

Anon. *chantepleure*, “En esmai et en confort” (RS 1929)

Transcribed and translated from BnF fr. 846 (trouvère songbook O), fol. 51v, by SK.

1	En esmai et en confort, ne sai a droit ou a tort, chant en riant et en lermes que trop m'esloigne li termes 5 que ceste amors que je port m'aura respasé ou mort: failliz m'en est mes aasmes.	In dismay and consolation, rightly or wrongly, I know not which I sing, both laughing and in tears because the end is so very far off when this love that I bear will have restored or killed me: my judgment <sup>1</sup> fails me!
2	En deduisant, en deport, me tient Amours foible et fort, 10 et m'ocit de douces armes tex don sanz force ne charmes n'ont deffense ne resort. Tot voient que riens n'en estort Amors, n'i vaut los ne blasmes.	In pleasure and enjoyment Love keeps me weak and strong, and slays me with sweet weapons such that, without force or magic, there is no defense or recourse against them. At once they see <sup>2</sup> that nothing can drive Love away, neither praise nor blame is of any avail.
3	15 Chantepleure sui sovant, sovent plor et sovent chant, que ma fole devinaille me croist mes maus et retaille; or les lesse, or les reprent. 20 Douce dame, a vos me rent; c'est la fins de ma bataille.	I keep being a <i>chante-pleure</i> , <sup>3</sup> I keep weeping and singing so that my crazy imagining increases my sufferings and sharpens them again; now I leave them go, now take them up again. Sweet Lady, I yield myself to you. This is the end of my battle.
4	Hé Amors, cum longuement atendrai ioie ou torment que vos ne pitié n'en chaille? 25 Grant pechié fait qui travaille celui qui riens ne concent. Home qui ne se deffent, n'est pas honors cum l'essaille.	Oh Love, for how long will I await joy or torment without you or mercy caring one bit about it? It is a great sin to cause to suffer someone who does not consent to it. When a man does not defend himself, it is not honorable to attack him.
5	Or sai bien que je ferai: 30 mal et bien en gré prendrai tant que morz ou gariz soie. Et savez ma plus grant ioie? Certes je la vos dirai, que j'ai si loingz ne serai 35 qu'en remembrant ne la voie.	Now know what I will do. I will willingly accept the harm and the good until I am either dead or cured. And do you know my greatest joy? indeed, I will tell you it, that I will never be so far away that I do not see her in my memory.

6 Cist remembrers me ravoie  
et conforte en grant esmai.  
Hélas! et quant plus n'en ai  
ne sai que devenir doie.

---

This memory puts me back on the right road,  
and comforts me in my great dismay.  
Alas! If I have nothing more [than memory],  
I don't know what should become of me.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> In the sense of “ability to estimate” < *aesmer*; cf. *esme*, “estimation”, *asmer* in *DMF*.

<sup>2</sup> Unless *Tot* is a spelling for *Tuit*, in which case the meaning is, “they all see that.”

<sup>3</sup> See Fritz, “La clepsydre,” 387, on the almost “adjectival” value of *chante-pleure* here.