del mon capdels e reis,

Qui anc premier gardet con, com non esteis

C'anc no fo mestiers ni garda c'a sidons estes sordeis.

Pero dirai vos de con, cals es sa leis,

Com sel hom que mal n'a fait e peitz n'a pres:

Si queg'autra res en merma, qui-n pana, e cons en creis.

E sel qui no volra-n creire mos casteis,

An ho vezer pres lo bosc, en un deveis:

Per un albre c'om hi tailla n'i naison ho dos ho treis.

E quan lo bocx es taillatz, nais plus espes

E-l senher no-n pert son comte ni sos ses:

A revers planh hom la tala, si-l dampnatges no-i es ges.

Tortz es c'om planha la tala si negun dan no-i a ges.

Comrades, I have had so many bad receptions

that I cannot do without singing and grieving about it;

however, I don't want people to know my business in many things.

And I shall tell you my opinion about this:

I don't like a warded cunt nor a pond without fish,

nor boasting of base men, as if there weren't records of their actions.

Lord God, who are refuge and king of the world,

why didn't the first cunt-warden drop dead?

Because there never was service, or watch, worse than that.

Therefore shall I tell you the Law of the Cunt,

as a man who's done badly and has been repaid worse:

if other things dwindle when you take of them, the cunt grows.

And he who will not believe my teachings,

let him go see by the wood, in a reservation:

for each tree people fell, two or three grow.

And when the wood is cut, it grows back thicker

and the owner doesn't miss his profit, nor his income:

one complains wrongly about the loss, if no harm is done.

It is wrong to complain about the loss, if no harm is done.

Farai un vers de dreit nien (I'll write a verse about nothing at all)

Farai un vers de dreit nien,

Non er de mi ni d'autra gen,

Non er d'amor ni de joven,

Ni de ren au,

Qu'enans fo trobatz en durmen

Sus un chivau.

No sai en qual hora-m fui natz,

No soi alegres ni iratz,

No soi estranhs ni soi privatz,

Ni no-n puesc au,

Qu'enaisi fui de nueitz fadatz

Sobr'un pueg au.

No sai cora-m fui endormitz,

Ni cora-m veill, s'om no m'o ditz!

Per pauc no m'es lo cor partitz

D'un dol corau,

E no m'o pretz una fromitz,

Per saint Marsau!

Malautz soi e cremi morir,

E re no sai mas quan n'aug dir.

Metge querrai al mieu albir,

E no-m sai cau:

Bos metges er si-m pot guerir,

Mas non, si-m mau.

Amigu' ai ieu, non sai qui s'es,

C'anc no la vi, si m'aiut fes,

Ni-m fes que-m plassa ni que-m pes,

Ni no m'en cau

C'anc non ac Norman ni Franses

Dins mon ostau.

Anc non la vi et am la fort,

Anc no-n aic dreit ni no-m fes tort;

Quan no la vei, be m'en deport,

No-m prez un jau,

Qu'ie-n sai gensor e belazor,

E que mai vau.

Fait ai lo vers, no sai de cui,

Et trametrai lo a celui

Que lo-m trameta per autrui,

Enves Peitau,

Que-m tramezes del sieu estui

La contraclau.

I'll write a verse about nothing at all,

it isn't about me or about anybody else,

it isn't about love nor about youth,

nor about anything else,

because, in the first place, it was conceived while sleeping

on a horse.

I don't know at which time I was born,

I am neither happy nor sad,

I am neither a stranger nor a native,

nor can I do anything,

because I was so bewitched one night

on a high hill.

I don't know when I'm asleep,

nor when I am awake, unless I am told!

I almost had my heart broken

by a deep pain,

and I don't care at all,

by St. Martial!

I am sick and I'm afraid to die,

but I don't know more than I hear around.

I'll call for a doctor as I feel,

but I don't know which one:

he is a good doctor if he can heal me,

he isn't if I get worse.

