UNIBOS:
THE EARLIEST FULL-LENGTH FABLIAU
(TEXT AND TRANSLATION)

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Unibos is an early comic tale which has escaped the notice of American and British literary theorists, although Flemish and German scholars have long been aware of this poem's seminal position in the history of medieval comic literature. It is the first extended Latin narrative antedating the vernacular productions of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and it thus deserves full critical attention from admirers of Old French and Chaucerian fabliaux.

The poem is located in a single manuscript, the Bibliothèque Royale’s 10,078-95 (fol 38V⁰-42V⁰) in Brussels, which also houses a number of important musical texts. Grimm and Schmeller, following a transcription by Jans-Frans Willems, first published Unibos in 1838, but their edition is riddled with faults. Haupt attempted to correct the errors of this text (1853), but he too failed to consult the manuscript directly. Not until Woestijne’s edition and Flemish translation (1944) did a reasonably accurate edition appear. Langosch’s text, accompanied by a German translation (1956), is indebted to Woestijne’s and contains several minor errors.

The story of Unibos or “One-ox”, the tricky peasant who continually hoodwinks his social superiors, is a widespread tale which has elicited the interest of European folklorists. Clouston (1887) mentions some twenty-seven versions of the legend, and Müller (1934) devotes a dissertation to comparative analyses of these versions. Cosquin (1886) considers the proliferation of the tale in France; Hart (1908), unaware of Unibos, traces the legend’s development in England; and Meyer (1942) investigates variants in Germany, France, and the Netherlands. These folklorists are most concerned with variations of themes, and they recognize Unibos as the first extant version of the tale. However, they do not view the poem from a literary perspective—that is, they do not evaluate Unibos’ generic context.

Only German theorists have attempted to establish the poem’s literary context. Kögel (1894-1897) and Ehrismann (1918-1935) give plot summaries
of the work, and Beyer (1974, 1979) and Suchomski (1975) devote detailed analyses to Unibos. Philip Allen is aware of Unibos but does not discuss it (1931, 37; 1928, 275, n. 3). Neither Dronke nor Raby mentions the poem.

The Brussels manuscript is generally recognized as an eleventh century compilation, but Unibos was probably circulated earlier. Langosch (1953, 634-638) gives 1045 as the terminus ad quem for Unibos, but he believes, like most scholars, that it was a well-known story in the tenth century. Only Müller (1934, 33) places the poem later, 1050-1070. Very likely Unibos was recited and even performed during the hundred or more years preceding its commitment to parchment.

The generic proximity of Unibos to several of the Cambridge Songs gives further evidence about its date and generic status. Critics agree that the Cambridge manuscript was compiled c. 1050, but a number of the poems are also located in tenth century manuscripts (Strecker 1926, 17, 41, 97). Seven of the Cambridge Songs are short comic narratives which some critics have called ridicula or “funny stories” (Beyer 1969, 64-93; Wolterbeek 1984, 2-13). Two of these stories, Sacerdos et Lupus and De Iohanne abbate, employ the same hymn strophe as does Unibos: Ambrosian rhymed couplets. This eight-syllable, rhythmic verse form differs little from the Old French octosyllabic couplet, the vehicle of the fabliaux.

Unibos resembles the short ridicula in content, but it excels them in narrative development. Deception, cunning, and stupidity are the basis of comedy in the ridicula and in Unibos, and the level of diction is appropriately low for the mundane subject matter. The significant difference between Unibos and the short ridicula is length: the longest story in the Cambridge collection has twenty strophes; Unibos consists of 216 strophes.

Unibos contains four complex episodes arranged in symmetrical order, and it thus represents an advancement upon the simpler ridicula of the Cambridge manuscript. Superficially, the poem appears to consist of six episodes: Unibos’ discovery of treasure (strophes 4-29); the sale of the ox-skins (strophes 30-67); the murder of the wives (strophes 68-114); the sale of the mare (strophes 115-158); Unibos’ fake death (strophes 159-196); and the antagonists’ actual deaths (strophes 197-215). But in fact there are four episodes in which the three fools imitate the hero’s actions with disastrous results. The first two and the last two scenes constitute single, lengthy episodes framing the shorter ones at the poem’s center. Unibos’ sheer bulk and narrative complexity distinguish it from contemporary comic tales.

The likely ancestors of the ridicula and Unibos are the comic Carolingian rhythms of the ninth century and before, but these early works, similar in strophic structure, lack meaningful narration. The untitled rhythm about the
tippling monk from Angers has no plot; it is merely the amusing description of a monk who drinks immense quantities of wine (Raby 1967, 1:217-218). The longest of these poems is the Cena Cypriani, consisting of 324 lines but having the thinnest of story lines: personages from the Old and New Testaments, invited to the wedding of King Johel, get drunk and sing, but they do little else (Strecker 1884, 4:857-900).

The appearance of the Unibos-theme in later comic literature reveals much about the nature of medieval genres. Rapularius, a twelfth century Latin Schwank written in the elegiac meter that dominates late Latin poetry and provides the form of the comediae elegiacae, has two episodes, one of which parallels the final episode of Unibos (Langosch 1956, 308-331). But this later work is flavored by a scholasticism foreign to the ridicula and fabliaux: the main character does not dupe a swineherd, as does Unibos, but tricks a scholasticus, and his appeal is not for worldly power, but for worldly knowledge.

Unibos and the ridicula are generically closer to less scholarly, more popular forms of literature, such as fabliaux and fairytale. One of the latest versions of Unibos is Grimm’s Das Bürle (‘’The Little Peasant’’), containing the first and last episodes of the Latin Unibos and introducing an entirely new scene at a miller’s house. The story is a conflation of Unibos and the fabliau Le Povre Clerc, providing the fairytale’s added scene (Hart 1908, 343-360). Although no exact analogue to Unibos exists among the extant fabliaux, this story and the ridicula share obvious structural and thematic commonplaces with the Old French narratives.

Like several other early rhythmic narratives, Unibos begins with an impressive statement about public performance. The poet explains that the story (fabula) was first heard at the “table of a great prince,” and he then exhorts his audience to sing of “One-ox” while actors perform the story. Numerous allusions to banquets and marketplaces as the locales of theatrical performances by mimi, scurræ, and histriones attest that the prologue of Unibos is not pure fiction (Ogilvy 1963). Sextus Amarcius, for instance, writing in the mid-eleventh century, describes a banquet scene in which mimes steal from their diverted listener (Manitius 1888, 15):

Quid loquar astantes ficta ditescere laude
Mimos? hi dominis astu per verba iocosa
Plurima surripiunt etiam scalpente datore
Sinciput; exhausto descrecet copia cornu.

(What should I say about these mimes hanging about and becoming rich with feigned praise? In their cleverness, with play-
ful words, they steal much from the lords, even the ham from
the titillated giver; plenty diminishes when the horn is
emptied.)

Curiously enough, much of the action in *Unibos* takes place at markets and
public squares. The main character himself is quite the actor, as he performs a
mock ritual for the onlooking fools (strophes 80-85), as he plays the role of
swineherd with gusto (strophes 198-199).

