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The ballade “Puisque je sui fumeux plains de fumée” appears with music composed around 1380 by Jehan Simon de Haspre in the manuscript Chantilly, Musée Condé 1047. Ja. de Noyon is mentioned in the words which follow the last line of text, but it is generally thought that the poetry was written by Haspre as well, possibly for the eccentric circle of men associated with Jean Fumée. The French text is taken from *One Hundred Ballades, Rondeaux and Virelais from the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Nigel Wilkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 44–5.

Puisque je sui fumeux plains de fumée
Fumer m'estuet, car se je ne fumoye
Ceulz qui dient que j'ay ceste fumée,
Par fumée je les desmentiroye.
Et nepourquant jamais ne fumeroye
De fumer qui fust contre raÿson;
Se je fume, c'est ma compleccïon
Quolerique qu'ainsi me fayt fumer.
Je fumeray sanz personne grever;
C'est bien fumé, y n'i a point d'outrayge
Quant on fume sans fayre autruy damage.
Fumée n'est à nulli refusée;
Fume qui veult, tenir ne m'en porroie.
J'ay en fumant mainte chose fit rimée,
Encore sçay que maïs n'i avenroye
Se par fumer en fumant n'i pensoye.
Fumée rent bien consolacion
Aucune fois tost tribulacion;
On se puet bien en fumant deliter,
Home fumeux puet en fumant mover
Et si pluseurs profit et avantage
Quant on fume sans fayre autruy damage.

Se j'eusse la cervellë empeinée
 De Socratés si comme je vodroye,
 J'eusse bien la teste plus temperée,
 Car onques ne fuma par nulle voye.
 Chascuns n'est pas clavis de telle corroye,
 Car tel fume que peu s'en parçoyt on;
 Tant a du cuer plus de confusion
 Quant i ne puet sa fumée monstrar,
 Ou il n'ose pour pãour d'enpirer.
 Je ne tieng pas c'on ayt le cuer volage
Quant on fume sans fayre autruy damage.

Since I am boiling mad, I'll let off steam,
 For if I do, I know full well that they
 Who say I'm full of hot air, it would seem,
 Will, by my spewing forth, know it's no play.
 And yet I never sputter much, I say,
 Unless I think some spouting off I need;
 My temper is a fiery one, indeed;
 So if I seethe with anger, don't despair—
 My scalding wit shall never cause one care.
 It's fine to fume, and there is no harm done,
 If you can get steamed up yet burn no one.
 For every man must sizzle in his time;
 Let him who would, go stew and simmer well;
 For I have found that oft the perfect rhyme
 Comes when I'm under pressure, truth to tell.
 The kernel would be charcoal if it fell
 Without first swelling up, into the fire;
 I praise the unrelieved relief of ire:
 Those hot under the collar work their will,
 And those who flare up take of joy their fill.
 It's profitable, when all's said and done,
 If you can get steamed up yet burn no one.
 Had I but had, as I wished in my youth,
 The lofty brain of Socrates, I vow,
 My unwatched pot would not have boiled, in sooth,
 And I'd be even-tempered, even now.
 But some of us may only wonder how

It is that others blow it off with ease;
For some it would be currying disease
Were they to bottle up the rage within—
Heartburn would be the least bodily sin—
I count him not half-baked, not anyone,
If he can get steamed up yet burn no one.

Sharon King

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