I have a mistress, and I don't know who she is,

because I never saw her, by my troth,

nor did she do anything I'd like or dislike,

nor do I care

since I never had either a Norman or a Frenchman

in my house.

I never saw her and I love her much,

I never had meed, nor did she ever wrong me;

when I don't see her, I do rather well,

I don't care,

because I know a kinder and prettier one

who is worth more.

I have written the verse, I don't know about whom,

and I'll convey it to the one

who'll convey it to someone else

towards Poitiers,

since I would like, of that etui,

to have the second key.

Farai un vers, pos mi sonelh (I'll write a verse, since I'm dozing off)

Farai un vers, pos mi sonelh,

E-m vauc e m'estauc al solelh.

Donnas i a de mal conselh,

Et sai dir cals:

Cellas c'amor de cavalier tornon a mals.

Donna no fai pechat mortal

Que ama cavalier leal;

Mas s'ama monge o clergal

Non es raizo:

Per dreg la deuri'hom cremar ab un tezo.

En Alvernhe, part Lemozi,

M'en anei totz sols a tapi:

Trobei la moller d'En Guari

E d'En Bernart;

Saluderon mi sinplamentz per san Launart.

La una-m diz en son latin:

"O, Deus vos salv, don pelerin;

Mout mi semblatz de belh aizin,

Mon escient;

Mas trop vezem anar pel mond de folla gent."

Ar auzires qu'ai respondutz;

Anc no li diz ni ba ni butz,

Ni fer ni fust no ai mentagutz,

Mas sol aitan:

"Babariol, babariol, babarian."

So diz n'Agnes a n'Ermessen:

"Trobat avem que anam queren:

Sor, per amor Deu l'alberguem,

Que ben es mutz,

E ja per lui nostre conselh non er saubutz."

La una-m pres sotz son mantel

Et mes m'en la cambra, el fornel:

Sapchatz qu'a mi fo bon e bel,

E-l foc fo bos,

Et eu calfei me volentiers als gros carbos.

A manjar mi deron capos,

E sapchatz agui mais de dos,

Et no-i ac cog ni cogastros,

Mas sol nos tres;

E-l pans fo blancs e-l vins fo bos e-l pebr'espes.

"Sor, si aquest hom es ginhos

Ni laicha a parlar per nos,

Nos aportem nostre gat ros

De mantement,

Qe-l fara parlar az estros, si de re-nz ment."

N'Agnes anet per l'enoios:

Et fo granz, et ag loncz guinhos:

Et eu, can lo vi entre nos,

Aig n'espavent,

Qu'a pauc no-n perdei la valor e l'ardiment.

Quant aguem begut e manjat,

Eu mi despoillei per lor grat;

Detras m'aporteron lo gat

Mal e felon:

La una-l tira del costat tro al tallon.

Per la coa de mantenen

Tira-l gat, et el escoisen:

Plajas mi feron mais de cen

Aquella vetz

Mas eu no-m mogra ges enquers qi m'ausizetz.

Pos diz N'Agnes a N'Ermessen:

"Mutz es, que ben es conoissen.

Sor, del banh nos apareillem

E del sojorn."

.xli. jorn estei az aquel torn.

Tant las fotei com auziretz:

Cen e quatre vint et ueit vetz,

Q'a pauc no-i rompei mos corretz

E mos arnes;

E no-us pues dir los malaveg tan gran m'en pres.

Monet, tu m'iras al mati,

Mo vers porteras el borsi

Dreg a la molher d'en Guari

E d'en Bernat,

E diguas lor que per m'amor aucizo-l cat

I'll write a verse, since I'm dozing off

and I move, though motionless, under the sun.

There are malicious women,

and I'll tell you which ones:

those who take a knight's love badly.

A woman is not in mortal sin

if she loves a loyal knight;

but if she loves a monk or priest,

it's evil:

she should rightfully burn on a stake.

In Auvergne, around Limoges,

I was going alone and incognito:

I found the wife of Sir Guari

and of Sir Bernart;

they greeted me simply by the name of Saint Leonard.

