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Arnaut Daniel

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Ans Quel Cim Reston de Branchas ·
Arnaut Daniel

Ere the winter's bleak disorder
Strip the branches dry their vesture,
I will make, as love hath bid me,
A brief song where a long cause is.
So aptly hath love wrought me with his training
That I can stem the torrent in its courses.
My ox outruns the hare where hill or coombe is.

With a very cunning order
Love commands me to attest her,
And no foreign court has hid me
Since he won me her applauses.
She is not like the violets not remaining
Until the winter setteth forth his forces,
But love as the laurel or the broom is.

Love saith: Thou'rt elsewhere no warder;
Whate'er other hath confessed her
Thine, of her it seems thou'st rid thee.
And thy rash way's reft of pauses. . . .
Shun any act that honour's name divorces,
And, next to God, extoll the thing her bloom is.

Faint heart, tho' she'd not award her
To thee the first time thou hast pressed her,
Follow! tho' she hath fled and chid thee,
For what runs against the laws is
That there should be long prayer and then no gaining.
I'd keep the track past where the Ebro courses
To where the Lernian pool so dark with doom is.

If I've passed o'er pools toward her,
Have I grieved in word or gesture?
No, and tho' famine undid me,
The one herb to save the jaw is
To hold her mouth to mine where she's reigning.
My heart would fly whate'er way crosses
My unwinged way; O Heart, hold thou to where her room is.

Twixt the Nile and Sanchas' border
No nobler robe e'er divests her.
Her grace is so great amid ye
That ye think it hath false causes.
But I go well to feel her long arms straining;
Knowing her lips I feel nor cold nor crosses
And move no more where pain or grief or gloom is.

Arnaut's hers from tip to toe maintaining.
She lost, Lucerne could not repay his losses
Nor all the land where St. Jago's tomb is.

(from the Provençal, ca. 1911)