Carmina burana, canciones profanae cantoribus et choris cantandae comitantibus instrumentis atque imaginibus magicis
CARL ORFF (1895-1982)

Composed: 1936. First performance: June 8, 1937, Opera House, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Performing forces: soprano, tenor, and bass soloists, mixed chorus (subdivided in a number of ways), chamber and treble choruses, with optional male soloists drawn from the chorus; three flutes, two piccolos, three oboes, English horn, three clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (including chimes, castanets, glockenspiel, ratchet, sleighbells, and tambourine), two pianos, celesta, and strings.

One of the most widely known and enthusiastically received works for chorus in the 20th century, Carl Orff's Carmina burana combines archaic poetry, simple melodies, primitive rhythms, and timeless sentiments in a magical atmosphere depicting the ever regenerating springtime of the human soul. Published as a cantata for concert use, it has had many productions (including its German premiere in 1938 and several Atlanta Ballet presentations in this city) in which it was staged, mixing dance and dramatic action with the singing and playing. The work's long Latin subtitle means "Secular songs for soloists and chorus accompanied by instruments and magical representations."

Orff was born and received his conservatory training in Munich. He served as conductor of opera and theater orchestras in Munich, Mannheim and Darmstadt before returning to his home city to help found a school for teachers of eurhythmics, a combination of music, movement and dance. Publication of collections of the improvisations and exercises he developed seemed to be leading to a nationwide acceptance of the school's methods of education, but the coming of nazism and world war ended that.

Beginning in 1945, German radio broadcasts of his work with children led to wider interest in his methods, leading to publication of his ideas and practices in the still-popular Orff Schulwerk, to adaptation of his songs to foreign languages around the world, and to establishment in 1961 of the Orff Institute at the Mozarteum in Salzburg. The aim of his work was to show that every child has the potential for musical participation and enjoyment. The simple percussion instruments he developed with associates, based in part on Indonesian gamelan instruments, have become a feature of many classrooms worldwide.

Coming of age in the era of Stravinsky and Prokofiev, Orff seems always to have been fascinated with primal rhythm and elemental, diatonic melody, and with theatrical techniques. As director of a Munich choral society he adapted and gave theatrical productions to older choral works, such as the Saint Luke Passion inaccurately attributed to Bach and early operas by Monteverdi. Much of the repetitiveness in his work (many of the numbers in Carmina burana consist of three verses to identical music) derives from the simple verse repetitions of folk songs, both ancient and contemporary.

Carmina burana was completed in 1937, showing strong influences from Stravinsky's Oedipus Rex and Les Noces (The Marriage), particularly in its varied and imaginatively used percussion. The poems on which it is based, in two languages described by one scholar as "distorted medieval Latin and Middle High German," were written by 13th-century goliards, an undisciplined rabble of students and homeless clerics whose lustiness and lack of respect for authority bear an
interesting resemblance to the hippie phenomenon of the 1960s. A large number of these poems were discovered in 1803 at the Benedictine monastery of Beuren in Bavaria and published under the title *Carmina burana* (Songs of Beuren), and from these Orff selected the ones he set in his cantata. He later designated this work as the first part of the trilogy *Trionfi* (Triumphs), grouping it with his *Catulli carmina* (Songs of Catullus, 1942) and *Il trionfo di Afrodite* (The Triumph of Aphrodite, 1950).

The governing image of Orff's *Carmina burana* is cycles, tying the highs and lows of the Wheel of Fate to the return of springtime and the annual surge of love and carnal passion. The opening chorus, "Fortune (Fate), Empress of the World," at once sets the mood of mystery, longing and ritualistic chanting for the entire work, and it will return in exact repetition at the end. Gregorian basses lead a lament for the inescapable vicissitudes of fortune.

Part I is "Springtime," three choral songs celebrating the annual return of both spring and love-making, followed by "In the Meadow" (or "On the Lawn"), flirtings and frolickings in the eternal mating game of spring. Part II, "In the Tavern," is sung by the male soloists and men's chorus alone. Dice, drink and debauchery all receive their due from the anonymous poets of the Beuern manuscripts. The songs range from the comic lament of a none too well cooked swan to a tipsy catalog of all the excuses for drinking. Part III brings us to "The Court of Love," in which hearts are broken and mended, conquered and surrendered, culminating in a pagan call to hedonistic pleasure. After an exhilarating paean to idealized love, *Carmina burana* closes as it began, the Wheel of Fortune completing its revolution.

