

The Lay of the Cid, Cantar 1, Parts 19-27

Source: *The Lay of the Cid*, trans. R. Selden Rose and Leonard Bacon (Semicentennial Publications of the University of California: 1868-1918, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1919). *Online Medieval and Classical Library*, 1997, <<http://omacl.org/Cid/cantarI.html>> (20th August 2009).

XIX When it was night the Cid lay down. In a deep sleep he fell,
And to him in a vision came the angel Gabriel:
"Ride, Cid, most noble Campeador, for never yet did knight
Ride forth upon an hour whose aspect was so bright.
While thou shalt live good fortune shall be with thee and shine. "
When he awoke, upon his face he made the holy sign.

XX He crossed himself, and unto God his soul commended then,
he was glad of the vision that had come into his ken
The next day at morning they began anew to wend.
Be it known their term of sufferance at the last has made an end.
In the mountains of Miedes the Cid encamped that night,
With the towers of Atienza where the Moors reign on the right.

XXI 'Twas not yet come to sunset, and lingered still the day.
My lord the Cid gave orders his henchmen to array.
Apart from the footsoldiers, and valiant men of war,
There were three hundred lances that each a pennon bore.

XXII " Feed all the horses early, so may our God you speed.
Let him eat who will; who will not, let him get upon the steed.
We shall pass the mountain ranges rough and of dreadful height.
The land of King Alfonso we can leave behind tonight.
And whosoe'er will seek us shall find us ready then."
By night the mountain ranges he traversed with his men.
Morn came. From the hills downward they were about to fare.
In a marvelous great forest the Cid bade halt them there,
And to feed the horses early; and he told them all aright
In what way he was desirous that they should march by night.
They all were faithful vassals and gave assent thereto;
The behests of their great captain it behooved them all to do.
Ere night, was every man of them unto the riding fit.
So did the Cid that no man might perchance get wind of it.
They marched all through the night-tide and rested not at all.
Near Henares a town standeth that Castejon men call.
There the Cid went into ambush with the men of his array.

XXIII He couched there in the ambush till the breaking of the day.
This Minaya Alvar Fanez had counselled and had planned:

"Ha, Cid, in happy hour thou girdedst on the brand.
Thou with an hundred henchmen shalt abide to hold the rear.
Till we have drawn forth Castejon unto the bushmen here.
But give me now two hundred men on a harrying raid to ride.
We shall win much if thy fortune and our God be on our side.
"Well didst thou speak, Minaya," the Campeador he said,
"Do thou with the two hundred ride on a harrying raid.
With Alvar Salvadorez, Alvar Alvarez shall advance,
likewise Galind Garciaz, who is a gallant lance.
Let them ride beside Minaya, each valiant cavalier.
Let them ride unfearing forward and turn from naught for fear.
Out unto Guadalajara, from Hita far and wide,
To Alcala the city forth let the harriers ride.
That they bring all the booty let them be very sure,
Let them leave naught behind them for terror of the Moor.
Here with an hundred lances in the rear will I remain,
And capture Castejon good store of provender to gain.
If thou come in any danger as thou ridest on the raid,
Send swiftly hither, and all Spain shall say how I gave aid."
Now all the men were chosen who on the raid should ride,
And those who in the rearguard with the lord Cid should abide.
And now the dawn was breaking and morning coming on,
And the sun rising. Very God! how beautifully it shone!
All men arose in Castejon, and wide they threw the gates;
And forth they went to oversee their farmlands and estates.
All were gone forth, and the gates stand open as they were thrown,
And but a little remnant were left in Castejon.
Round the city were the people scattered the whole country o'er.
Then forth out of the ambush issued the Campeador.
And without fail round Castejon he rushed along his way.
The Moors, both men and women, he took them for a prey,
And of their flocks as many as thereabouts there strayed.
My lord Cid don Rodrigo straight for the gateway made,
And they that held it, when they saw that swift attack begin,
Fled in great fear, and through the gates Roy Diaz entered in
With the sword naked in his hand; and fifteen Moors he slew
Whom he ran down. In Castejon much gold, and silver too,
He captured. Then unto him his knights the booty brought
To my lord Cid they bore it. The spoil they valued naught.
Lo! the two hundred men and three to plunder that rode out,
Sped fearlessly, and ravaged the country roundabout.
For the banner of Minaya unto Alcala did gleam.
Then they bore home the booty up the Henares stream
Past Guadalajara. Booty exceeding great they bore
Of sheep and kine and vesture and of other wealth good store.
Straightway returned Minaya. None dared the rear attack.