One told me in her tongue:

"God save you, Sir Pilgrim;

you certainly look of high status,

in my opinion,

but we see so many fools going around the world."

And hear what I answered;

I didn't say "ah" nor "bah"

(neither did I mention iron nor wood)

but only as much as:

"Babariol, babariol, babarian"

So Dame Agnes told Dame Ermessen:

"We have found what we looking for:

sister, by all means, let's host him,

since he is dumb,

and nobody will know our purpose from him."

One took me under her cape

and lead me into the room, by the hearth:

and know that I appreciated it,

and the fire was good

and I warmed myself gladly with those large cinders.

And they fed me capons

and know that I had more than two,

and there were neither a cook nor kitchen-boys

but only we three;

and the bread was white, and the wine good, and the pepper abundant.

"Sister, if this man is playing it dumb

and refrains from speaking for our sake

let's bring in our red cat

right away:

it will make speak immediately, if he deceives us in any way."

Agnes went fetch the bothersome thing

and it was big and had long whiskers

and I, as I saw it among us,

was so afraid of it

that I almost lost heart, and lust.

When we had drunk and eaten,

I stripped myself naked for their sake.

They brought in, from behind, the cat,

[which was] mean and treacherous:

one spread it from the ribcage down to the heels.

Suddenly, she pulled the cat by the tail

and it scratched:

they gave me more than a hundred sores

that time

but I wouldn't have budged, even if they had killed me.

Thereafter Dame Agnes told Dame Ermessen:

"He is dumb, it is clear:

sister, let's get ready for merryment

and pleasure."

I lingered 41 days that way.

You shall hear how much I fucked them:

a hundred and eighty-eight times,

so much that they almost broke my equipment

and my tool;

and I can't describe the aching, so much I was taken.

Monet, you shall go in the morning,

bringing my verse in your purse,

straight to the wife of Ser Guari

and of Sir Bernat,

and tell them, for the love of me, to kill the cat.

Ben vuelh que sapchon li pluzor (I would well like most people to know)

Ben vuelh que sapchon li pluzor

D'un vers, si-s de bona color

Qu'ieu ai trag de mon obrador,

Qu'ieu port d'ayselh mestier la flor,

Et es vertatz,

E puesc en trair lo vers auctor,

Quant er lassatz.

Eu conosc ben sen e folor,

E conosc anta et henor,

Et ai ardiment e paor;

E si-m partetz un juec d'amor,

No suy tan fatz

No sapcha triar lo melhor

Entre-ls malvatz.

Eu conosc ben selh qui be-m di

E selh qui-m vol mal atressi

E conosc be selluy qui-m ri;

E si-ll pro s'azauton de mi,

Conosc assatz:

Qu'atressi dei voler lor fi

E lor solatz.

Ja ben aya selh qui-m noyri,

Que tan bo mestier m'eschari

Que anc a negu no-n falhi:

Que de jogar sobre coyssi,

A totz tocatz

Mais en say que nulh mo vezi,

Qual que-m vejatz.

Dieus en lau e sanh Jolia:

Tant ai apres del joc doussa

Que sobre totz n'ai bona ma,

E selh qui cosselh me querra

No l'er vedatz,

Ni us de mi non tornara

Descosselhatz.

Qu'ieu ai nom "maistre certa":

Ja m'amigu'anueg no m'aura

Que no-m vuelh'aver l'endema!

Qu'ieu suy d'aquest mestier, so-m va,

Tan ensenhatz

Que be-n sai gazanhar mon pa

En totz mercatz.

Pero no m'auzetz tan guabier

Qu'ieu non fos rahuzatz l'autrier,

Que jogav'a un joc grossier

Que-m fon trop bos el cap primier

Tro fo taulatz;

Quan gardiey, no m'ac plus mestier:

Si-m fon camjatz.

Mas elha-m dis un reprovier:

"Don, vostre datz son menudier"

"Et ieu revit vos a doblier,

Fis-m ieu:qui-m dava Monpeslier

Non er laissatz!"