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**FORTUNA, IMPERATRIX MUNDI**
*(Fortune, Empress of the World)*

1. Chorus

\[
\text{O Fortuna,} \\
\text{velut Luna} \\
\text{statu variabilis,} \\
\text{semper crescis} \\
\text{aut decrescis;} \\
\text{vita detestabilis} \\
\text{nunc obdurat} \\
\text{et tunc curat} \\
\text{ludo mentis aciem,} \\
\text{egestatem,} \\
\text{potestatem} \\
\text{dissolvit ut glaciel.}
\]

\[
\text{Sors immanis} \\
\text{et inanis,} \\
\text{rota tu volubilis,} \\
\text{status malus,} \\
\text{vana salus} \\
\text{semper dissolubilis,}
\]

Oh, Fortune,  
like the moon  
ever changing,  
ever increasing  
or diminishing;  
detestable life  
now is harsh  
and then it playfully  
nurses the mind's pain  
and destitution;  
power  
it dissolves like ice.

Fate, monstrous  
and empty,  
you are a turning wheel,  
an evil state,  
a vain shelter,  
always destructive,
obumbrata  
et velata  
michi quoque niteris;  
nunc per ludum  
dorsum nudum  
fero tui sceleris.

Sors salutis  
et virtutis  
michi nunc contraria,  
est affectus  
et defectus  
semper in angaria.  
Hac in hora  
sine mora  
corde pulsum tangite;  
quod per sortem  
sternit fortem,  
me cum omnes plangite!

2. Chorus  
Fortune plango vulnera  
stillantibus ocellis,  
quod sua michi munera  
subtrahit rebellis.

Verum est, quod legitur  
fronte capillata,  
sed plerumque sequitur  
occasio calvata.

In Fortune solio  
sederum elatus,  
prosperitatis vario  
flore coronatus;

quicquid enim florui  
felix et beatus,  
nunc a summo corru  
gloria privatus.

Fortune rota volvitur:  
descendo minoratus;  
alter in altum tollitur;  
nimis exultatus

shadowed  
and veiled,  
you also act on me;  
now for your entertainment  
my back is bared  
because of your villainy.

The lot of safety  
and of virtue  
to me is now denied;  
it is both gain  
and loss,  
but always subservient.  
Right now,  
without delay,  
feel my hearts' beating,  
because through fate  
the strong are defeated.  
All mourn with me!

Wounded by Fortune, I lament  
with weeping eyes,  
for from me her gifts  
she withdrew with hostility.

It is true, what is said  
of a head of hair,  
that often there follows  
the downfall of baldness.

On Fortune's throne  
I sat exalted,  
crowned in prosperity  
with diverse flowers.

Yes, once I flourished,  
happy and blessed;  
now from the summit I have fallen,  
deprived of glory.

Fortune's wheel turns;  
I go down to defeat.  
When one or another is raised up,  
much too proudly
rex sedet in vertice —
he sits like a king at the top —
caveat ruinam!
beware his ruin!
nam sub axe legimus
for beneath the axle we behold
Hecubam reginam.
[the fallen] Queen Hecuba [of Troy].

PART I. PRIMO VERE (Springtime)

3. Chorus
Veris leta facies
Spring's mortal face
mundo propinatur,
is toasted by the world;
hiemalis acies
Winter's harshness,
victa iam fugatur,
already overcome, is routed.
in vestitu vario
In colored robes
Flora principatur,
Flora reigns,
nemorum dulcisono
whose sweet song is
qui cantu celebratur.
celebrated from the groves.

Flore fusus gremio
In the flowers covering her lap
Phebus novo more
Phoebus, once more
risum dat, hoc vario
laughing, is already crowded
iam stipate flore.
by colored blooms.
Zephyrus nectareo
The nectared west wind
spirans in odore;
breathes forth scents;
certatim pro bravio
competing for the prize,
curramus in amore.
let us hasten our loving.
Cytharizat cantico
Musically sings the
dulcis Philomena,
sweet nightingale Philomena,
flore rident vario
while colored flowers laugh
prata iam serena;
in the serene fields;
salit cetus avium
a flock of birds flies
silve per amena,
through the pleasant forest,
chorus promit virginum
while a choir of maidens tells
iam gaudia millena.
of joys by the thousand.