The following edition attempts to produce a faithful rendition of the Brus-
sels' manuscript, with emendations only when absolutely necessary. I have
followed the corrections made by a later scribe on the parchment, for they all
seem just. Ten of the thirteen emendations correct obvious errors, and
Woestijne also makes most of these changes. One line (90, 1) lacks a syllable,
and I agree with Woestijne that *hunc* is a logical insertion; I also agree with the
Flemish scholar that *sim* is more appropriate than *sum* in 55, 2, and that *nobis
arare* is more syntactically correct than *arare nobis* in 39, 2. However, I do not
think it necessary to change *donavi* to *donavit* in 139, 4 and 146, 4 — this
emendation complicates a perfectly intelligible passage. Woestijne changes
the manuscript's *obprobriis* (63, 1) to *obprobii*- a simple mistake on his part
— and he does not correct the obvious error of *gebulae* (113, 1). All in all, the
manuscript offers an easily understood story in a clear, prosaic Latin.

**UNIBOS**

1. Rebus conspectis seculi
   Non satiantur oculi;
   Aures sunt in hominibus
   Amicacae novitatibus.

2. Ad mensam magni principis
   Est rumor Uniusbovis;
   Praesentatur ut fabula
   Per verba iocularia.

3. Fiunt cibus convivia,
   Sed verbis exercitia;
   In personarum drammate
   Uno cantemus de bove!

4. Natis natus ridiculis,
   Est rusticus de rusticis;
   Natura fecit hominem,
   Sed fortuna mirabilem.

Men's eyes are never filled enough by
the remarkable sights of this world.
Their ears are ever eager to hear new
tales.

As a play with witty words, the story
of Unibos is presented at the table of a
great prince.

There are guests at the feast, a
bandying of words. Accompanied by
performing actors, let us sing of
Unibos:

Son of ridiculous sons, he is a peasant
from peasants. Nature made the man,
but fortune produced wonders.
5. Gravis fati commercio
   Boves emit pauper homo;
   Sub exemplis agricolae
   Terram laborat scindere.

   This poor man has bought oxen —
   they are cruel fate’s lot — and imitating farmers, he tries to split the earth.

6. Eventus per horribiles
   Nunquam ducit duos boves;
   Nec simul pungit stimulo
   Nec uno ponit sub iugo.

   But the worst luck prohibits him from
   leading two oxen. He never strikes
   two at once, he never puts two under
   the same yoke.

7. Frustra fortunam vincere
   Sua certat pauperie;
   Duro fatorum stamine
   Boves perdit assidue.

   Vainly he struggles to conquer his
   destined poverty; he continuously
   loses oxen, thanks to the coarse
   thread of the Fates.

8. Sequax unius fit bovis
   Excoriatis relinquis.
   A vicinis deluditur;
   Unusbos miser dictitur.

   Now he follows one ox — the others
   have been skinned. His neighbors,
   mocking him, call him wretched
   “One-ox.”

9. Tristis sors mugientium
   Bovem rapit novissimum;
   Iam res minor fit elegi
   Egestate vocabuli.

   Bitter destiny deprives him of his last
   lowing ox. Now things stand worse
   than his nickname would indicate.

10. Exinanito nomine,
    Evacuato bostare,
    Tergus disposit vendere
    Denudato cadavere.

   With his good name gone and his
   stalls emptied, he plans to sell the
   hide once the corpse has been
   stripped.

11. Corpus sinquit quadruvio
    Sumpto bovis amphibalo;
    Super iumenti sellulam
    Ponit vitae fiduciam.

   He leaves the carcass on the cross-
   road, takes the ox’s hide, and places
   it, his last hope for survival, upon his
   mule’s saddle.

12. Ad forum postliminii
    Bovis fert vestem mortui;
    Non tardat se per semitas
    Dum festinat ad nundinas.

   He brings the skin of his dead ox to a
   market beyond the border. Narrow
   paths do not slow him down as he
   hurries to the fair.

13. Sed ut intrat emporium,
    Facit venale corium,
    Quod putat magni precii
    Sicut decorem pallii.

   As soon as he enters the marketplace,
   he offers the skin for sale, thinking it
   most valuable, like a fine cloak.
14. Participes commercii
   Capacitatem corii
   Pedem mensurant terminis
   Sutorum testimoniis.

15. Unibovem nullus iuvat;
    Solus pellem magnificat.
    Pro nummis octo tunicam
    Bovis largitur sordidam.

16. Post expletum commercium
    Ascendit iumentum suum,
    Distento ventre turgidus
    Retrorsum vertendo gradum.

17. Omen habens argenteum
    Intrat lucum frondiferum;
    Qui dum ventris purgat
    Lacum,
    Nummatum trahit meritum.

18. Anum dum certat tergere,
    Herbam festinat rumpere,
    Sed herbam vellens repperit
    Quod gens avara diligit.

19. De nummis tres sextarios
    Mox offendit absconditos,
    Quos in flaccenti sacculo
    Ponit mox facto turgido.

20. Super iumentum concitus
    Totis imponit viribus
    Casu repertas vir opes;
    Ad paternas redit lares.

21. Reversus saccum disligat;
    Infantem stultus advocat,
    Quem mittit pro sextario
    Praepositi iustissimo.

With shoemakers looking on, merchants measure the breadth of the skin to the tips of the hooves.

None of the offers satisfies Unibos — he alone values the skin highly. Yet for eight cents he sells the shabby hide of his ox.

After this deal, Unibos fills his belly, climbs his mule, and heads back home.

Chance smiles upon him as he enters a thick wood: while relieving himself, he discovers a treasure of coins.

In fact, as he seeks to wipe himself, tearing handfuls of grass, under a tuft he finds what greedy people love.

He uncovers three bags of silver coins hidden in the grass and soon his saddlebag bulges with them.

Using all his strength, he places his new-found wealth on top of the mule and returns to his father’s hearth.

Back home, the fool unloads his bag and calls for his son, whom he sends to the provost for an accurate measuring device.
22. Quaerit puer sextarium, 
Praepositus officium; 
Pandit puer negotium 
Nimis simplex argenteum.

The boy goes for the measurer. The 
provost asks about its purpose, and 
the simpleton reveals the story about 
the silver.

23. Largitur vas praepositus 
Infanti donans ocius; 
Unibovem pauperrimum 
Stupet factum ditissimum.

The provost takes out the instrument 
and gives it to the swift boy. He is 
amazed that the destitute Unibos is 
now extremely wealthy.

24. Post tergum vadit pueri 
Ferentis lancem tritici; 
Massam videt argenteam 
Fumosam dum lustrat domam.

The provost, hurrying behind the boy, 
who carries the wheat-balance, finally 
perceives a silver mass brightening 
the smoky cottage.

25. Nummorum visis montibus 
Dicit complossis manibus: 
"Huius egent gaudium 
Est furtum, non commercium.

Upon seeing mountains of coins, the 
provost, clapping his hands together, 
exclaims, "This poor man’s joy 
comes from theft, not business.

26. "Non est in musac cesarum 
Nec corbanan pontificum 
Argenti tantum pretium 
Quantum tegit tugurium."

"Neither the emperor’s vault nor the 
pope’s coffer conceals as much silver 
as this cottage."

27. Irritatus praeposito 
Respondet valde livido: 
"Non est hoc furtum noctium, 
Sed corii commercium.

Angry, Unibos replies to the envious 
provost: "This does not come from 
stealing in the dark of night, but from 
the sale of my ox-skin.

28. "Post huius regni terminum 
Sollemne fit emporium; 
Dum data bovis tunica 
Argenti ridet copia.

