

Un Sirventes on Motz no Falh · *Bertran de Born*

Quarrels where words don't miss fire  
Have I made: that cost me never a garlic,  
And I have brother, cousin, cousins, son,  
I share egg and penny,  
And if he then wish my part,  
I throw it into the common lot.

So all must my brain have I in my custody.  
Altho as they have given me great trouble  
Between Sir Azemar and Sir Richard,  
Long time have they held me in fear.  
But now have they such strife  
That their children, if the king part them not,  
Will not have worth in the brain.

Everyday I resole and resew together  
The barons, re-fuse, melt, and stir 'em up together,  
Whom I thought to put in carnage;  
And I am well a fool because I was afraid to care about it,  
For they are of the worst workhands (the iron St. Lunart),  
Whereby he is a fool who bothers about them.

Talairan neither trots nor gallops,  
Nor is moved from his sand heap,  
Nor fear shakes, lays up lance nor dart;  
Rather I see him like a Lombard,  
So is he filled full of laziness  
That when the other folk take sides,  
He stretches himself and yawns.

Guilhelms de Gordo, a fool bobbin and bone,  
Have you put to your foil basket,  
And I love you, so God grant me,  
But for fool and for lazyman  
They hold you of the contract,  
The two viscounts, and it is late for their urge  
That you be in their battle order.

Everyday I contend and strive and cover myself  
And defend and rush hither and thither,  
And men tear down my land and burn me there  
And make of my trees slaughter  
And spill the corn in the stream,  
And I have not bold nor coward every who doth not now assail  
me.

At Perigord, near the wall,  
So that their man could throw a mace,  
I will come armed on Bayart,  
And if there I find the thick bellied Poitevin,  
They will see of my brand how it cuts,  
That on his head I will make  
Mush, mud, and brains mixed with the joints of his mail.

Barons, God save you and guard you  
And aid you, and avail your strength,  
And give you what you shall say to Sir Richard.  
I know what the sow peacock said to the crow.

*(from the Provençal, ca. 1909)*