E leviey un pauc son taulier

Ab ams mos bratz.

E quan l'aic levat lo taulier

Empeys los datz:

E-ill duy foron cairat vallier,

E-l terz plombatz.

E fi-l ben ferir al taulier,

E fon joguatz.

I would well like most people to know

whether this verse is well crafted.

I produce it from my workshop,

since I am really the champion of this art

and it is true

and I bring as a witness this verse itself

when it is done.

I know wisdom and foolishness well,

and I know shame and honour

and I have both fear and courage;

and if you propose a love-game

I am not so fatuous

that I can't tell the best one

among the mediocre.

I know well those who mean well

and those who hate me as well

and I know who makes merry with me;

and if gentlemen enjoy my company,

I am quite aware

that I have to take care of their comfort

and of their amusement.

Be blessed the one who took care of my upbringing

and taught me such a good occupation

which never failed me

because when it comes to board-playing

for every fret

I know more than any of my neighbours

no matter what you see me trying.

I thank god and Saint Julian:

I have learned so much about the sweet game

that I am more skilled than anybody else,

and he who asks for my advice

won't be denied it,

nor will anyone come back from me

with bad advice.

Since I have for a nickname "Infallible Master":

never will my mistress have me one night

and not wish to have me the next day!

Because in this trade I am (and I freely say it)

so expert

that I can earn my living

in every market.

However, I am not so big

that I wasn't defeated the other day

when I was playing for a big stake

and the preliminaries were all in my favour

until the game was laid out:

when I looked at it, it wasn't of any use anymore,

it had changed on me.

But she reproached me:

"Sir, your dice are small"

"And I will double the stakes:"

Said I "Even if they gave me Montpellier,

I wouldn't resign!"

And I lifted her board a little

with both arms.

And after having lifted the board,

I threw the dice,

and the first two were good points

and the third was loaded.

And I had it hit the board well,

and it was game.

Pos vezem de novel florir (Since we see, again, blossoming)

Pos vezem de novel florir

Pratz, e vergiers reverdezir,

Rius e fontanas esclarzir,

Auras e vens,

Ben deu chascus lo joi jauzir

Don es jauzens.

D'amor non dei dire mas be.

Quar no-n ai ni petit ni re?

Quar ben leu plus no m'en cove!

Pero leumens

Dona gran joi qui be-n mante

Los aizimens.

A totz jorns m'es pres enaisi

C'anc d'aquo c'amei no-m jauzi;

Ni o farai, ni anc non ho fi;

C'az essiens

Fauc maintas ves que-l cor me di:

Tot es niens.

Per tal n'ai meins de bon saber

Quar vueill so que non puesc aver;

E si-l reprovers me ditz ver,

Sertanamens

A bon coratge bon poder,

Qui-s ben sufrens.

Ja no sera nuils hom ben fis

Contr'amor, si non l'es aclis,

Et als estranhs et als vezis

Non es consens,

Et a totz sels d'aicels aizis

Obediens.

Obediensa deu portar

A motas gens qui vol amar,

E cove li que sapcha far

Faitz avinens

E que-s gart en cort de parlar

Vilanamens.

Del vers vos dic que mais ne vau

Qui be l'enten, e n'a plus lau:

Que-ls motz son faitz tug per egau

Comunalmens,

E-l sonetz, ieu meteus m'en lau,

Bos e valens.

A Narbona, mas ieu no-i vau,

Sia-l prezens

Mos vers, e vueill que d'aquest lau

Sia guirens.

Mon Esteve, mas ieu no-i vau,

Sia-l prezens

Mos vers, e vueill que d'aquest lau

Sia guirens.

Since we see, again, blossoming

meadows and greening gardens

and clearing rills and fountains,

and breezes and winds,

everybody should enjoy the joy

which makes him joyous.

I can't say anything bad about love:

why don't I get any of it?

Probably because I've had my full share!

Still, easily

gives great joy the one who keeps

to the rules.