"Beyond this realm’s border is a 
weekly market. When a seller offers 
an ox-hide, merchants offer him plen-

29. "Non est mercatum simile 
Sicut de bovis tergore. 
Exemplum de me paupere 
Si vis tenere, suscipe!"

"There is no business like selling ox-
skins. If you wish to follow my exam-

30. Post haec ministri publico 
Conveniunt in trivio, 
Villae maior, praepositus, 
Templi sacerdos inelitus.

After this the officials — the town 
mayor, the provost, and the distin-

guished priest of the church — con-
vene in a public square.
31. Oeconomus attonitus
Suis refert comitibus
Famam novi commercii,
Unius questum corii.

32. Tunc gavisus praepositus,
Fartus tantis rumoribus,
Profunda dat suspiria,
Cum pompa dicens talia:

33. "Vobis dicam miraculum,
Revelabo prodigium,
Aperiam consilium
Celandum saluberrimum.

34. "Si vultis esse divites,
Si fortunati, comites,
Quae sum facturus, facite,
Sequenda nunc perpendite!

35. "A nostris tabernaculis
Omnis fortuna sterilis
Descendet per commercium,
Commerciorum maximum.

36. "Est mercandi felicitas
Quam transmisit divinitas,
De vitulorum coris,
De vitularum spoliis.

37. "Hic noster pauper Unibos
Habet multos denarios,
Quos non mensurat numero,
Sed ferrato sextario.

38. "Est fortunatus subito
Unius pellis precio,
Quam vendidit in proximo
Eventu felicissimo.

39. "Non est opus sub imbribus
Nobis arare amplius,
Si probatis una die
Locupletem de paupere.

The stunned provost, who is treasurer of the church, informs his companions about the news of the recent sale and the enormous profit gained from a single hide.

Filled with joyful tidings and sighing deeply, the provost pompously hails his colleagues:

"I'll tell you about a miracle and reveal a marvel. Indeed, I'll give you a most useful bit of advice, but you must keep it secret.

"If you want to become wealthy and blessed, my friends, follow my advice and do what I shall do.

"All evil fortune will depart our houses through a great business deal — the greatest of all deals.

"The Lord brings us the opportunity of selling the skins of our calves and our cows.

"Our poor Unbos has so many silver pieces, he can't measure them without a wheat-measurer.

"He is suddenly enriched by selling a single hide, which by happy chance he sold nearby.

"If you agree to become rich instead of poor in a single day, we need no longer plough in the rain.
39,2 nobis arare
arare nobis B

40. "Sed quod narro commercium
Occultum sit per triduum!
Si trapezetae saperent,
Argentum nunquam tunderent.

41. "Est facta demonstratio
Commercii de commodo;
Fiat deliberatio,
Quid nobis sit in animo!"

42. Ad haec suspirans presbiter
Prior respondet impiger,
Plenus novae letitiae
Plusquam possit ostendere.

43. "Si mutaretur in bovem
Uxor, quam duxi, nobilem,
Pro tanti lucri spe bona
Mox careret pellicula."

44. Mox maior villae tertius,
Habendi cui non est modus,
Quae concepit ex fabula,
Eructavit prodigia:

43,1 in bovem
unibovem B
43,3 bona
boni B

45. "Per istum iuro baculum,
Per corpus hoc, per
spiritum,
Si ruminant diluculo
Mei bovis in stabulo."

46. Dextras furtivo foedere
Vicissim certant tangere
Ut clam boves excercbren
Interfectos excorient.

"But let's keep this business secret for three days, for, if the minters should find out, they would never strike silver coins.

"I have described this business opportunity to you. Let us now decide what we shall do."

At this the priest, sighing deeply, eagerly responds first; he is full of a new-found joy — more than he can ever show.

"If the woman I have married could be turned into a fine ox, she would soon lack her little hide in my hope for so much gain."

Then the mayor of the village, whose possessions are immeasurable, having heard the provost's tale, belched forth oaths:

"I swear by this staff, by this body, by this soul, my oxen won't be chewing cud in the stable at dawn."

They eagerly shake hands to seal their secret compact: to behead their oxen and skin the dead animals.
47. Firmati per stultitiam
    Procedunt ad insaniam;
    Mactant boves crudeliter
    Excoriantes acriter.
    Confirmed in their stupidity, they
    rush to madness; they savagely slay
    their oxen and zealously strip them of
    their hides.

48. Suspendunt carnes trabibus;
    Pelles taxant in curribus.
    Quiete noctis tempore
    Petunt mercatum transfugae.
    They hang the flesh on beams and
    stack the skins in their carts. In the
    deep of night, they go to market like
    traitors seeking an enemy camp.

49. Plaustra pelles vehentia
    Locant sub arrogantia
    In mercati confinio
    Inani pleni somnio.
    Haughty and full of foolish dreams,
    they place the carts full of skins at the
    edge of the marketplace.

50. Respectum per silentia
    Vibrant per fori stadia;
    Interpretari sub prece
    Sperant a multitudine.
    They glance rapidly and silently
    around the confines of the market-
    place; they expect to do business with
    an entreating multitude.

51. Vulgus transit, vulgus redivit,
    Nullus sub cura consultit;
    Non est, qui quaterat cupide
    Commerciunm de tergo.
    People come, people go, and not one
    shows any interest in the hides; no
    one eagerly inquires about the skins.

52. Post intervalla temporum
    Maior tenendo stimulum
    Clamat in rauco gutture:
    "Quis vult has pelles
    emere?"
    After some time the mayor,
    brandishing his staff, cries in a hoarse
    voice, "Who wants to buy these
    skins?"

53. Assunt suores sordidi,
    Quibus sunt septem solidi,
    Quibus placet coemptio
    Uno signato corio.
    Lowly shoemakers who have seven
    cents approach. They are interested in
    buying only a single intact hide.

54. Dicit sutor: "Quantum dabo
    Hoc pro bovino corio?"
    Respondet maior subito:
    "Tres libras da continuo!"
    One of them asks, "How much do I
    have to pay for this ox-hide?" The
    mayor replies quickly, "Three
    pounds at once!"
55. Sutor inquit: "Es ebrius!"
  Maior ait: "Sim fatuus.
  De tribus libris minimum
  Non dimittam denarium."

56. Tunc infit sutor setifer:
  "Dicis ioculariter."
  Econtra maior somnifer:
  "Tres libras!" clamat firmiter.

57. Vulgaris ammiratio
  Sonoro mox fit in foro;
  Est vulgus in spectaculis
  Relictis mercimonii.

58. Ira commotus presbiter
  Maiori dicit duriter:
  "Insulse, nescis vendere,
  Quod praesentas hic
  publice.

59. "Hac hasta discerno meum
  Trium librorum corium.
  Solve, sutor, marsuppium!
  Audisti fixum numerum."

60. Quam mensuram commercii
  Profert sensus presbiteri.
  Sutor subinfert: "Stultior
  Non est in terra venditor;

61. "De qua sint hi provincia,
  Dicant tres in praesentia,
  Qui putant boum tergora
  Divittiarum maxima!

62. "Decem nummorum corium
  Ad magnum levant precium.
  Nudis plantis incedite
  Huius coloni patriae!"

The shoemaker replies, "You must be crazy." "Maybe I am," replies the mayor, "but I will not budge a penny under three pounds."

Then the surly shoemaker says, "You're joking," and in reply the mayor, still sleepy, says steadily, "Three pounds."

Filled with surprise, the people in the crowded marketplace soon leave their goods aside to attend the show.