4. Baritone
Omnia Sol temperat
The Sun tempers all
purus et subtilis,
with purity and delicacy;
novo mundo reserat
a new world's face
faciem Aprilis;
is unlocked by April;
ad Amorem properat
the young man's spirit,
animus herilis,
and pleasure rules
et iocundis imperat
as god of youth.
deus puerilis.
Rerum tanta novitas
in sollemni vere
et veris auctoritas
iubet nos gaudere,
vias prebet solitas,
et in tuo vere
fides est et probitas
tuum retinere.

Ama me fideliter!
fidem meam nota:
de corde totaliter
et ex mente tota,
sum presentialiter
absens in remota:
quisquis amat taliter,
volvitur in rota.

5. Chorus
Ecce gratum
et optatum
ver reducit gaudia,
purpuratum
floret pratum,
sol serenat omnia.

Iamiam cedant tristia!
Estas redit,
nunc recedit
Hyemis sevitia.

Iam liquescit
et decrescit
grando, nix et cetera;
bruma fugit,
et iam sugit
Ver Estatis ubera;

illi mens est misera,
qui nec vivit,
nec lascivit
sub estatis dextera.

The universal renewal
of recurring Spring
and her authority
compel us to rejoice.
The streets offer solitude;
to your true love's
trust and honor
hold fast.

Love me faithfully!
take note of my fidelity.
With all my heart
and my entire mind
I am with you,
although far apart.
Whoever loves so much
revolves on the wheel [of torture].

Behold, gracious
and desirable
Spring brings back her joys;
bepurpled,
the field blooms;
the sun calms everything.

Now let sorrows be banished!
Summer returns;
now recedes
Winter's severity.

Now melts
and diminishes
the hail, snow and so forth;
coldness flees,
and now nurses
Spring at Summer's breast;

his mind is miserable
who neither lives
nor cavorts
at Summer's side.
Gloriantur et letantur in melle dulcedinis, qui conantur ut utantur premio Cupidinis; simus jussu Cypridis gloriantes et letantes pares esse Paridis.

They rejoice and delight in sweetest honey who attempt to utilize Cupid's reward; let us obey Venus, glorified and joyous to be the equals of Paris.

UF DEM ANGER (In the Meadow)

6. Tanz (Dance: Orchestra)

7. Chorus
Floret silva nobilis floribus et foliis.
Ubi est antiquus meus amicus?
Hinc equitavit, eia, quis me amabit?

Floret silva undique,
nah mime gesellen ist mir wê.
Gruonet der walt allenthalben, wâ ist min geselle als lange?
Der ist min geriten hinnen,
O wî, wer sol mich minnen?

The noble forest blooms with flowers and foliage.
Where is that former lover of mine?
He has ridden away; Alas, who will love me?
The forest blooms everywhere, but where is a lover for me?
The wood is green all over, why does my lover take so long?
He has ridden off; Oh woe, who will love me?

8. Sopranos and Chorus
Chramer, gip die varwe mir, die min wengel roete, damit ich die jungen man an ir dank der minnenliebe noete.

Seht mich an, jungen man! Lat mich iu gevallen!

Seller, give me the color that reddens my cheeks so that I can make the young man love me in his thoughts.
Look at me, young man! Let me enslave you!
Minnet, tugentliche man
minnecliche frouwen!
Minne tuot iu hoch gemuot
unde lat iuch in hohen
eren schouwen.

Make love, virtuous men,
charming women!
Love makes you highly natured
and lets you appear
in high esteem.

Seht mich an,
yungen man!
Lat mich iu gevallen!

Look at me,
young man!
Let me enslave you!

Wol dir, Werlt, daz du bist
also freudenriche!
Ich will dir sin undertan
durch din liebe immer sicherliche.

Hail, world, that you be
so rich in joy!
I wish you to serve me
through your ever prosperous love.