It has always been like this for me:

that I never enjoyed the one I loved;

I never will, just as I never have;

therefore, it is consciously that,

many times, I do what my heart suggest:

all is nothing.

For this reason I have less pleasure,

because I want what I cannot have;

but if the adage tells the truth,

certainly

persistence is success

to one who can cope.

Never will a man be loyal

to love, unless he is submitted to it,

and is kind

towards both strangers and neighbours

and obliging

towards everybody in these circles.

One must oblige

many people, if he wants to love

and he ought to have

elegant manners

and that he refrains, in court, from speaking

coarsely.

Concerning this verse, I tell you that it acquires more value

and praise if one understands it well,

because the words are well arranged

together

and the melody, I boast about it myself,

is nice and moving.

Let Narbonne (but I won't go there)

have my verse

and I want it to be the voucher

of this praise.

Let my Esteve (but I won't go there)

have my verse

and I want him to be the voucher

of this praise.

Farai chansoneta nueva (I shall write a new little song)

Farai chansoneta nueva,

Ans que vent ni gel ni plueva:

Ma dona m'assaya e-m prueva,

Quossi de qual guiza l'am;

E ja per plag que m'en mueva

No-m solvera de son liam.

Qu'ans mi rent a lieys e-m liure,

Qu'en sa carta-m pot escriure.

E no m'en tenguatz per yure,

S'ieu ma bona dompna am!

Quar senes lieys non puesc viure,

Tant ai pres de s'amor gran fam.

...

...

Per aquesta fri e tremble,

Quar de tam bon'amor l'am,

Qu'anc no cug qu'en nasques semble

En semblan del gran linh n'Adam.

Que plus es blanca qu'evori,

Per qu'ieu autra non azori:

Si-m breu non ai aiutori,

Cum ma bona dompna m'am,

Morrai, pel cap sanh Gregori,

Si no-m bayza en cambr'o sotz ram.

Qual pro-y auretz, dompna conja,

Si vostr'amors mi deslonja

Par que-us vulhatz metre monja!

E sapchatz, quar tan vos am,

Tem que la dolors me ponja,

Si no-m faitz dreg dels tortz q'ie-us clam.

Qual pro i auretz s'ieu m'enclostre

E no-m retenetz per vostre

Totz lo joys del mon es nostre,

Dompna, s'amduy nos amam.

Lay al mieu amic Daurostre,

Dic e man que chan e bram.

I shall write a new little song

before it turns windy, cold and rainy:

let my mistress assay and test me

so she'll learn in which fashion I love her;

and certainly, come hell and high water,

she won't free me from her snares.

Instead, I surrender and deliver myself to her,

so that she can write my name in her charter.

And don't think I am drunk,

if I love my good mistress,

because I can't live without her,

so much I starve for her love.

...

...

I shiver and shake for this woman

because I love her of such a good love:

I don't think one alike to her was born

in the great lineage of the noble Adam.

Because she is whiter than ivory,

and for this I can't adore anyone else:

if I am not reassured shortly,

that my good mistress loves me,

I shall die, by the head of St. Gregory,

unless she kisses me in her room or under a tree.

What good will it be to you, beautiful dame,

if your love parts me from you?

You seem to intend to become a nun!

And know, since I love you so much,

that I fear that the pain will harm me,

if you don't redress the wrongs I blame on you.

What good will it be to you if I become a monk

and you don't keep me as your own?

All the joy in the world is ours,

Lady, if we love each other.

Down there, I tell and command my friend Daurostre

to sing and cry.

Molt jauzions mi prenc en amar (Very happily, I begin to love)

Molt jauzions mi prenc en amar

Un joi don plus mi vueill aizir;

E pos en joi vueill revertir,

Ben dei, si puesc, al meils anar,

Quar meillor n'am, estiers cujar,

C'om puesca vezer ni auzir.

Eu, so sabetz, no·m dei gabar

Ni de grans laus no·m sai formir;

Mas si anc nuill jois poc florir,

Aquest deu sobretotz granar

E part los autres esmerar

Si com sol brus jorns esclarzir.

