

Ballade Des Dames De Temps Jadis

Dictes moy ou, n'en quel pays,
Est Flora la belle Rommaine,
Archipiades ne Thaïs,
Qui fut sa cousine germaine,
Echo parlant quant bruyt on maine
Dessus riviere ou sus estan,
Qui beaulté ot trop plus q'humaine.
Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan?

Ou est la tres sage Helloïs,
Pour qui chastré fut et puis moyne
Pierre Esbaillart a Saint Denis?
Pour son amour ot ceste essoyne.
Semblablement, ou est la royne
Qui commanda que Buridan
Fust geté en ung sac en Saine?
Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan?

La royne Blanche comme lis
Qui chantoit a voix de seraine,
Berte au grand pié, Beatris, Alis,
Haremburgis qui tint le Maine,
Et Jehanne la bonne Lorraine
Qu'Englois brulerent a Rouan;
Ou sont ilz, ou, Vierge souveraine?
Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan?

Prince, n'enquerez de sepmaine
Ou elles sont, ne de cest an,
Qu'a ce reffrain ne vous remaine:
Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan?

Ballad Of The Ladies Of Yore

Tell me where, in what country,
Is Flora the beautiful Roman,
Archipiada or Thais
Who was first cousin to her once,
Echo who speaks when there's a sound
On a pond or a river
Whose beauty was more than human?
But where are the snows of yesteryear?

Where is the leamed Heloise
For whom they castrated Pierre Abelard
And made him a monk at Saint-Denis,
For his love he took this pain,
Likewise where is the queen
Who commanded that Buridan
Be thrown in a sack into the Seine?
But where are the snows of yesteryear?

The queen white as a lily
Who sang with a siren's voice,
Big-footed Bertha, Beatrice, Alice,
Haremburgis who held Maine
And Jeanne the good maid of Lorraine
Whom the English bunt at Rouen, where,
Where are they, sovereign Virgin?
But where are the snows of yesteryear?

Prince, don't ask me in a week
or in a year what place they are;
I can only give you this refrain:
Where are the snows of yesteryear?

François Villon (1431 – 1480)