The priest, moved by anger, says sternly to the mayor: "Fool, you don't know how to drive a bargain with the merchandise you offer these people.

"I swear by this staff that my hide is worth three pounds. Open your purse, shoemaker — you have heard the required sum."

The priest is endowed with such business know-how that the shoemaker replies, "There is not a stupider salesman on the face of the earth.

"Let these three men, who think ox-hides are the greatest riches, tell us here and now what country they are from.

"They value ten-cent hides at the highest price. People from that country must walk barefoot!"
63. Alternat ex obprobriis
   Utraque pars sub iurgiis;
   Sutorum congregatio
   Irato crescit animo.

64. Ducuntur a lictoribus;
   Praesentantur iudicibus.
   Traduntur exactoribus;
   Corripiuntur legibus.

65. Reddunt per vadimonium
   Conventionem tergorem,
   Quam posuerunt in foro
   Unibovis consilio.

66. Persolvunt legis debita;
   Revertuntur ad propria,
   Exhausitis in marsupiis,
   Oiosis in curriculis.

67. Denudati pecunia,
   Armati tres mestitia
   Conantur interficere
   Unibovem meridie.

68. Infra caeli tentoria
   Non sunt audita talia,
   Quae perpetravit Unibos,
   Ut sedaret stultissimos.

69. Versutus mites reddidit,
   Ut tres iratos respicit;
   Insania prudentia
   Respondent per ludibria.

70. Mori dum tremens aestimat,
   Occasionem simulat,
   Mortem pingens in coniuge
   Tincta suillo sanguine.

71. Uxor dolosi sub dolo
   Strata iacet tugurio,
   Quasi sit vere mortua,
   Occisa sponsi dextra.

Each side exchanges reproaches and insults; the group of shoemakers becomes increasingly irritated.

Finally, the three fools are led away by bailiffs and presented to judges; they are led before the overseers and rebuked according to the laws.

As a fine they must give up all of the hides which they put on sale with Unibos’ advice.

They pay off the legal fines and return home with empty purses and vacant carts.

Stripped of money but full of resentment, they decide to kill Unibos at high noon.

Never has such a deed as Unibos performed to soothe the stupid threesome been seen under heaven.

The sly Unibos is able to render the three angry men mild when he sees them; craftiness counters madness with a trick.

Trembling, thinking he is about to die, he devises a plan: he paints his wife deathly red with swine blood.

The crafty man’s wife lies apparently dead in the cottage, as if she had been killed by her husband.
72. Cadaver foedum sanguine 
Corpus apparet feminae; 
Crudeles mansuescere 
Incipiunt pro crimine.

73. Qui venerant occidere, 
Certant percussam plangere, 
Increpantes Unibovem 
Flendo mactatam coniugem.

74. Simul dicunt feroxiter: 
"Heus, insensate compater, 
Qua causa tu durissima 
Perpetrasti facinora?

75. "Confusionis trux faber 
Nos seduxisti nequiter; 
Ut mercatum probavimus, 
Mortem tuam tractavimus.

76. "Magnum damnum, 
stultissime, 
Adquisisti de coniugé; 
Non est culpa mediocris 
Vitam fugasse coniugis."

77. Inquit securus Unibos 
Magis seducens tres viros: 
"Sanabile flagitium 
Perpetravi per gladium.

78. "Si mecum pacem facitis, 
Si cordis iram rumpitis, 
Vivam cito videbitis, 
Interfectam quam cernitis."

79. "Fiat fiat!" hilariter 
Dicunt seducti pariter: 
"Repellimus a pectore 
Pestes inimicitiae."

The woman’s body is like a corpse caked with blood; seeing this atrocity, 
the cruel men forget their anger.

Those who came to kill now lament 
the beaten woman, and as they lament 
the slaughtered wife, they reproach Unibos.

Together, they shout wildly: "Why, 
unfeeling man, why did you commit 
this dastardly crime?

"Wicked sower of confusion, you 
evilly seduced us; however, just as we 
agreed upon our unfortunate business 
venture, we have agreed upon your 
death.

"And because of you wife, fool, you 
shall receive the greatest punishment: 
murdering one’s wife is not a venial 
sin."

Confident, Unibos speaks, and tricks 
the threesome yet more: "This crime, 
which I committed with a sword, is in 
fact curable.

"If you make peace with me, if you 
quell the anger in your hearts, you 
will see this woman, whom you now 
perceive dead, come back to life."

"So be it! So be it!" the three men, 
equally deceived, exclaim gladly. 
"We shall remove our sworn hatred 
from our breasts."
80. Dum sic perpendit Unibos
   Loqui tres adversarios,
   Ad cistam currit ligneam
   Sumens salignam bucinam.
   After sizing up his three babbling enemies, Unibos runs to a wooden chest and takes out a willow flute.

81. Lustrat cadaver coniugis
   Sub testibus erroneis;
   Bis lustrat, saepe bucinat,
   Horam surgendi praedicat.
   While the fools observe him, he circles his wife’s corpse. Twice he circles, and while playing the instrument continuously, he foretells the moment of her resurrection.

82. Lustratione tertia
   Tamquam virtute mistica,
   Dum nomen sponsae nominat,
   Quiescentem resuscitat.
   With the great powers of a magician, on the third pass he revives his wife from her sleep at the exact moment he utters her name.

83. Exurgens uxor impetu
   Astat deformis habitu;
   Iubetur ab Unibove,
   Ut se mundet a sanguine.
   Rising promptly, his wife, horrible in appearance, stands before the threesome; Unibos then orders her to wash off the blood.

84. Confestim lota facie,
   Induta meliuscule,
   Apparet speciosior,
   Vultu mundato pulchrior.
   When her face is washed and she is better clothed, she immediately seems most beautiful, comelier of face and limbs.

85. Seducit per Unibovem
   Mirantur pulchritudinem
   Resuscitatae feminae,
   Stupentes illam plaudere.
   The fools, tricked by Unibos, marvel at the beauty of the revived woman. Astonished, they nonetheless voice their approval.

86. Dicunt suppressis vocibus:
   "Nunquam tam pulchram vidimus
   Istius formam feminae,
   Quae surrexit in hac die.
   With hushed voices they say: “‘We have never seen this woman, who has just now been revived, appear so beautiful.

87. ‘Ante mortem turpis fuit;
   De morte pulchra rediit.
   Felix mors, quae pulchrificat,
   Quae deformes condecorat!
   ‘Before her death she was ugly, but from death she returned fair. Blessed is the death which beautifies and improves the unsightly!
88. "Quam felix sonus bucinae, 
Qua renovantur vetulae!
Sponsae nostrae decrepitae 
Pro multo fiunt tempore.

"How sweet the sound of the flute which rejuvenates old women! Our own wives have also been decrepit for a long time.

89. "Si nos divina gratia 
Honoraret hac bucina, 
Occideremus coniuges 
Pro rugis detestabiles.

"If this flute would bestow some of its miraculous power upon us, we could also kill our wives and their cursed wrinkles.

90. "Precemur hunc Unibovem, 
Ut nobis praestet ad vicem 
Vel ut vendat hanc bucinanam, 
Quae turpem tollit maculam!

"Let us beg Unibos to lend it to each one of us, or perhaps he might sell us this flute which removes ugly age-spots.

91. "Tubam certemus emere, 
Ut sponas intercere 
Uno possimus tempore 
Ornandas pulchritudine.

