

Texts & Translations

<p>Padre del ciel, dopo i perduti giorni, dopo le notti vaneggiando spese, con quel fero desio ch'al cor s'accese, mirando gl'atti per mio mal sì adorni,</p> <p>piacciati homai col tuo lume ch'io torni ad altra vita et à piu bell'imprese, si c'havendo le reti indarno tese, il mio duro avversario se ne scorni.</p> <p>Hor volge, signor mio, l'undecimo anno ch'io fui sommessò al dispietato giogo che sopra i più soggetti è più feroce.</p> <p>Miserere del mio non degno affanno, reduci i pensier' vaghi a miglior luogo, ramenta lor com' hoggi fosti in croce.</p> <p>Francesco Petrarca, <i>Canzoniere</i> 62</p>	<p>Father in heaven, after the lost days, after the nights spent raving with that fierce desire that ignited in my heart when to my cost I beheld those so lovely gestures,</p> <p>may it please you now that with your light I return to another life, and to more worthy endeavors, so that, having spread his nets in vain, my hard adversary be put to scorn.</p> <p>Now turns, my Lord, the eleventh year that I have been subject to the pitiless yoke that to the most submissive is most ferocious.</p> <p>Take pity on my unworthy suffering, lead my wandering thoughts back to a better place, remind them that today you were on the cross.</p>
<p>Padre del cielo, hor ch'altra nube il calle destro m'asconde, e vie fallaci stampo con vago pie per questo instabil campo de la mondana e paludosa valle,</p> <p>regga tua santa man sì ch'ei non falle mio corso errante e di tua gratia il lampo dolce sovra me splenda e del mio scampo quel sentier mostri a cui vols'io le spalle.</p> <p>Deh! pria che'l verno queste chiome asperga di bianca neve, e'l mio nascente giorno chiuda in tenebre eterne il fosco lume,</p> <p>dammi ch'io faccia a tua magion ritorno, come sublime angel che spieghi et erga da vil fango palustre al ciel le piume.</p> <p>Torquato Tasso, <i>Rime</i> 1688</p>	<p>Father in heaven, now that another cloud hides the right way from me, and I tread deceptive paths with wandering steps though this unstable field in the swampy valley of this world,</p> <p>may your holy hand guide me, that I do not fail in my errant course, and may the lamp of your grace shine gently above me and show me that path to escape on which I turned my back.</p> <p>Ah, before winter sprinkles this hair with snowy white and encloses the dim light of my dawning day in eternal darkness,</p> <p>grant that I return to your dwelling place, like a soaring angel who spreads and raises his wings, above this vile muddy swamp, to heaven.</p>
<p>L'aura serena che fra verdi fronde mormorando a ferir nel volto viemme, fammi risovenir quand'Amor diemme le prime piaghe, sì dolci profonde,</p>	<p>The serene breeze that through green boughs comes murmuring to strike my brow makes me remember when Love gave me those first wounds, so sweetly deep,</p>

<p>e 'l bel viso veder, ch'altri m'asconde, che sdegno o gelosia celato tiemme; et le chiome hor avolte in perl'e in gemme, all'hor sciolte e sovra or terso bionde,</p> <p>le quali ella spargea sì dolcemente, e raccogliea con sì leggiadri modi, che ripensando ancor trema la mente;</p> <p>torsele il tempo poi in più saldi nodi e strinse 'l cor d'un laccio sì possente, che Morte sola fia ch'indi lo snodi.</p> <p>Petrarca, <i>Canzoniere</i> 196</p>	<p>and made me see the sweet face which she hides from me, which anger or jealousy keeps hidden; and her tresses, now twisted with pearls and gems, then loose and blonder than polished gold,</p> <p>which she spread out so sweetly and gathered together again in such a charming way that as I think again on it, my mind trembles;</p> <p>time then wound them into tighter knots and bound my heart with such a powerful cord that Death alone shall be able to unbind it.</p>