Anc mais no poc hom faissonar

Car en voler ni en dezir

Ni en pensar ni en consir

Aitals jois non pot par trobar;

E qui be·l volria lauzar

D'un an no·i poiri' avenir.

Totz jois li deu humeliar

E tota ricors obezir,

Midons, per son bel acuillir

E per son dous plazent esgar;

E deu hom mais sent tans durar

Qui·l joi de s'amor pot sazir.

Per son joi pot malaus sanar,

E per sa ira sas morir,

E savis hom enfolezir

E belhs hom sa beutat mudar

E·l plus cortes vilanejar,

E·l totz vilas encortezir.

Pus hom gensor no·n pot trobar,

Ni hueils vezer, ni boca dir,

A mos obs la vueill retenir,

Per lo cor dedins refrescar

E per la carn renovelar,

Que no puesca enveillezir.

Si·m vol midons s'amor donar,

Pres soi del penr'e del grazir

E del celar e del blandir

E de sos plazers dir e far

E de son pretz tener en car

E de son laus enavantir.

Ren per autrui non l'aus mandar,

Tal paor ai c'ades s'azir!

Ni ieu mezeis, tan tem faillir,

Non l'aus m'amor fort asemblar;

Mas ela·m deu mon meils triar,

Pos sap c'ab lieis ai a guerir.

Very happily, I begin to love

a joy from which I will have more pleasure;

and, since I want to be back to joy

I well ought to, if I can, aim for the best;

since I love the best, without doubt,

that one could see or hear.

I (you know as much) should not brag

nor dare I praise myself much;

but if ever could one joy blossom,

this one should above all take roots

and shine above all others

just as the day turns brighter.

And never could anyone portray it

for in want nor wish

nor in though nor in imagination

such a joy can't find an equivalent;

and if one wanted to praise it properly,

he couldn't do it in a year.

Every joy must lower itself

and all royalty obey

my lady, because of her kindness

and of her sweet pleasant visage;

and he will live a hundred times longer

who can partake of her love.

Because of her joy can the sick turn healthy

and because of her displeasure can a healthy man die

and a wise man turn mad

and a handsome man lose his beauty

and the most courteous turn into a lout

and the most churlish turn into a courtier.

Since nobody can find a worthier woman

nor eyes see one, nor mouth describe one,

I want to keep her all for me,

to bring freshness to my heart

and to renew my flesh,

so that it cannot grow old.

If my lady wants to grant me her love,

I am ready to receive it and to reciprocate

I am ready to discretion and cajoling

and to say and do what she pleases,

and to keep her worth into account

and to further her reputation

I don't dare communicate by proxy,

so much I am afraid to anger her;

nor I myself, so much I am afraid to fail,

dare declare my love precisely;

But she ought to choose what is best for me

because she knows that I shall be saved through her.

Ab la douzor del temps novel (For the sweetness of springtime)

Ab la douzor del temps novel

Fueillon li bosc, e li auzel

Chanton chascus en lor lati,

Segon lo vers del novel chan:

Adonc esta ben q'on s'aizi

De zo dont hom a plus talan.

De lai don plus m'es bon e bel

No-m ve messatger ni sagel,

Don mon cors non dorm ni non ri

Ni no m'en auz traire enan,

Tro que eu sapcha ben de la fi,

S'el es aissi com eu deman.

La nostr'amor va enaissi

Com la brancha de l'albespi

Qu'estai sobre l'arbre tremblan,

La noig, ab la ploi' e al gel,

Tro l'endeman, qe-l sols s'espan

Per la fueilla vert el ramel.

Anquar me membra d'un mati

Que nos fezem de guerra fi

E que-m donet un don tan gran,

Sa drudari'e son anel:

Anquar me lais Dieus viure tan

Qu'aia mas manz sotz son mantel!

Qu'ieu non ai soing d'estraing lati

Qe-m parta de mon Bon Vezi,

Q'ieu sai de paraulas com van,

Ab un breu sermon qi s'espel:

Que tal se van d'amor gaban;

Nos n'avem la pess'e-l coutel.