"Let's try purchasing this flute so we may kill our wives, and later have them adorned with beauty.

92. "Cum resonabit bucina, 
Fugabitur mors aspera, 
Sicut in hac probavimus, 
Exanimem quam vidimus.

"When we play the flute, cruel death will fly away, just as it did with this woman whom we saw dead.

93. "Facturi sumus alteras 
De redivivis nuptias. 
Offeramus pecuniam, 
Ut nobis vendat bucinam!"

"With rejuvenated wives, we shall celebrate second nuptials. Let us offer Unibos money so he will give us his flute."

90.1 Precemur hunc Unibovem 
Precemur unibo vem B

94. Oblato magno munere 
Tubam merentur emere; 
Post comparatam bucinam 
Vertuntur in insaniam.

They manage to buy the horn once they have offered much money, and after their purchase, they turn their minds to madness.

95. Duobus dicit presbiter: 
"Oro, precor sollemniter, 
Ut primus interficiam 
Sponsam mihi carissiam.

The priest says to his companions: "I pray, I solemnly beg of you to let me be the first to kill my dear wife."
96. "En praestetur gratissima
Mihi vitalis bucina!
Minorabo per iugulum
Presbiterissae senium.

97. "Post me secundus buciam
Assumet saluberrimam,
Qui prior suam feminam
Occidet sicut vitulam."

98. Petitiones annuunt
Sacerdotis, quem diligunt,
Ut occidat, ut iugulet,
Ut occisam resuscitet.

99. It sacerdos cum bucina
Armatus ex insania;
Morituarum dat basia
Stricta coma feminea.

100. Cultellum monstrat
presbiter,
Ridendo dicit mulier:
"Quid vultis, care,
facere?
Nolite dure facere!"

101. Sacerdos ait loetifer:
"Te iugulabo dulciter;
In iuvenili corpore
Resurges voce bucinae."

102. Solum "Vae!" clamat femina,
Percussa iacet mortua;
Stultus paterfamilias
Exclamat: "Deo gratias!"

103. Apponit ori bucinaam,
Sufflat per arrogantiam;
Dum ter iacentem circuit,
Obscenis verbis arguit:

"Come now, this resuscitating flute should bring me great happiness. First, however, I will end my wife's old age by slitting her throat.

"After me, one of you, having first killed his wife like a heifer, will play this rejuvenating flute."

The other two, who adore the priest, agree to his request that he kill, murder, and resuscitate the dead woman.

Excited by such foolishness, the priest takes off with the flute. He kisses his wife, who must soon die, and he touches her hair lightly.

When the priest shows his wife the knife, she says to her smiling husband, "What are you planning, dear? Don't do anything wicked."

The murderous priest replies: "I will strangle you gently, and then you will arise in a youthful body when I play this flute."

The wife emits a single "alas!" before she falls down dead, and the foolish husband cries out his thanks to God.

He places the flute to his lips and plays presumptuously, but after circling the prostrate body of his wife three times, he begins to curse her offensively.
104. "O simulatrix callida, 
Surge, dolosa simia! 
Petulca sicut asina 
Leva caput de bucina!"

105. Auditis his clamoribus 
Amens suam praepositus 
Festinat interficere 
Sub spe vitalis bucinæs.

106. Ad orbatum presbiterum 
Venit post homicidium, 
Ut sibi praestet bucinam, 
Qua suscitet praepositam.

107. Tandem recepta bucina 
Sacerdotem de femina 
Interrogat hac mortua, 
Si surrexit iuvenula.

107.3 hac ha B

108. Interroganti dicitur: 
"Haece a te non videbitur, 
Donec limen ecclesiae 
Tua petet cum coniuge."

109. Sponsaeuida praepositus. 
Privatus mentis sensibus 
Ad domum portat propriam 
Seductionis bucinam.

110. Nunquam sacerdos altius 
Mestis tubae mugitibus 
Bucinavit profundius 
Quam fatusus praepositus.

111. Quantum tubae concavitas, 
Tantum prodest ventositas: 
Ut revixit presbitera, 
Sic surrexit praeposita.

112. Maior villae non est minor 
In reatu, si tardior, 
Qui sponsae vitam dissipat, 
Qui bucinat, non suscitat.

"Come on, you sly faker! Get up, you little monkey! Stubborn as a mule, raise your head to the sound of this flute!"

At the moment the priest’s shouts are heard, the foolish provost is in the act of killing his wife, hoping to revive her with the life-giving flute.

And after the murder, he visits the newly widowed priest to receive the flute that he believes will resuscitate his own wife.

When he finally gets the flute, he asks the priest about his dead wife — did she arise as a young girl?

The priest replies to the provost: "You will not see my wife until she arrives at the churchdoor with your wife."

The wife-killing provost, taking leave of his senses, carries the trickster’s flute to his own house.

Never did a cleric, with sad bellowings of horn, play more clearly, more deeply than the foolish provost.

His playing, however, is as profitable to him as the empty air within the flute. Just as the priest’s wife had revived, so arose the provost’s.

The town’s mayor is not the least, although the last, in committing the crime. He takes his wife’s life and plays, but she does not arise either.
113. Tres glebulae, tres mortuae 
Praesentantur ecclesiae 
Orto tristi diluculo 
Cum lugubri spectaculo.

114. Sponsorum sub insania 
Infossantur cadavera; 
Tres occultantur coniuges 
Per threnas lamentabiles.

115. Discendentes a tumulis 
In profundis suspiriis 
Tres susurrant ad invicem: 
"Occidamus Unibovem.

116. "Qui gazas nostras sustulit, 
Suis verbis nos tradidit. 
Dum dixit iuvenescere 
Anus mugitu bucinae!

117. "Auctor tanti periculi 
A nobis possit conteri; 
Eius invadat verticem 
Amara mors ignobilem!"

131 glebulae 
gebulae B

118. Mentis commoti fluctibus 
Ad arma corrunt protinus 
Artificem versutiae 
Occisuri durissime.

119. Calliditas Unibovis 
Plena multis ingeniis 
Superavit iactantiam 
Trium virorum fervidam.

120. Ad suos currit Unibos 
Quondam pauper denarios. 
Massam de nummis accipit; 
Armatus hostes decipit.

The three dead women, now mere 
clay, arrive at the church as the sad 
dawn rises over the mournful proces-
sion.

After this lunacy, the corpses are 
buried, lowered into the graves to the 
tune of mournful dirges.

Leaving the graves, the three luna-
tics, sighing deeply, whisper to each 
other, "Let's kill Unibos,

"Who took our money and then 
tricked us when he said that an old 
woman could be rejuvenated by the 
lowing of a flute.

"We should destroy the author of 
such mischief — let a cruel death fall 
upon his peasant head!"

Mentally unbalanced, they rush forth 
and gather arms to kill the master of 
strategem.

But Unibos' cleverness, brimming 
ever with new tricks, again over-
comes the angry threats of the three 
men.

The once-poor Unibos runs to his 
coins, grabs a mass of them, and suc-
cedes in tricking the armed host.
121. Equam trahit de stabulo; Caudam levat plus solito. In naturae foramine Nummos certat inmergere.

He draws his mare from the stable, lifts her tail quite high, and plunges the coins into nature's opening.

122. In medio tugurio Equae firmatur statio; Mox iumento candidum Expandit unum linteum.

He makes the mare stand in the middle of the cottage, and then spreads a white linen cloth over the beast.