<p><i>Paragona il canto di Laura a' dolcissimi suoni fatti naturalmente e dimostra gli effetti de la sua meravigliosa armonia.</i></p> <p>Non fonte o fiume od aura odo in più dolce suon di quel di Laura, né 'n lauro o 'n pino o 'n mirto mormorar s'udì mai più dolce spirto. O felice a cui spira, e quel beato che per lei sospira, ché se gl'inspira il core, pote al cielo aspirar col suo valore.</p> <p>Tasso, <i>Rime</i> 137</p>	<p><i>He compares the singing of Laura [Peperara] to the sweetest sounds produced by nature and describes the effects of her marvelous harmony.</i></p> <p>No fountain or river or breeze do I hear make a sound sweeter than Laura's, nor among laurel nor pine nor myrtle was ever heard the murmuring of a sweeter spirit. O happy one towards whom she breathes and blessed he who, for her, sighs, for if she inspires his heart, he can aspire to heaven, aided by her valor.</p>
<p>Vezzosi augelli in fra le verde fronde temprano a prova lascivette note; mormora l'aura, e fa le foglie e l'onde garrir che variamente ella percote. Quando taccion gli augelli alto risponde, quando cantan gli augei più lieve scote; sia caso od arte, or accompagna, ed ora alterna i versi lor la musica hora.</p> <p>Tasso, <i>Gerusalemme liberata</i> XVI, 12</p>	<p>Joyous birds amid the green fronds tune their merry little notes; the breeze murmurs and makes the leaves and waves chatter as variously she strikes them. When the birds fall silent, loudly she replies; when the birds sing, more softly she shakes the leaves; be it chance or art, her music now accompanies and now alternates with their verses.</p>
<p>Dissimulare etiam sperasti, perfide, tantum posse nefas tacitusque me a decedere terra? Nec te noster amor, nec te data dextera quondam, nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido?</p>	<p>Did you even hope, traitor, that you could conceal so foul a crime and leave my land in secret? Can neither our love stay you, nor the pledge you once gave, nor the fate of cruel death that waits on Dido?</p>

<p>Quin etiam hiberno moliris sidere classem, et mediis properas aquilonibus ire per altum, crudelis. Quid si non arva aliena domosque ignotas peteres, et Troia antiqua maneret, Troia per undosum peteretur classibus aequor?</p> <p>Mene fugis? Per ego has lacrimas dextramque tuam te —quando aliud mihi iam miserae nihil ipsa reliqui— per connubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos, si bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quicquam dulce meum, miserere domus labentis et istam, oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem.</p> <p><i>Aeneid IV, 305-19</i></p>	<p>Nay, even under the winter sky you hasten to repair your ships and cross the deep in the midst of the northern gales, cruel one! What! were you not in quest of alien lands and unknown dwellings, were ancient Troy still standing, would your ships go in search of Troy over stormy seas?</p> <p>Is it I you flee? By these tears and your right hand —since naught else have I left my wretched self— by our union, by the wedding ceremonies we have begun, if ever I deserved well of you, if anything of mine has been sweet to you, pity a failing house, and I pray, if there be yet room for prayers, abandon this purpose.</p>
<p>At trepida et coeptis immanibus effera Dido sanguineam volvens aciem, maculisque trementes interfusa genas et pallida morte futura, interiora domus inrumpit limina et altos conscendit furibunda rogos ensemque recludit Dardanium, non hos quaesitum munus in usus. Hic, postquam Iliacas vestes notumque cubile conspexit, paulum lacrimis et mente morata incubuitque toro dixitque novissima verba:</p>	<p>But Dido, trembling and frenzied with her awful purpose, rolling her bloodshot eyes, her quivering cheeks flecked with burning spots, and pale at the coming of death, bursts into the inner courts of the house, mounts in madness the high pyre and unsheathes the Dardan sword, a gift besought for no such end! Then, as she saw the Trojan garb and the familiar bed, pausing awhile in tearful thought, she threw herself on the couch and spoke her last words:</p>