Seht mich an,
yungen man!
Lat mich iu gevallen!

Look at me,
young man!
Let me enslave you!

9. Reie (Round Dance: Orchestra) and Songs (Chorus)
Swaz hie gat umbe,
daz sint allez megede,
die wellent ân man
alle disen sumer gan!

Here they go around,
do all the maidens,
wishing to go without a man
all this summer!

Chume, chum, geselle min,
ih enbite harte din.

Come, come, my beloved,
I urgently bid you.

Suzer rosanvarwer munt,
chum un mache mich gesunt.

Sweet rose-colored mouth,
come and make me well.

Swaz hie gat umbe,
daz sint allez megede,
die wellent ân man
alle disen sumer gan!

Here they go around,
do all the maidens,
wishing to go without a man
all this summer!

10. Chorus
Were diu werlt alle min
von deme mere unze an den Rin,
des wolt ih mih darben,
daz diu chünegin von Engelant
lege an miner armen.

Were this world all mine
from the sea up to the Rhine,
I would forsake it all,
if the queen of England
lay in my arms.
PART II. IN TABERNA (In the Tavern)

11. Baritone

Estuans interius
ira vehementi
in amaritudine
loquor mee menti:
factus de materia
cinis elementi,
similis sum folio,
de quo ludunt venti.

Cum sit enim proprium
viro sapienti
supra petram ponere
sedem fundamenti,
stultus ego comparor
fluvio labenti,
sub eodem tramite
nunquam permanenti.

Feror ego veluti
sine nauta navis,
ut per vias aeris
vaga fertur avis;
non me tenet vincula,
non me tenet clavis,
quero mihi similes
et adiungor pravis.

Mihi cordis gravitas
res videtur gravis,
iocus est amabilis
dulciorque favis;
quicquid Venus imperat,
labor est suavis,
que nunquam in cordibus
habitat ignavis.
Via lata gradior
more iuventutis,
imperit et vitiis
immemor virtutis,
voluptatis avidus
magis quam salvutis,
mortuus in anima
curam gero cutis.

Boiling inwardly,
madly vehement,
in bitterness
I say to myself:
what is material
resolves to ashes;
I am like a leaf
with which the wind plays.

Though a wise man
selects a house site,
placing his foundation
upon bedrock,
foolish me, I am like
a flowing river,
ever remaining upon
the same path.

I move about like
a ship without a pilot
or a bird blown about
aimlessly in the wind.
No chains hold me fast;
no key locks me down.
I search out those like me
and join their depravity.

To me, heaviness of heart
seems a thing too grave;
jesting is pleasant,
sweeter than the honeycomb.
Venus's commands
make easy work,
never to be found
in faint hearts.
I travel the broad road
in youthful manner,
implicated in vice
and unmindful of virtue.
Avid for sensuality
rather than well-being,
dead in soul,
I care only for the flesh.
12. Tenor and Male Chorus

Olim lacus colueram,
oлим pulcher extiteram,
dum cignus ego fueram.

Miser, miser! modo niger
et ustus fortiter!

Girat, regirat garcifer,
me rogus urit fortiter:
propinat me nunc dapifer.

Miser, miser! modo niger
et ustus fortiter!

Nunc in scutella iaceo,
et volitare nequeo,
dentes frendentes video:

Miser, miser! modo niger
et ustus fortiter!

Once the lake was my abode;
Once exceedingly beautiful
as a swan was I.

Poor me, poor me! blackened
and thoroughly burned!

The cook turns me over and over;
the fire burns me completely.
Now the waiter serves me.

Poor me, poor me! blackened
and thoroughly burned!

Now I lie on the platter
and cannot fly;
gnashing teeth I see.

Poor me, poor me! blackened
and thoroughly burned!

13. Baritone and Male Chorus

Ego! Ego sum abbas Cucaniensis
et consilium meum est cum bibulis,
et in secta Decii voluntas mea est,
et qui mane me quesierit in taberna
post vesperam nudus egredietur,
et sic denudatus veste clamabit:

Wafna! Wafna!
quid fecisti sors turpissima?
Nostre vite gaudia
abstulisti omnia!
Wafna! Wafna!

Ha ha!

