

**1) Guilhem IX of Aquitaine. fl. 1090-1127**

Farai chansoneta nueva  
 Ans que vent ni gel ni plueva;  
 Ma dona m'assai' e•m prueva,  
 Quossi de qual guiza l'am;  
 E ja per plag que m'en mueva 5  
 No•m solvera de son liam.

Q'ans mi rent a lieys e•m liure,  
 Qu'en sa carta•m pot escriure.  
 E no m'en tengatz per yure  
 S'ieu ma bona dompna am, 10  
 Quar senes lieys non puesc viure,  
 Tant ai pres de s'amor gran fam.

Que plus etz blanca qu'evori,  
 Per qu'ieu outra non azori.  
 Si•m breu non ai ajutori, 15  
 Cum ma bona dompna m'am,  
 Morrai, pel cap sanh Gregori,  
 Si no•m bayz' en cambr' o sotz ram.

Qual pro y auretz, dompna conja,  
 Si vostr' amors mi deslonja? 20  
 Par queus vulhatz metre monja.  
 E sapchatz, quar tan vos am,  
 Tem que la dolors me ponja,  
 Si no•m faitz dreg dels tortz qu'ie•us clam.

Qual pro y auretz, s'ieu m'enclostre 25  
 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 [no] bram. 30

Per aquesta fri e tremble,  
 Quar de tan bon' amor l'am;  
 Qu'anc no cug qu'en nasques semble  
 En semblan del gran linh n'Adam.

Guilhem IX of Aquitaine. fl. 1090-1127. *Les chansons de Guillaume IX, Duc d'Aquitaine (1071-1127)*. (Edited by Alfred Jeanroy. 1967. Second edition. Paris: Champion.) pages 19-21.

**Translation** (after *Lyrics of the Troubadours and Trouvères: An Anthology and an History*. (Edited and translated by Frederick Goldin. 1973. New York: Anchor.), pages 41-42:

“I shall make a new song / before the wind blows and it freezes and rains. / My lady tests and probes me / about the way I love her. / Well now, no matter what quarrel she moves for that reason, / she shall not loose me from her bond [i.e. ‘lien vassalique’], // Instead, I become her man, deliver myself up to her, / and she can write my name down in her charter. / Now don’t go thinking I must be drunk / if I love my virtuous lady, / for without her I have no life, / I have caught such hunger for her love. // For you are whiter than ivory, / I worship no other woman. / If I do not get help soon / and my good lady does not give me love, / by Saint Gregory’s holy head, I’ll die / if she doesn’t kiss me in chamber or under tree. // What shall it profit you, my comely lady, / if your love keeps me away [i.e. if you do not grant me your love]? / It seems as if you want to become a nun. / But know that, because I love you so much / I’m afraid grief will torment me, / if you don’t do right by me for the wrongs I cry against you. // What shall it profit you if I become a monk shut in / and you do not keep me for your man? / All the joy of the world belongs to us, / lady, if we both love each other. / Now to my friend down there, Daurostre, / I say and command: sing this nicely, do not bray it out. // For this one I shiver and tremble, / I love her with such good love; / I do not think the like of her was ever born / in the long line of Lord Adam.”

## 2) Love-suffering

He was despeyred; no thyng dorste he seye,  
 Save in his songes somewhat wolde he wreye  
 His wo, as in a general compleynyng;  
 He seyde he lovede and was biloved no thyng.  
 Of swich matere made he manye layes,  
 Songes, compleintes, roundels, virelayes,  
 How that he dorste nat his sorwe telle,  
 But langwissheth as a furye dooth in helle;

(Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Franklin’s Tale*, ll. 943-950, in Benson, Larry D. (ed.). 1987. *The Riverside Chaucer*. (Third edition. Based on *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, edited by F.N. Robinson. 1957.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, page 181.

Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen was,  
 Ful ofte a day he swelte and seyde ‘Allas!’  
 For seen his lady shal he nevere mo.  
 And shortly to concluden al his wo,  
 So muche sorwe hadde nevere creature  
 That is, or shal, whil that the world may dure.  
 His slep, his mete, his drynke, is hym biraft,  
 That lene he wex and drye as is a shaft;  
 His eyen holwe and grisly to biholde,  
 His hewe falow and pale as asshen colde,  
 And solitarie he was and evere allone,  
 And waillynge al the nyght, makyng his mone;  
 And if he herde song or instrument,  
 Thanne wolde he wepe, he myghte nat be stent.

So feble eek were his spiritz, and so lowe,  
 And chaunged so, that no man koude knowe  
 His speche nor his voys, though men it herde.  
 And in his geere for al the world he ferde  
 Nat oonly lik the loveris maladye  
 Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye,  
 Engendered of humour malencolik  
 Biforen, in his celle fantastik.

(Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Knight's Tale*, ll. 1355-1376; in Benson, Larry D. (ed.). 1987. *The Riverside Chaucer*. (Third edition. Based on *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, edited by F.N. Robinson. 1957.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, pages 43-44.

### 3) Bernart de Ventadorn. fl. 1150-1180

Non es meravelha s'eu chan  
 melhs de nul autre chantador,  
 que plus me tra•l cors vas amor  
 e melhs sui faihz a so coman.  
 cor e cors e saber e sen 5  
 e fors' e poder i ai mes.  
 sí•m tira vas amor lo fres  
 que vas outra part no•m aten.

Ben es mortz qui d'amor no sen  
 al cor cal que dousa sabor; 10  
 e que val viure ses valor  
 mas per enoi far a la gen?  
 ja Domnedeus no•m azir tan  
 qu'eu ja pois viva jorn ni mes,  
 pois que d'anoi serai mespres 15  
 ni d'amor non aurai talan.

Per bona fe e ses enjan  
 am la plus bel' e la melhor.  
 del cor sospir e dels olhs plor,  
 car tan l'am *eu*, per que i ai dan. 20

eu que•n posc mais, s'Amors me pren,  
 e las charcers en que m'a mes  
 no pot claus obrir mas merces,  
 e de merce no•i trop nien?

Aquest' amors me fer tan gen 25  
 al cor d'una dousa sabor:  
 cen vetz mor lo jorn de dolor  
 e reuiu de joi autras cen.

ben es mos mals de bel semblan,  
 que mais val mos mals qu'autre bes; 30  
 e pois mos mals aitan bos m'es,  
 bos er lo bes apres l'afan.

Ai Deus! car se fosson trian  
 d'entrels faus li fin amador,  
 e•lh lauzenger e•lh trichador 35  
 portesson corns el fron denan!  
 tot l'aur del mon e tot l'argen  
 i volgr'aver dat, s'eu l'agues,  
 sol que ma domna conogues  
 aissi com eu l'am finamen. 40

Cant eu la vei, be m'es parven  
 al olhs, al vis, a la color,  
 car aissi tremble de paor  
 com fa la folha contra•l ven.  
 non ai de sen per un efan, 45  
 aissi sui d'amor entrepres;  
 e d'ome qu'es aissi conques,  
 pot domn' aver almorna gran.

Bona domna, re no•us deman  
 mas que•m prendatz per servidor, 50  
 qu'e•us servirai com bo senhor,  
 cossi que del gazardo m'an.  
 ve•us m'al vostre comandamen,  
 francs cors umils, gais e cortes!

ors ni leos non etz vos ges, 55  
 que•m aucitzatz, s'a vos me ren.

A Mo Cortes, lai on ilh es,  
 tramet lo vers, e ja no•lh pes  
 car n'ai estat tan lonjamen.

Bernart de Ventadorn. fl. 1150-1180. *Lieder*. (Edited by Carl Appel. 1915.  
 Halle: Niemeyer.), pages 188-191.