123. In foribus tugurii Adsunt tres adversarii; Dum minantur Unibovem, Causam vident mirabilem.

His three enemies, standing outside the hut and threatening Unibos, witness a marvellous event.

124. Tres stant in domus limine Volentes interficere Unibovem, sed non valent, De novo facto dum stupent.

Standing on the threshold, they want to kill Unibos, but they are stunned into inaction by the new event.

125. Observantes officium Unibovis argenteum, Qui costas equae dum fricat, Partum nummorum provocat.

They observe Unibos working over some silver coins: while rubbing the mare's flanks, he seems to produce a quantity of coins.

126. Exclamant: "Quid est, Unibos, Quod iumentum denarios Aperte tibi parturit, Miram causam nobis parit?"

They exclaim, "What is this, Unibos? What is this beast that is clearly producing coins for you and a marvel for us?"


Unibos replies cautiously: "See these coins? This mare’s belly excretes coins instead of worthless dung.

128. "Per noctes equa singulas Tales iactat pecunias, Obs, regina pecuniae, Ani sedet foramine."

"Every night she pours out such wealth that surely Ops, the queen of abundance, must sit at this opening."

129. Repente visis talibus Auditis his sermonibus, Hostes iram reiciunt; Unibovi sic inquitunt:

Once they see the money and hear the story, the anger of Unibos’ enemies immediately abates, and they say to him:
130. "Si de fortuna gaudeas, Vende nobis hoc animal! Deponemus tres odium Si comparamus turgidum."

131. Vestitus tegnis Unibos Ad tres hoc dicit socios: "Non est hanc dare facile Genitricum pecunia.

132. "Huius sub pelle bestiae Arca latet laetitia; Non est hic vilis bestia, Quae tanta parit munera."

133. "Si de tua substantia Tua laetetur anima, Ili dicunt, "carissime, Ne differas hanc vendere!"

134. Versipellis mox Unibos Ad brutos dicit tres viros: "Iumentum vendam nobile, Sed non pro parvo munere.

135. "Vos vidistis, quid peperit; Cognoscitis, quid hic pluit. Si nummorum latibulum Vultis, conferte precium!

136. "Sed ut sitis benivolii, Conferte libras quindecim! Plures in brevi tempore Libras reddet pro stercore."

137. Tres illi libras quindecim Ut persolvunt Unibovii, Equam ducent ligamine Custodientes cupide.


"Enjoy your good fortune and sell us this animal! If you do, we three shall end our hatred once we have bought this swollen beast."

Unibos, full of tricks, says this to the three friends: "It's not easy just giving away this source of wealth.

"There is a wonderful treasure chest hidden in this beast's hide; surely this animal, which bestows such gifts, is not a cheap one."

"If you wish to delight further in your great wealth," they threaten, "my dearest Unibos, no longer delay selling the mare to us."

The crafty Unibos then says to the senseless three: "I'll sell you my noble beast, but not for a small price.

"You see what it has produced and you know what it has showered. If you want a coin-laden treasure chest, you must pay the price!

"Give me fifteen pounds — may you be so kind. In a short time my beast will repay your pounds in kind instead of excrement."

After paying Unibos fifteen pounds, the threesome lead the mare away with a rope, greedily guarding it.

The priest speaks eagerly: "Listen to me! You must! I want to be the first to lead the beast to my house-stable."
139. "Qui sum primus ecclesia, Sim primus in custodia; Diluculo recolligam, Quam donavi pecuniam."

"Since I am the foremost member of our church, I should be the first to keep it. At dawn I shall collect the money I have given Unibos."

140. "Sit prima nox presbiteri; Secunda sit praepositi. Maioris nox sit tertia Sub aequitatis trutina."

"Let the first night be mine, the second the provost's, and the third the mayor's, according to the scales of equity."

141. "Fiat," dicit praepositus; "Sit," dicit maior tertius "Haec est nostra concordia Sub miti patientia."

"So be it," says the provost. "Yes," adds the mayor. "This is our agreement. Let us be patient."

142. Equam procurat presbiter Dans hordeum celeriter. Per nocturnas vigilias Equae praebet auriculas.

The priest cares for the mare, giving it barley. His ears are cupped towards the mare during his nocturnal vigil.

143. Facto tamen diluculo Sacerdos a praeepio Communem trahit bestiam, Ut deponat pecuniam.

When morning comes, the priest leads the shared beast from its stall so it may deposit the money.

144. Illa putans ad aratrum Deduci sibi cognitum Sub cauda laxat squibulas, Sicut solet, foedissimas.

Thinking she's being led to her familiar plough, she lets go a foul apple, as she is wont, from beneath her tail.

145. Dum stercoris quassatio Auditur a presbitero, Nummos putat procedere Ex alvo brutae bestiae.

When the priest hears the dung's splatter, he believes that coins are coming from the heavy beast's belly.

146. Clamat sacerdos: "Pueri, Abscendite, domestici! Solus meam recolligam, Quam donavi pecuniam."

The priest cries, "Houseboys, leave! I alone will gather up the money I have given."

147. Cum sacerdos scrutinium Per fimum facit foetidum, Unum minutum repperit, Quod festinanter accipit.

When the priest has examined the filthy pile, he discovers a tiny coin, which he quickly picks up.
148. Iumentum cum sex mensium
Olim fuisset parvulum,
Vulnus suscepit stipite
Ani tenelli limine.

Long ago, when the beast was a six-
month old filly, it wounded its anus
on a tree-stump.

149. Ibi minutum substitit,
In cicatrice latuit,
Equa cum nummos reddidit,
Quos Unibos subintulit.

In that scar, a small coin hid itself and
stood firm while the mare emitted the
other coins Unibos had placed there.

150. Illa scrobis alti vulneris
Invenienti profuit
Dum commovit pecuniam
Inclinus hordeaceam.

The deep wound profited the
prospector as, bending down, he
loosened the barley-money.

151. Est vulgare proverbium:
‘Quod non prosit, non est
malum;’
Ani lesi molestia
Presbitero dat gaudia.

There is a popular proverb: ‘What is
not good is not necessarily bad.’ The
annoying wound gives the priest joy.

152. Praepositus per studium
Sacerdotis petit domum,
Ructatricem pecuniae
Certans mane requitere.

The provost, meanwhile, joyously
seeks the priest’s house in the morn-
ing, hoping to procure in his turn the
belcher of wealth.

153. ‘‘Iumentum praesta, presbiter! Ex una nocte locuples
Manebis omni tempore
Nummorum multitudine.’’

‘Give me the beast, priest. After this
one night you should be forever rich
with innumerable coins.’’

154. ‘‘Dedam equam, praeposite,’’
Dicit sacerdos tepide.
‘‘Intempestive reddere
Equam me cogis bodie.

The priest replies lukewarmly, ‘‘I’ll
give you the mare, provost, but you
force me to give the mare up prema-
turely on this day.

152.4 certans certam B

155. ‘‘Aurora gallicinio
Exierunt ab utero
Male cocti denarii,
Recentes, hordeacei.’’

‘At the crack of dawn, only under-
done coins, mostly barley, came out
of its belly.’’
156. Cum magnis potentatibus
   Equam ducit praepositus;
   Idem tamen quod presbiter
   Praeter minuta possidet.

   Nevertheless, with much authority
   the provost leads the mare away, but
   he gets the same thing the priest did,
   with the exception of the small coin.