<p>Dulces exuvie, dum fata deusque sinebant, accipite hanc animam meque his exolvite curis. Vixi et quem dederat cursum fortuna peregi et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago.</p> <p>Urbem praeclaram statui, mea moenia vidi, ulta virum poenas inimico a fratre recepi: felix, heu nimium felix, si litora tantum nunquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae.</p> <p><i>Aeneid IV, 651-58</i></p>	<p>O relics once dear, while Fate and God allowed, take this spirit and release me from my woes! I have lived, I have finished the course that Fortune gave, and now in majesty my shade shall pass beneath the earth.</p> <p>A noble city have I built; I have seen my walls rise; avenging my husband, I have punished my brother and foe: happy, ah! too happy, had but the Dardan keels never touched our shores!</p> <p>Translation after H. R. Fairclough</p>
<p>Dolci spoglie, felic'e care tanto mentr'al ciel piacqu'e fui da lui gradita, prendet'hor questa miserabil vita e qui fin habb'il duol, le pen'e 'l pianto.</p> <p>Viss'ho 'l mio corso et ho fornito quanto</p>	<p>Sweet relics, so happy and dear as long as it pleased heaven that I was beloved by him: take now this miserable life and let there be an end to grief, pain, and tears.</p> <p>I have run my course and accomplished that</p>

<p>mi die natura: hor vo nell'altra vita. Vendicat'ho Sicheo, vist'ho fornita la terra di ch'ancor mi glori'e vanto.</p> <p>Felic'haimè, troppo felic'er'io se le navi Troiane il nostro lido con quel crudel mai non havesser visto.</p> <p>Così disse premend'al petto Dido la spada, che mostrò di sangue un rio d'ira, d'odio, d'Amor, di pianto misto.</p> <p>Raffaele Gualtieri, after <i>Aeneid</i> IV, 651-58 & 663-65</p>	<p>which nature granted me: now I pass into the other life. I have revenged Sichaeus and watched over the creation of the land which is yet my glory and pride. Happy, ah! too happy was I, had the Trojan ships, with that cruel man, never seen our shores.</p> <p>So spoke Dido, plunging the sword into her breast, which gave forth a flood of blood mixed with wrath, hate, love, and tears.</p>
<p>Quel rosignol, che si soave piagne forse suoi figli o sua cara consorte, di dolcezza empie il cielo et le campagne con tante note si pietose et scorte,</p> <p>e tutta notte par che m'accompagne e mi ramente la mia dura sorte: ch'altri che me non hò di ch'io mi lagne, che'n dee non credev'io regnasse Morte.</p> <p>O che lieve è inganar chi s'assicura! Que' duo bei lumi, assai piu che'l sol chiari, chi pensò mai veder far terra oscura?</p> <p>Hor cognosco io che mia fera ventura vuol che vivendo et lagrimando impari come nulla qua giù diletta et dura.</p> <p>Petrarca, <i>Canzoniere</i> 311</p>	<p>The nightingale who so sweetly weeps, perhaps for his children or his dear consort, with sweetness fills the sky and the fields with many notes, so piteous and skillful,</p> <p>and every night he seems to accompany me and remind me of my hard lot: for I have none but myself to complain of, since I did not believe that Death reigns over goddesses.</p> <p>Oh, how easy it is to deceive one who believes himself secure! Those two lovely eyes, much brighter than the sun, who ever thought to see them made dark earth?</p> <p>Now I know that my fierce destiny wants me, living and weeping, to learn how nothing here below pleases and endures.</p>