**Translation** (Goldin 1973:127-129): “Of course it’s no wonder I sing / better than any other troubadour: / my heart draws me more toward love, / and I am better made for his command. / Heart body knowledge sense / strength and energy – I have set all on love. / The rein draws me straight toward love, / and I cannot turn toward anything else. // A man is really dead when he does not feel / some sweet taste of love in his heart; / and what is it worth to live without worth, / except to irritate everyone? / May the Lord God never hate me so / that I live another day, or even less than a day, / after I am guilty of being such a pest, / and I no longer have the will to love. // In good faith, without deceit, / I love the best and most beautiful. / My heart sighs, my eyes weep, / because I love her so much, and I suffer for it. / What else can I

do, if Love takes hold of me, / and no key but pity can open up / the prison where he has put me, / and I find no sign of pity there? // This love wounds my heart / with a sweet taste, so gently, / I die of grief a hundred times a day / and a hundred times revive with joy. / My pain seems beautiful, / this pain is worth more than any pleasure; / and since I find this bad so good, / how good the good will be when this suffering is done. // Ah, God! if only true lovers / stood out from the false; / if all those slanderers and frauds / had horns on their heads. / I'd give all the gold in the world, / and all the silver, if I had it to give, / just so that my lady knew / how I love her with the love of a courtly man. // Whenever I see her, you can see it in me, / in my eyes, my look, my color, / because I shake with fear / like a leaf in the wind. / I don't have the good sense of a child, / I am so taken over, ruled by love; / and when a man is overcome like this, / a lady may let herself feel great pity. // Good lady, I ask you for nothing / but to take me for your servant, / for I will serve you as my good lord, / whatever wages come my way. / Behold me at your command, a man to rely on, / before you, o noble, gentle, courteous, and gay. / You are not, after all, a bear or a lion, / you would not kill me if I give myself to you. // To Mon Cortes, [Appel 1915:193 gives: "Meinem Artigen sende ich den Vers dahin wo sie ist"] down there, where she dwells, / I send this song, and let her not be vexed / that I have been so far away."

#### 4) Richard de Fournival. fl. 1240-1260. *Consaus d'amour*

[II] saveront si bel parler – con cil ki en sont bien coustumier – que il conqueront l'amour d'une dame u d'une damoisele plus tost assés que ne feroit uns fins amis de cuer, qui a paines saura u osera moustrer sa besoigne pour le grant amour ki son cuer destraint; ne ja ne verrés nul homme ki aime de cuer – tant soit sages ne avisés, ne tant ait recordé comment il mousterra sa besoigne a s'amie –, que il ne soit esbahis, et que il n'ait perdu tout son proupos, quant il vient devant s'amie. Et pour ce vous di je que vous n'aiés ja fiance que li hom vous aime bien, qui vous dist sa volenté hardiement et abandonnement et sans vergoingne. Et la cose dont vous poés miex connoistre celui ki vous aime de cuer, si est quant il est devant vous simples, pensis, plains de souspirs [...]: saciés que c'est une des plus beles et des plus vraies exprueves c'on puist trouver en son ami, s'il aime de cuer u non. (Richard de Fournival. fl. 1240-1260. *Consaus d'amours*. (Edited by Gian Battista Speroni. 1974. *Medioevo Romanzo* 1:217-278.), pages 271-272).

**Translation** by Shapiro, Norman R. (trans.). 1997. *The Comedy of Eros: Medieval French Guides to the Art of Love*. (Second edition, with notes and commentary by James B. Wadsworth and Betsy Bowden. First edition 1971.) Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, pages 119-120): "They [i.e. false lovers] will be smooth of speech – like all who are well versed in this art – that they will win the love [of lady of maiden] they seek more quickly than the true and loyal suitor, whose heart is so heavy with love that only with great difficulty will he dare bring himself to disclose the need that torments him. For you will never find a true and loyal lover, clever though he be, and certain of the way in which he will make known his desire, who does not fall speechless with awe when he comes before his lady. It is for this reason that I warn you never to trust in the love of a man who bares his heart to you boldly, with no restraint and no discomfiture. On the other hand, it is also very possible to recognize a true and loyal lover; for when he is before you he will be artless, pensive and full of sighing. [...] Indeed, this is one of the surest and most pleasing ways to prove the sincerity of a suitor's heart."