I! I am the Abbot of the Land of Fools,
and I take my counsel with drinkers,
and I belong to the Decius* clan,
and whoever joins me in the tavern over dice
will end up naked by evening,
and thus deprived of clothing will cry:

Woe! Woe!
What have you done, foulest fate?
All the pleasures of this life
are taken away!
Woe! Woe!

Ha ha!

*Decius: the invented Saint of dice-throwers
14. Male Chorus

In taberna quando sumus,
non curamus quid sit humus,
sed ad ludum properamus,
cui semper insudamus.
Quid agatur in taberna,
ubi nummus est pincerna,
hoc est opus ut queratur
si quid loquar, audiatur.

Quidam ludunt, quidam bibunt,
quidam indiscrete vivunt.
Sed in ludo qui morantur,
ex his quidam denudantur,
quidam ibi vestiuntur,
quidam saccis induuntur.
Ibi nullus timet mortem,
sed pro Baccho mittunt sortem:

Primo pro nummata vini,
ex hac bibunt libertini;
semel bibunt pro captivis,
post hec bibunt ter pro vivis,
quater pro Christianis cunctis,
quinquies pro fidelibus defunctis,
sexies pro sororibus vanis,
septies pro militibus silvanis.

Octies pro fratribus perversis,
nonies pro monachis dispersis,
decies pro navigantibus,
undecies pro discordantibus,
duodecies pro penitentibus,
tredecies pro iter agentibus.
Tam pro papa quam pro rege
bibunt omnes sine lege.

When we are in the tavern,
we don't ponder the nature of death,
but hasten to gambling,
which always makes us sweat.
What happens in the tavern,
where coins are the tender,
this is the task that is called for;
that which I say, let it be heard:

Some gamble, some drink,
some live indiscreetly.
But of those who tarry at gambling,
some lose their clothing,
some become [better] attired,
some are dressed in sack-cloth.
There no one fears death,
but throw their lot with Bacchus,

First for the cost of the wine,
of which they drink freely,
next they drink for all captives,
then they drink thrice for the living,
four times for all Christians,
five times for the faithful departed,
six for vain sisters,
seven for soldiers in the woods.

Eight for brothers who have gone wrong,
nine for absent monks,
ten for the sailors
eleven for the quarrelsome,
twelve for the penitent,
thirteen for those who travel.
Equally for the pope as for the king
they drink for all without exception.
Bibit hera, bibit herus,  
bibit miles, bibit clerus,  
bibit ille, bibit illa,  
bibit servus cum ancilla,  
bibit velox, bibit piger,  
bibit albus, bibit niger,  
bibit constans, bibit vagus,  
bibit rudis, bibit magus.  
Bibit pauper et egrotus,  
bibit exul et ignotus,  
bibit puer, bibit canus,  
bibit presul et decanus,  
bibit soror, bibit frater,  
bibit anus, bibit mater,  
bibit iste, bibit ille,  
bibunt centum, bibunt mille.

Parum sexcente nummate  
durant, cum immoderate  
bibunt omnes sine meta,  
quamvis bibant mente leta;  
sic nos rodunt omnes gentes,  
et sic erimus egentes.  
Qui nos rodunt confundantur  
et cum iustis non scribantur.  
Io, io, io!

Mistress drinks, master drinks,  
soldier drinks, cleric drinks,  
he drinks, she drinks,  
servant drinks with housemaid,  
swift one drinks, slow one drinks,  
white one drinks, black one drinks,  
stay-at-home drinks, wanderer drinks,  
bumpkin drinks, wise man drinks.  
pauper drinks and sick man,  
exile drinks and unknown,  
child drinks, old man drinks,  
prelate drinks and chorister,  
sister drinks, brother drinks,  
old maid drinks, mother drinks,  
this one drinks, that one drinks,  
hundreds drink, thousands drink.

Six hundred [drinks] are gone  
too soon, when they all drink  
immoderately, limitlessly,  
though we drink with easy mind.  
Hence all people disparage us,  
and hence we shall be destitute.  
Let those who scold us be damned  
and not listed with the just.  
Hi, hi, hi!

PART III. COUR D'AMOURS (The Court of Love)

15. Boy's Choir and Soprano

Amor volat undique,  
captus est libidine.  
Iuvenes, iuvencule  
coniunguntur merito.