With the treasure they had taken his company turned back.
Lo, they wore come to Castejon, where the Campeador abode.
He left the hold well guarded. Out from the place he rode.
With all his men about him to meet them did he come,
And with arms wide asunder welcomed Minaya home:
"Thou art come, Alvar Fanez, good lance thou art indeed.
Whereso I send thee, in such wise I well may hope to speed.
Put straightway all together the spoil both shine and mine;
The fifth part of all, Minaya, an thou so desire, is thine."

XXIV "Much do I thank thee for it, illustrious Campeador.
With what thou giv'st me, the fifth part of all our spoils of war,
The King Alfonso of Castile full well content would be.
I renounce it in thy favor; and without a claim to thee.
But I swear to God who dwelleth in the high firmament,
That till upon my charger I gallop in content
Against the Moors, and till I wield both spear and brand again,
And till unto my elbow from the blade the blood doth drain
Before the Cid illustrious, howe'er so small it be,
I will not take the value of a copper groat from thee.
When through me some mighty treasure thou hast at thy command.
I will take thy gift; till such a time, all else is in thine hand."

XXV They heaped the spoil together. Pondered the Cid my lord,
He who in happy hour had girded on the sword,
How tidings of his raiding to the King would come ere long,
And Alfonso soon would seek him with his host to do him wrong.
He bade his spoil-dividers make a division fair,
And furthermore in writing give to each man his share.
The fortune of each cavalier had sped exceeding well,
One hundred marks of silver to each of them there fell,
And each of the foot soldiers the half of that obtained.
A round fifth of the treasure for my lord the Cid remained
But here he could not sell it, nor in gifts give it away.
No captives, men or women, he desired in his array.
And with the men of Castejon he spoke to this intent
To Hita and Guadalajara ambassadors he sent
To find how high the ransom of the fifth part they would rate.
Even as they assessed it, his profit would be great.
Three thousand marks of silver the Moors agreed to pay.
The Cid was pleased. And duly was it paid on the third day.
My lord the Cid determined with all his men of war
That there within the castle they would abide no more,
And that they would have held it, but that water sore it lacked:
"Ye Moors are friendly to the King; even so runs the pact,
With his host will he pursue us. And I desire to flee

From Castejon; Minaya and my men, so hark to me;

XXVI "Nor take it ill, mine utterance. For here we cannot stay.
The king will come to seek us, for he is not far away;
But to destroy the castle seems in no way good to me.
An hundred Moorish women in that place I will set free
And of the Moors an hundred. Since there, as it befell,
I captured them. Hereafter shall they all speak of me well.
Ye all are paid; among you is no man yet to pay.
Let us on the morrow morning prepare to ride away,
For against my lord Alfonso the strife I would not stir."
What the Cid said was pleasing to his every follower.
Rich men they all departed from the hold that they had ta'en
And the Moors both men and women blessed them o'er and o'er again.
Up the Henares hastened they and hard they rode and strong.
They passed through the Alcarrias, and swift they marched along,
By the Caverns of Anquita they hastened on their way.
They crossed the stream. Into Taranz the great plain entered they,
And on down through that region as hard as they might fare.
Twixt Fariza and Cetina would the Cid seek shelter there.
And a great spoil he captured in the country as he went,
For the Moors had no inkling whatso'er of his intent.
On the next day marched onward the great Cid of Bivar,
And he went by Alhama, and down the vale afar.
And he passed Bubierca and Ateca likewise passed,
And it was nigh to Alcocer that he would camp at last
Upon a rounded hillock that was both strong and high.
They could not rob him of water; the Jalon it flowed hard by.
My lord Cid don Rodrigo planned to storm Alcocer.

XXVII He pitched a strong encampment upon the hillock there,
Some men were toward the mountains, some by the stream arrayed.
The gallant Cid, who in good hour had girded on the blade,
Bade his men near the water dig a trench about the height,
That no man might surprise them by day nor yet by night.
So might men know that there the Cid had taken up his stand.