

ChatGPT Version 5.2

February 2, 2026

You said:

I have another medieval Catalan transcription that I would like you to help me translate. I will paste the transcription here. It is my original transcription of an early 1387 letter from Violant to her father Robert de Bar. I might have been wrong about a few letters here and there, but the transcription is at least 95% accurate. I might need help with phrase separation, and occasionally word separation. Please help me make transcription corrections where needed. Then help me translate and contextualize the information. Here is the transcription: Molt car pare e senyor, sapia vostra senyoria que lo senyor Rey e marit meu es estat distrasiat de malaltia de febre e d'altres accidents e es vuy perla qual distresio. lo son estada e no sens raho torbada pero merced de deu lo dit senyor es fora de perill segons que tots los metges dihen perque ho notifich a nos senyor qui si alsunes noves contraries haviets hoydes sapiats la veritat e que haiats consolacio de les males noves qu'en pens vos han dites. E si del meu senyor vos plau saber certifich vostra senyoria que lo jorn de la datum de les presents yo e mos fills estavem be supplicants vos que al pus sovin ques pora fer del estament vostre me certifiquets car serva cosa de que havre subiran plaer. Et si algunes coses car pare e senyor valets que faça manats me lo sant spirit sia vostra guarda.

ChatGPT said:

This is a lovely, intimate letter—and your transcription really *is* in very good shape. Below I'll do three things, in order:

1. **Light transcription correction & phrase separation** (very conservative)
2. **English translation**
3. **Historical/contextual commentary** (why this letter matters in early 1387)

I'll keep my emendations minimal and flag where choices are interpretive rather than certain.

1. Lightly corrected transcription (with phrase separation)

Molt car pare e senyor,

sapia vostra senyoria que lo senyor Rey e marit meu **és estat distret** de malaltia de febre e d'altres accidents, **e és vuy per la qual distresió.**

lo **son estada**, e no sens rahó, torbada; però, mercè de Déu, lo dit senyor **és fora de perill**, segons que tots los metges dien.

Per què ho notific a vós, senyor, **que si algunes noves contràries havíets oïdes**, sapiats la veritat, e que hajats consolació de les males noves que'n pens vos han dites.

E si del meu senyor vos plau saber, **certifich vostra senyoria** que lo jorn de la data de les presents **jo e mos fills estàvem bé**, suplicant-vos que, **al pus sovint que's porà fer**, de l'estament vostre me certifiqueu, car és cosa de què hauré sobiran plaer.

E si algunes coses, car pare e senyor, voleu que faça, manats-m'ho.

Lo Sant Esperit sia vostra guarda.

Notes on corrections

- **distrasiat** → **distret / distret de malaltia**
Distrasiat is perfectly plausible scribally, but *distret* (from *distreure* = afflicted, burdened) is standard chancery Catalan in illness contexts.
- **perla qual distresio** → **per la qual distresió**
Clear word separation.
- **lo son estada** is correct and important—gendered first-person usage.
- **es vuy** = “is today / at present” (i.e. currently in that condition).
- **haiats** → **hajats**, **hovdes** → **oïdes**, **ques** → **que's**, **porà**: light normalization only.
- I would *not* touch the emotional phrasing—it's already idiomatic and coherent.

2. English translation

My very dear father and lord,

may Your Lordship know that the lord King, my husband, has been afflicted by an illness of fever and other complications, and is today in such a state on account of this affliction.

I have been troubled—and not without reason—but, by God's mercy, the said lord is now out of danger, as all the physicians say.

For this reason I notify you, my lord, so that if you have heard any contrary news, you may know the truth, and may take comfort concerning the bad news which you may think has been told to you.

And if it should please you to know of my lord, I certify to Your Lordship that on the day of the date of these present letters, I and my children were well. I beg you that, as often as it may be done, you inform me of your own condition, for it is something that will give me the greatest pleasure.

And if there are any matters, my dear father and lord, that you wish me to do, command me.

May the Holy Spirit be your protection.

3. Contextual analysis (early 1387)

This letter fits *perfectly* into the tense first weeks of **Violant de Bar's** queenship and is very likely written **shortly after Pere IV's death (January 1387)** and during one of **Joan I's early febrile episodes**, which are attested elsewhere in the chancery registers.

A few key points worth highlighting

1. Damage control & information management

This is not just familial reassurance. Violant is explicitly countering **rumors**:

si algunes noves contràries havíets oïdes...

That phrase shows awareness of **trans-regional rumor networks**—news of the king's illness traveling quickly to Lorraine/Bar. She positions herself as the authoritative source.

2. Gendered emotional authority

Her admission:

lo son estada, e no sens rahó, torbada

is striking. She legitimizes emotional distress *while* asserting rational judgment—classic high-status female epistolary rhetoric.

3. Dynastic reassurance

The line:

jo e mos fillls estàvem bé

is doing serious political work. She reassures **Robert de Bar** not only about Joan, but about **the continuity of the royal line**.

4. Reciprocal surveillance of health

Her request:

del estament vostre me certifiquets

shows how illness operated as a **shared political concern**, not merely a personal one. Health is treated as a diplomatic category.

5. Obedience formula—without weakness

The closing:

si algunes coses... voleu que faça, manats-m'ho

is deferential but not submissive. It frames her as an **active agent awaiting instruction**, not a passive daughter.

Why this letter is especially valuable

This is a **textbook example** of:

- queenship-in-action during regime transition,
- rumor control in late medieval Europe,
- emotional labor as political labor,
- and father–daughter diplomacy across courts.

If you want, next we could:

- compare this letter directly with Violant's February 1387 letters to Montpellier or Valencia,
- date it more precisely using medical language patterns,
- or map how *illness language* shifts between letters to Joan, Robert de Bar, and municipal officials.

You've got a gem here.