Si quanta sine socio,  
caret omni gaudio;  
tenet noctis infima  
       sub intimo  
cordis in custodia:

fit res amarissima.

Love (Cupid) flutters everywhere,  
making each the captive of desire.  
Young men, young women  
are fittingly joined together.

When she has no partner,  
a girl misses all joy.  
She keeps the dark of night  
locked deep  
in her heart.

This is the bitterest fate.
16. Baritone  
*Dies, nox et omnia*  
*Day, night and everything*  
*michi sunt contraria,*  
*are against me.*  
*virginum colloquia*  
The conversation of maidens  
*me fay planszer,*  
makes me weep,  
*oy suvenz suspirer,*  
fills me with sighs  
*plu me fay temer.*  
and makes me fearful.

*O sodales, ludite,*  
O comrades, make sport,  
vos qui scitis dicite,*  
say what is obvious.  
michi mesto parcite,*  
Spare me in my misery;  
grand ey dolur,*  
great is my sadness,  
attamen consulite*  
but counsel me  
per voster honur.*  
through your honor.

*Tua pulchra facies,*  
Your lovely face  
*me fay planszer milies,*  
makes me weep a thousand tears;  
pectus habet glacies.*  
your breast contains ice.  
A remender*  
Restore me  
statim vivus fierem*  
to full life  
per un baser.*  
with a kiss.

17. Soprano  
*Stetit puella*  
There stood a maiden  
rufa tunica;*  
in a red tunic.  
*si quis eam tetigit,*  
If it was but touched,  
tunica crepuit.*  
the tunic rustled.  
Eia.*  
Ay!

*Stetit puella*  
There stood a maiden  
tamquam rosula;*  
just like a rose,  
facie splenduit,*  
her face radiant,  
*os eius floruit.*  
her mouth like a flower.  
Eia.*  
Ay!

18. Baritone and Chorus  
*Circa mea pectora*  
Around my heart,  
multa sunt suspiria*  
many are the sighs  
de tua pulchritudine,*  
for your beauty,  
que me ledunt misere.*  
which oppresses me wretchedly.

*Manda liet, manda liet,*  
I call gently;  
min geselle chumet niet!*  
my dear comes not!
**Tui lucent oculi**
sicut solis radii,
sicut splendor fulguris
lucem donat tenebris.

Your eyes shine like the sun's rays, like the lightning's flash giving light to the darkness.

*Manda liet, manda liet,*
*min geselle chumet niet!*

May God, may the gods will what my mind proposes: that I release the chains of her virginity.

*Vellet deus, vellent dii,*
*quod mente proposui:*
*ut eius virginea*
*reserassem vincula.*

I call gently; my dear comes not!

*Manda liet, manda liet,*
*min geselle chumet niet!*

19. Male Chorus

*Si puer cum puellula*
*moraretur in cellula*
*felixconiunctio.*

If a fellow with a lass lingers in a room, happy is their union.

*Amore suscresente,*
*pariter e medio*
*avulso procul tedio,*
*fit ludus ineffabilis*
*membris, lacertis, labiis.*

Love grows greater between them as shame is driven off; there occurs ineffable play of limbs, arms, lips.

*Si puer cum puellula*
*moraretur in cellula*
*felixconiunctio.*

If a fellow lingers with a lass in a room, happy is their union.

20. Double Chorus

*Veni, veni, venias,*
*ne me mori facias,*
*hyrca, hyrce,*
*nazaza, trillirivos!*  

Come, come, do come; don't make me die, Hyrcan lad, Hyrcan lass, heia-hey, tralalala!

*Pulchra tibi facies,*
*oculorum acies,*
*capillorum series,*
*o quam clara species!*
*Rosa rubicundior,*
*lilio candidior,*
*omnibus formosior,*
*semper in te glorior!*  
*Nazaza!*

Beautiful is your face, your bright eyes, your hair style — oh what a clear complexion! Redder than the rose, whiter than the lily, fairest of all, I glory in you always! Heia-hey!
21. Soprano

In trutina mentis dubia
fluctuant contraria
lascivus amor et pudicitia.

My doubtful mind is in the balance,
fluctuating between opposites:
voluptuous love and chastity.

