

Gemini Version 3

March 8, 2026

Conversation with Gemini

You said

I have another letter in Catalan from 1387, written in fourteenth century Gothic Secretarial hand. The lines below the main letter are written in Latin. Please do your best to transcribe.

Gemini said

This is a beautiful example of a 14th-century royal letter. The script is indeed a **Gothic Secretarial** (also known as *Bastarda* or *Cancelleresca*), characterized by its fluid, cursive loops and the frequent use of abbreviations (called *sigla*).

Based on the date (August 22, 1387) and the content, this letter is from **Violant de Bar**, Queen of Aragon and wife of King John I (Joan I). She is writing to a "cousin" (likely the King of France or a high-ranking French noble, given the Latin note at the bottom) to report on the King's health.

Transcription

Catalan Text

Molt alt e poderoso princep e cosi molt car Desijants continuament ab fervent desitj saber vostra sanitat e bon estament vos pregam tan affectuosament co podem que per vostres honorables letres nos en vullats certifficar tota vegada que si en nenguna car cosa ha de que fer-vos plaer molt gran que fort nos grahirem. E car sabem que semblantment vos plauria saber nostre bon estat vos notificam que nos e nostres infants som sans e en bona disposicio de nostres persones. E quel senyor Rey marit e senyor nostre molt car es en tanta convalescencia de sa malaltia que dins breu s'espera cert guarir perfectament. Gras a nostre senyor Deu. E si alcunes coses vos plaen cosi molt car que nos fer puscam fets-les nos saber e seran complides encontinent. La santa trinitat vos tinga en sa guarda e faça tot temps prosperar segons vostres vots. Dada en Barcelona sots nostre segell secret a xxij dies d'Agost l'any Mil CCC Lxxxvij. La Reyna.

Latin Notations (Bottom)

- **Left:** *fuit directa Regi Francie* (It was directed to the King of France)

- **Right:** *Ira p[er] ma[num] de Barth[olome]u Pruost* (Letter [written] by the hand of Barthomeu Pruost)
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Translation (Modern English)

Very high and powerful prince and very dear cousin. Continually desiring with fervent longing to know of your health and good condition, we pray you as affectionately as we can that, through your honorable letters, you would certify us of it; for if there is any thing in which we could do you a great pleasure, we would be very grateful.

And because we know that similarly it would please you to know of our good state, we notify you that we and our children are healthy and in good physical disposition. And that the lord King, [my] husband and our very dear lord, is in such convalescence from his illness that within a short time it is expected he will certainly recover perfectly. Thanks to our Lord God.

And if there are any things that please you, very dear cousin, that we are able to do, let us know and they will be fulfilled immediately. May the Holy Trinity keep you in its guard and make you prosper at all times according to your wishes.

Given in Barcelona under our secret seal on the 22nd day of August in the year 1387.

The Queen.

Paleographic Notes

- **Abbreviations:** The scribe uses several common medieval shortcuts. For example, "p[er]" is written with a "p" and a stroke through the descender; "q[ue]" is a "q" with a flourish.
- **The "Secret" Seal:** The Queen mentions the *segell secret*. In this era, monarchs used a "great seal" for public proclamations and a "secret seal" (or signet) for private or diplomatic correspondence.
- **Historical Context:** John I of Aragon (the "Hunter") was known for bouts of ill health. The "infants" mentioned are likely their children, though infant mortality was high; at this time, their daughter Yolanda of Aragon (future Queen of Naples) would have been a young child.

Would you like me to analyze the specific linguistic features of the Old Catalan used here, or perhaps help you identify the scribe Barthomeu Pruost?

Gemini is AI and can make mistakes.