157. Iumentum nocte tertia
   Maior claudit domo sua
   Reperturus diluculo
   Quod fetebat in angulo.

   On the third night the mayor likewise
   stables the beast, and at dawn he also
   finds a stinking pile in a corner.

158. Comedit hordeoceum
   Equa communis pabulum,
   Quae stercus foetoriferum
   Horis concepit noctium.

   The shared mare had eaten a meal of
   barley and engendered only bad-
   smelling dung during the night.

159. Quid sit facturus Unibos
   Contra commotos aemulos
   Meditatur in lectulo
   Frequenti cum suspicio.

   Meanwhile, Unibos, sighing fre-
   quently in his bed, worries about what
   he should do with his enraged and
   envious rivals.

160. Conveniunt cum turbine
   Ferrata tres in ace,
   Post nocturnam caliginem
   Adeuntes Unibovem.

   These three assemble like a whirl-
   wind, assume a proper battle forma-
   tion, and finally approach Unibos’
   house once night’s darkness has dissi-
   pated.

161. Viri clamant tres pariter
   ‘Exi, sceleste fraudifer!
   Occidende crudeler
   Mactaberis carnaliter.’

   All three then call out together:
   ‘Come out, you filthy liar! We shall
   butcher you most cruelly; shortly,
   we’ll cut you to pieces.’

162. Respondet adversariis,
   Qui quaeritur sub stipulis:
   ‘Praesto sum vester Unibos;
   Vos meos dico dominos.

   Hidden under his straw mat, Unibos
   replies to his enemies: ‘Here I am,
   your Unibos, and I call you my lords.

163. ‘Si vultis interficere,
   Quem quaeritis durissime,
   Vobis narrabo, quomodo
   Perire velim subito.

   ‘Before you kill me, whom you seek
   most keenly, let me first tell you how
   I should prefer to die a quick death.
164. "Sunt mortis multa genera,  
   Unum finem dant omnia;  
   Ut vobis satisfaciam,  
   Modum mortis mox eligam.

165. "Quae mors fiat amarior  
   In mundo sive tristior,  
   Nunquam probastis, domini,  
   Nec probetis, dulcissimi.

166. "Dicam tamen pacifice,  
   Qua ratione perdere  
   Me possitis in hac die  
   Aut cras futuro tempore.

167. "Ligate me de funibus  
   Aut de contortis restibus;  
   In apotheca mittite,  
   In qua me missum claudite.

168. "A doctis carpentariis  
   Stringatur tonna circulis;  
   Tonnam cum meo corpore  
   Ad mare magnum volvite.

169. "Cum tonna me dimergite;  
   Ad abyssum transmittite;  
   Hac arte me confundite!  
   Sic peream me iudice."

   "Hoc mentes nostrae cupiunt,  
   Ut tali morte pereas,  
   A nobis ut sic exeas."

171. Nectunt loris Unibovem  
   In terra detestabilem,  
   Qui, postquam tonna clauditur,  
   In ripa maris sistitur.

"There are many ways of being killed, but all lead to the same end. So, in order to meet your ends and mine, why not let me choose the manner of my death?

"Surely, my lords, you would not approve, nor indeed should you, my dear friends, that I should undergo too bitter or too cruel a parting from this life.

"I, however, will reveal to you peaceably how you should destroy me, either today or at a future time.

"Tie me with rope, bind it tightly around me, get a barrel, and shut me up in it.

"The barrel should be sealed with bands by skilled coopers; then, with my body inside, throw the barrel into the mighty sea.

"Carry me out to the deep sea and sink me and the barrel. In this way you destroy me, and I die according to my wishes."

"Let it be as you wish," the three say. "We also desire that you perish by such a death and thus depart from this world."

They bind Unibos, the most detested man on earth, with cords. Afterwards he is enclosed in a barrel and placed on a cliff near the sea.
172. Clausus sic fatur Unibos
    Magis seducens tres viros:
    "Confiteor hic hodie,
    Reclusus sum iustissime.

173. "In agone iudicii
    Sum constitutus ultimi;
    Propter diem novissimum
    Deponite nunc odium.

174. "Miser manus erigere
    In hoc non possum carcere;
    Heu, lumbos vexant brachia
    Per maledicta vincula.

175. "Pietatis viatico,
    Apothecae spiraculo
    Mendacium non profero,
    Caritatem pronuntio.

176. "Bisseni sunt denarii
    In fundo mei loculi,
    Quos bibite, piissimi,
    Ad honorem summi dei!"

177. Caritativus presbiter
    Fatetur temporaliter:
    "Donec bibamus dulciter"
    In tonna dormi dulciter.

178. Tres festinant ad pocula
    Bibituri precamina;
    Sedent, loquantur nimium,
    Bibunt vinum clarissimum.

179. It cum porcinis gregibus
    Sonoris grunnientium,
    Subulcus transit pervius
    In pharetratis renibus.

From inside, Unibos, deceiving the three men as usual, says the following: "I confess, here and now, that I have been imprisoned most righ- teously.

"Indeed, I am now ready to meet my last judgment. My lords, on behalf of this new beginning, please end your hatred now.

"Miserable that I am, I cannot free my hands in this prison. The cursed cords, alas, torment my arms and legs.

"As a result of your charity, of these last rites kindly given, I can no longer lie to you as I speak from this barrel — I must demonstrate my love of you.

"There are twelve coins at the bottom of my moneybox. Buy drinks, my kind fathers, and toast to the Lord Almighty!"

The priest, now turned a loving man, speaks in a courteous manner: "While we drink sweet wine, sleep sweetly in this barrel."

The three hurry to their cups to make holy toasts. They sit and they talk while they drink a fine wine.

Meanwhile a swineherd passes by the barrel with a herd of swine grunting noisily. With arrows in his quiver, he crosses the road towards it.
180. Dum porcos audit Unibos
   Tonnae fricare circulos,
   Exclamat: "Adversarii,
   Ah, non sunt adhuc ebrii."

181. Horret subulcus de sono
   Unibovis incognito;
   Vas quernum tangit baculo
   Dicens incluso miserro:

182. "Pro quo clausus es crimine
   In apotheca, perdite?"
   Prompte respondet Unibos:
   "Honores nolo maximos.

183. "Huius coloni patriae
   Me compellunt cotidie
   Me volentes efficere
   Praepositionum potentiae.

184. "Ergo nunquam praepositus
   Ero meis aetatibus,
   Nam sufficit, quod habeo;
   Honores regni renuo."

185. Subulcus inquit cupidus:
   "Me decet honor maximus.
   Ego pro te praepositus
   Efficiar ditissimus.

186. "Compulsus sum fataliter
   Apothecam tuam, miser,
   Hoc fuste meo tangere.
   Certa me tonna ponere!"

187. Subulcus pellit circulos;
   Multum laetatur Unibos.
   Aperitur vas ligneum;
   Fit fortuiae commercium.

188. Eicitur, dissolvitur,
   Festinanter dimittitur;
   Duris fit liber vinculis.
   Qui iacuit sub circulis.

When Unibos hears the pigs rubbing against the barrel’s bands, he ex-
claims, "Oh no! My enemies decided not to get drunk!"

The swineherd shudders at the myster-
rious sound coming from the barrel.
He taps the oaken vessel with his stick
and says to the imprisoned Unibos:

"For what crime, oh lost soul, are you
enclosed in this barrel?" Unibos re-
plies readily: "I refused the highest
honors.