Sed eligo quod video,
collum iugo prebo;
ad iugum tamen suave transeo.

But I choose what I see;
I offer my neck to the yoke.
To the yoke I willingly submit.

22. Soprano, Baritone, Chorus and Boys' Choir

Tempus est iocundum,
o virgines,
modo congaudete,
vos iuvenes.

Oh, oh, oh,
totus floreo!
Iam amore virginali
totus ardeo,
novus amor est,
quo pereo.

The season is pleasant,
oh maidens;
time for rejoicing,
you young men.

Oh, oh, oh,
I'm all aflower!
Already with love of maidens
am I all afire;
the love is new
with which I perish.

Mea me confortat
promissio,
mea me deportat
negatio.

Oh, oh, oh,
totus floreo!
Iam amore virginali
totus ardeo,
novus amor est,
quo pereo.

My promise
comforts me;
my refusal
dispirits me.

Oh, oh, oh,
I'm all aflower!
Already with love of maidens
am I all afire;
the love is new
with which I perish.

Tempore brumali
vir patiens,
animo vernali
lasciviens.

Oh, oh, oh,
totus floreo,
iam amore virginali
totus ardeo,
novus amor est
quo pereo.

In winter time
a man is patient;
with the breath of spring
he is lustful.

Oh, oh, oh,
I'm all aflower!
Already with love of maidens
am I all afire;
the love is new
with which I perish.
Mea mecum ludit
virginitas,
mea me detrudit
simplicitas.
Oh, oh, oh,
totus floreo!
Iam amore virginali
totus ardeo,
novus amor est,
quo pereuo.

My virginity
teases me;
my innocence
disheartens me.
Oh, oh, oh,
I'm all aflower!
Already with love of maidens
am I all afire;
the love is new
with which I perish.

Veni, domicella,
cum gudio,
veni, veni, pulchra,
iam pereuo.
Oh, oh, oh,
totus floreo,
iam amore virginali
totus ardeo,
novus amor est
quo pereuo.

Come, mistress,
with joy;
come, come, beauty;
I am perishing.
Oh, oh, oh,
I'm all aflower!
Already with love of maidens
am I all afire;
the love is new
with which I perish.

23. Soprano
Dulcissime,
totam tibi subdo me!

Sweetest one,
to you I give myself completely!

BLANZIFLOR ET HELENA

24. Chorus
Ave formosissima,
gemma pretiosa,
ave decus virginum,
virgo gloriae,
ave mundi luminar,
ave mundi rosa,
Blanziflor et Helena,
Venus generous.

Hail, most beautiful one,
gem most priceless;
hail, glory of maidenhood,
Virgin most glorious;
hail, light of the world;
hail, rose of the earth:
Blanziflor* and Helena,
Venus most generous.

*Heroine of a popular medieval saga
25. Chorus

O Fortuna,
velut Luna
statu variabilis,
semper crescis
aut decrescis;
vita detestabilis
nunc obdurat
et tunc curat
ludo mentis aciem,
egestatem,
potestatem
dissolvit ut glaciem.

Sors immanis
et inanis,
rota tu volubilis,
status malus,
vana salus
semper dissolubilis,
obumbrata
et velata
michi quoque niteris;
nunc per ludum
dorsum nudum
fero tui sceleris.

Sors salutis
et virtutis
michi nunc contraria,
est affectus
et defectus
semper in angaria.
Hac in hora
sine mora
corde pulsum tangite;
quod per sortem
sternit fortem,
mecum omnes plangite!

Oh, Fortune,
like the moon
ever varying,
always increasing
or diminishing;
detestable life
now is harsh
and then it tends
playfully the mind's pain
and destitution;
power
it dissolves like ice.

Fate, monstrous
and empty,
you are a turning wheel,
an evil state,
a vain shelter,
always destructive,
shadowed
and veiled,
you also act on me;
now for your entertainment
a bared back
I bear for your villainy.

The lot of safety
and of virtue
to me is now denied;
it is both gain
and loss,
but always subservient.
Right now,
without delay,
feel my hearts' beating,
because through fate
the strong are defeated,
all mourn with me!

— Notes and English translation by Nick Jones
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