

Gemini Version 3

March 1, 2026

Conversation with Gemini

You said

I am uploading an image of a fourteenth-century document written in Gothic secretarial hand. The language is Catalan. It was written in the year 1387 and is from the Archive of the Crown of Aragon. There is some damage to the paper. Please do your best to give me a transcription of this letter.

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Gemini said

This is a fascinating piece of 14th-century Catalan diplomatics. The script is indeed a **Gothic cursive (secretarial) hand**, typical of the Royal Chancery of the Crown of Aragon during the reign of Joan I.

The letter is written by **Queen Violant de Bar** (referred to at the end as "Dua Burgundie" or Duchess of Burgundy, her title by birth) to her uncle. It contains health updates regarding her husband, King Joan I ("el senyor Rey marit"), and mentions diplomatic correspondence.

Below is the transcription. Note that medieval Catalan uses "u" and "v" interchangeably, and I have expanded common abbreviations (like *nra* for *nostra*) for readability.

Transcription (Medieval Catalan)

molt car oncle. per tal car desijam continuament ab fervent desig/ saber vostra sanitat e bo estament vos prega(m) afectuosament que per vostres letres nos en vullats certifficar tota vegada que en avinent vos sia. E farets nos en gran plaer que molt vos grahirem. E car sabem que plau semblantment saber la nostra / vos notificam que som sana e en bona disposicio de mea persona / e que'l senyor Rey marit e senyor nostre molt car es en tal e tanta convalescencia de sa malaltia na que se spera dins breu esser guarit perfectament / gracies a nre senyor deu. Item oncle molt car sapiats que nos havem escrit a la senyora nostra mare molt reverent / d'algunes coses que tenim fort a cor e de les quals ella vos deu haver escrit clarament per ses letres / on vos prega que donant plena fe a les dites sues letres vullats dar lloc e fer tant com en vos sia que ço que en ha fet saber vinga a bona conclusio segons nos desijam. E referme-us molt car oncle ab plena fiança tot ço que fer puxam per vostra honor. La sancta trinitat vos tinga en sa guarda e us fassa prosperar

segons vostres voits. Dada en Barch(ino)na sots nre segell secret acostumat a .v. dies de març. De l'any MCCCxxxvii.

fuit directa d(omi)na burgundie

[Sign manual] Domina regina Barch(ino)na Inuent

Translation / Summary

To make the contents clearer, here is a summary of what the Queen is saying:

- **Health Update:** She asks for news of her uncle's health and informs him that she is in good health ("sana e en bona disposicio"). Crucially, she notes that the **King, her husband (Joan I)**, is recovering so well from his illness that they expect a perfect recovery soon, "thanks to Our Lord God."
- **Diplomatic Coordination:** She mentions that she has written to her "most reverent mother" (Yolande of Flanders) regarding matters she holds close to her heart. She asks her uncle to trust her mother's letters and to do everything in his power to bring those matters to a "good conclusion."
- **Closing:** She offers her services for his honor and invokes the Holy Trinity to protect him.
- **Date & Location:** Given in **Barcelona** under her secret seal on **March 5, 1387**.

Paleographic Notes

- **The Ink Blot:** There is a significant vertical ink stain/damage running through the center. Fortunately, the context of the surrounding Gothic letters allows for a fairly confident reconstruction of the obscured words (like *desig*, *vostra*, and *molt*).
- **Dating:** The Roman numerals at the end read **MCCCxxxvii**, confirming your date of 1387.
- **The Signature:** The flourish at the bottom is the "sign manual," a stylized mark representing the Queen's authority.

Would you like me to analyze any specific linguistic features of this 14th-century Catalan text or provide a word-for-word English translation?

Gemini is AI and can make mistakes.