For the sweetness of springtime,

the woods leaf and the birds

sing, each in its own language,

according to the swing of the new song:

it is therefore right that one tends towards

what he desires most.

From the place I like and love

comes neither messenger nor missive;

because of this, I neither sleep nor laugh;

and I don't dare come forward

until I know with certitude

whether things stand as I want them to.

Our love works

just as the hawthorn twig

which stands shaking on the tree

in the night, in the rain and in the frost

until the morning after, when the sun stretches

on the green leaf and on the branches.

I still remember a morning

when we ended a fight

and when she gave such an important gift,

her love and her ring:

god let me live long enough

to put my hands under her cape.

I don't worry that a strange language

would part me from my Good Neighbour,

because I know the wandering ways of words:

they begin as idle chat:

some people brag about love matters,

we have the matter in hand.

Pos de chantar m'es pres talenz (Since I feel like singing)

Pos de chantar m'es pres talenz,

Farai un vers, don sui dolenz:

Mais non serai obedienz

En Peitau ni en Lemozi.

Qu'era m'en irai en eisil:

En gran paor, en gran peril,

En guerra, laisserai mon fil,

Faran li mal siei vezi.

Lo departirs m'es aitan greus

Del seignorage de Peitieus

En garda lais Folcon d'Angieus

Tota la terra e son cozi.

Si Folcos d'Angieus no-l socor,

E-l reis de cui ieu tenc m'onor,

Guerrejar l'an tut li plusor,

Felon Gascon et Angevi.

Si ben non es savis ni pros,

Cant ieu serai partitz de vos,

Vias l'auran tornat en jos,

Car lo veiran jov'e mesqui.

Merce clam a mon conpaignon,

S'anc li fi tort, qu'il m'o perdon,

Et il prec en Jezu del tron

En romans et en son lati.

De proez'e de joven fui,

Mais ara partem ambedui,

Et ieu irai m'en a Cellui

On tut peccador troban fi.

Mout ai estat cuendes e gais,

Mas Nostre Seigner no-l vol mais;

Ar non puesc plus soffrir lo fais

Tant soi aprochatz de la fi.

Tot ai guerpit cant amar sueill:

Cavalaria et orgueill

E pos Dieu platz, tot o acueill,

E El que-m reteigna ab Si.

Totz mos amics prec a la mort,

Qu-il vengan tuit e m'onren fort,

Qu'eu ai agut joi e deport

Loing e pres et e mon aizi.

Aissi guerpisc joi e deport,

E vair e gris e sembeli.

Since I feel like singing,

I'll write a verse I grieve over:

I shall never be a vassal anymore

in Poitiers nor in Limoges

For now I shall be exiled:

in a dreadful fright, in great peril,

in war, shall I leave my son,

and his neighbours shall turn on him.

It is hard for me to abandon

the rule of Poitiers

I leave Folcon of Angiers as a keeper

of the whole country and of his cousin.

If Folcon of Angiers doesn't aid him

(and the king I owe my title to doesn't do likewise)

most of them will attack him,

those villainous Gascons and Angevins.

If he isn't very wise and valiant,

as soon as I have left you,

they will upturn him,

because they will see him young and defenceless.

I beg my companion for mercy:

if I ever wronged him, let him forgive me,

and let him praise lord Jesus in his throne

both in the common tongue and in his.

I lived with youth and valour,

but now they are both gone,

and I shall go to the One

by whom all sinners find peace.

I have been agreeable and gay,

but Our Lord doesn't allow it anymore;

now I can't bear the burden anymore,

so close I am to the end.

I have left all I used to love:

knighthood and pride;

and since this pleases god, I accept it wholly,

and let him keep me with him.

I endear all my friends to come to my death

and to honour me greatly

since I had and kept joy and disport

far and wide, and in my own abode.

So I leave joy and disport,

and vair and grey squirrel and sable furs.