

Mediaeval Baebes, The Snake

middle-age Castilian

Era un ortolano byen siempre e syn mal
En el mes de enero con fuerte tenporal
Andando por su huerta, vido so un peral
Una culebra chica, medio muerta atal

Con la nieve e con el viento e con la elada fria
Estava la culebra medio amodorrida
El omne piadoso que la vido aterida
Doliose mucho della, quisole darla vida

Tomola en la falda e llevola a su casa
Pusola erca del fuego, erca de buena blasa
Abivo la culebra ante que la el asa
Entro en un forada desa cosina rasa

Aqueste omne bueno davale cada dia
Del pan e de la leche e de quanto el comia
Cresio con el grand vyio e con el grand byen que
Tenia, tanto que sierpe grande a todos paresia

Venido eselestio, la siesta affyncada
Que ya non avia miedo de viento nin de elada
Salyo de aquel forada sauda e ayrada
Comeno de enponoar con venino en la posada

Dixole el ortolano, "Vete de equeste lugar
Non fagas aqui dao" elle fuese en-saar
Ablaolo tan fuerte que lo queria afogar
Apretandolo mucho, cruelmente, syn vagar

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English translation

There was a simple honest gardener
Who was walking through his garden
In January, in a bad storm. Under a pear tree
He spied a small snake which looked half dead

The snake was very sluggish
Because of the snow and wind and ice
When the kind man saw it stiff with cold
He felt very sorry for it and tried to revive it

He wrapped it in his clothes and carried it to his house
He put it near the fire, near the warmth of the blaze
The snake perked up, and before it was roasted
It went and found a hole in the smooth kitchen floor

Every day the good man gave it bread and milk
And some of his own food
The snake grew because it was happy and well cared for
Until it looked like an enormous serpent to everyone

When the summer came, with the heat well established
And no longer a threat from the wind and cold
It came out of its hole angry and irate
And began to poison the souse with its venom

The gardener said to it, "Get out of here
Don't you harm this place!" And it grew enraged
It wrapped itself 'round him tightly as if to strangle him
Squeezing him cruelly, hissing all the time

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