"The people of this country urge me
daily to become their leading provost.

"But never in my life will I become
their provost, for what I have suffices
me, and I reject the honors of this
world."

The greedy swineherd answers,
"Great honors, however, well befit
me. I, taking your place, could be-
come a wealthy provost.

"Indeed, fate must have driven me,
you wretch, to tap your barrel with my
staff. Now help me put myself in the
barrel instead of you!"

The swineherd dislodges the bands
while Unibos greatly rejoices. The
wooden barrel is finally opened, and
the business of Lady Luck is done.

Unibos is pulled out, untied, and
quickly released. Now he is free of
fetters, free of the bands which once
held him.
189. Subulcus intrat concavum
Vas aptans corpus proprium,
Quasi sentiret lectulum
De floribus compositum.

190. Trux vas opturat Unibos;
Strictim reponit circulos.
Per locos transit invios
Ducens porcos pinguissimos.

191. Reversis potatoribus
Tres de potationibus,
Dum tonnam volvunt in mare,
Audet subulcus dicere:

192. “Fiam, fiam praepositus
Sub vestris voluntatibus;
Maris ne iacter fluctibus
A vobis iam edomitus.”

193. Plenus vino praepositus
In indignationibus
Subulco dixit simplici:
“Non est haec vox dulcis mihi.

194. “Tonnam certate volvere,
O socii, certissime.
Fit fluctuum praepositus
Hic Unibos nequissimus.”

195. In ponto salso mergitur;
Apotheca colliditur.
Subulcus, heu, conterit;
A cunctis obliviscitur.

196. Fatuitatis divites
Tres persolvisse comparæ
Existimant novissimas
Unibovis exequias.

197. Post haec in die tertia
Sollemplni tamen feria
Visitaturus fatuos
Redit magistros Unibos.

The swineherd enters the hollow barrel in Unibos' place and adjusts his own body as if he were settling upon a little bed of flowers.

Unibos seals up the wooden barrel and replaces the bands firmly. Then leading the fat pigs away, he enters a trackless waste.

When the three bibblers return from drinking and begin to roll the barrel seaward, the swineherd boldly says:

“Alright, I’ll be your provost. I give in to your wishes. So don’t throw me into the sea! I am ruled by your desires!”

The provost, full of wine, replies indignantly to the swineherd: “I don’t find those words very amusing.

“Let’s roll this barrel, oh comrades, with strong hands. Let this wicked Unibos become provost of the waves.”

The barrel is thrown into the salty sea. There it is dashed apart, and the swineherd, alas, is destroyed. He is forgotten by everybody.

All three men, still rich in foolishness, think they have finally paid their due to the dead Unibos.

But three days later, at a weekly fair, Unibos returns to visit his foolish masters.
198. It per villae quadrivium
Tenens in dextra baculum,
Porcorum multitudinem
Deducens ante faciem.

199. Distente prudens bucina
Subulci more sybilat.
Rufos cum furvis convocat;
Dente laedentes territat.

199,3 furvis furis B

200. Qui viderant Unibovem,
Eius dicebant similem,
De quo fama volaverat,
Quod mortuus iam fuerat.

201. Nuntiatur praeposito,
Maiori cum presbitero,
Quod Unibos revixerit,
In ponto qui mersus fuit.

202. Tres illi surgunt stupidi
Famam credentes somnii,
Suis quassantes genibus
Subsellia poplitibus.

203. Formam vident Unibovis
Porcini ductricem gregis.
Ipsum sed esse non putant;
Occidisse putaverant.

204. Recognoscent Unibovem;
Vident porcorum divitem.
Interrogant, quis dederit
Tot porcos aut vendiderit.

205. Respondet sub prodigio:
"Maris praecipitatio,
Ad regnum felicissimum
Ivi per praecipitium.

206. "Inde nunquam recederem,
Si non amassem coniugem,
Quam vidistis resurgere
Veracis tubae murmure.

He enters the center of the town holding a staff in his right hand and leading a multitude of pigs in front of him.

He plays his horn fully and carefully, and whistling like a swineherd, he calls together the red and the dark pigs and prods the alarmed animals with his prong.

Those who see him say he looks just like Unibos, whose recent death is now a matter of gossip.

The provost, the mayor, and the priest learn that Unibos, whom they had thrown into the sea, has been resurrected.

Thinking he is a ghost, they spring up stunned, and their knees and hams shake the benches.

They behold the shape of Unibos leading the drove of swine, but they do not think it is Unibos himself—they were sure they had killed him.

At last they must recognize that it is he, and seeing his wealth in pork, they ask him who had given him or sold him so many animals.

He replies with a miraculous lie: "Tumbling beneath the sea, I travelled to a marvelous realm on the ocean's floor.

"I would never have returned here from that place if I did not love my wife, who you saw rise again by the sound of the true flute."
207. "‘Non fuit culpa bucinae,  
   Sed bucinantis pessime,  
   Ormnes si vestrae feminae  
   Modo sternunt sub pulvere."

   "It wasn’t the fault of the flute if your  
   wives now snore under dust — it was  
   your bad playing that is to blame."

208. "‘Heu, cur in pueritia  
   Me non iactasti ad loca,  
   Unde felix regredior,  
   Revertor eruditior?"

   "Ah, why didn’t you throw me down  
   there when I was a boy? Still, even  
   now I return a happy, a wiser man."

209. "‘Me iactatis per odium  
   Ad propitiatorium,  
   Ubi porcorum sunt greges  
   Per nullum numerabiles.”"

   "In your hatred you threw me to my  
   atonement, a place where there are so  
   many pigs they cannot be counted.”

210. Sub ammirationibus  
     Prius dicit praepositus:  
     ‘Nos pernarum spes optim  
     Monet temptare maria.

   Admiring Unibos, the provost speaks  
   first: "The hope of acquiring such  
   pigs drives me to assail the sea also.

211. "‘Me quisquis erit stultior,  
     Parebit,’ dicit stultior.  
     Petunt fluctus aequoreos,  
     Post quos incedit Unibos.

   "Anyone less perceptive than I  
   should follow me,” says the dolt. So  
   they seek the sea’s waves, while  
   Unibos walks behind.

212. Motus marini personant;  
     Grunnie porcos estimant.  
     Requirunt ab Unibove,  
     Qua sint porcinae semitae.

   The sea resounds, and the three men  
   think they hear pigs grunting. They  
   ask Unibos where lies the trail to the  
   pigs.

213. Sed Unibos periculum  
     Dicens designat pessimum,  
     Ubi litus est altius,  
     Ubi mare profundius.

   And Unibos indicates the place where  
   the danger is greatest, where the cliffs  
   are highest, where the sea is deepest.

214. "‘Illuc festini currite;  
     Sine metu vos mergite!  
     Maiores porci sunt aquis,  
     Quam sint in terris aridis.”"

   "There you should run quickly, and  
   throw yourselves in without fear.  
   You’ll find more pigs in these waters  
   than on dry land.”

215. Unibovis consiliis  
     Tres dant se praecipiitis;  
     Sub capitali frenesi  
     Per saltum stulte mortui.

   With this advice the three throw  
   themselves off the cliff. In deadly  
   frenzy they die foolishly in the salt  
   sea.
216. Inimici consilia
    Non sunt credenda subdola;
    Ostendit ista fabula
    Per seculorum secula.

As this story reveals, the deceitful
counsel of the wicked should not be
believed — amen.

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