<p>Or negletta e schernita in abbandono rimasa, segue pur chi fugge e sprezza; e procurar adornar co' pianti il dono rifiutato per sé di sua bellezza. Vassene, ed al piè tenero non sono quel gelo intoppo e quella alpina asprezza; e invia per messaggieri inanzi i gridi, né giunge lui pria ch'ei sia giunto a i lidi.</p> <p>Tasso, <i>Gerusalemme liberata</i> XVI, 39</p>	<p>Now she pursues, forsaken and despised, the one who flees her presence in contempt. Trying to make more beautiful with tears that beauty which, alone, has been so scorned, she chases him; and all the mountain ice, and all its steepness by no means impede her fragile feet. Heralds she sends before; she's there, but he's already reached the shore.</p> <p>Translation by Joseph Tusiani</p>

<p>Forsennata gridava, ò tu che porte Parte teco di me, parte ne lassi, O prendi l'una o rendi l'altra o morte Da insieme ad'ambi: arresta, arresta i passi, Sol che ti sian le voci ultime porte, Non dico i baci: altra piu degn'havrassi Quelli da te. Che temi, empio, se resti? Potrai negar poi che fuggir potesti.</p> <p>Tasso, <i>Gerusalemme liberata</i> XVI, 40</p>	<p>Maddened, she screamed, O you, who are taking part of me with you and leaving the other behind, either take the one or return the other, or give death to both parts together! Halt, halt your steps, just long enough that you receive my last words, if not my kisses; another worthier woman shall have those from you. What do you fear, wicked man, if you stay? You can as easily refuse, since you are able to flee.</p>
<p>Quivi da faci in lungo ordine accese con nobil pompa accompagnar lo feo, e le sue arme, a un nudo pin sospese, vi spiegò sovra in forma di trofeo. Ma come prima alzar le membra offese nel dí seguente il cavalier poteo, di riverenza pieno e di pietate visitò le sepolte ossa onorate.</p> <p>Tasso, <i>Gerusalemme liberata</i> XII, 95</p>	<p>So with a sad procession and a long line of lit tapers her fair body is buried, and so, above her tomb, her arms are hung, as a bright trophy, on a naked pine. The new day dawns, and as the knight is able to lift from bed his still-offended limbs, laden with pity, lost in reverence, he comes to honor her interred remains.</p> <p>Translation by Joseph Tusiani</p>
<p>Giunto a la tomba ove al suo spirto vivo Dolorosa prigion il ciel prescrisse, Di color, di calor, di moto privo, Gia marmo in vista al marmo il viso affisse. Al fin sgorgando un lagrimoso rivo, In un languido ohime! proruppe e disse: O sasso amato tanto, amaro tanto, Che dentro hai le mie fiamme et fuor il pianto,</p> <p>Non di morte sei tu, ma di vivaci Ceneri albergo ov'è nascosto Amore; Sento dal freddo tuo l'usate faci, Men dolci si, ma non men cald'al cuore. Deh prendi questi piant'e questi baci, Prendi ch'io bagno di doglioso humore Et dalli tu, poi ch'io non posso, almeno A le amate reliquie c'hai nel seno.</p> <p>Tasso, <i>Gerusalemme liberata</i> XII, 96-97</p>	<p>Before the tomb where her living soul lies in a dolorous prison prescribed by heaven, empty of color, warmth, and motion, his face marble, on marble he fixes his gaze. At last disgorging a flood of tears, he bursts out in a languid sob and says: O stone, so beloved, so bitter, who keeps my flame within and my tears without,</p> <p>you are not the dwelling-place of death, but of living embers, where Love lies hidden; within your chill I feel the old flame, less sweet, yes, but no less warm to the heart. Ah, take these tears and these kisses, take them, bathed in my grief, and give them at least, since I cannot, to the beloved remains enclosed within you.</p>
<p>Chiaro Sol, che rotando esci del Gange, D'alta corona di bei raggi adorno, Piangi dolente hor con Maria che piange E piovoso ne porta e oscuro il giorno. Tu piangi il duol che la scolora ed ange,</p>	<p>Bright Sun, which, revolving, rises from the Ganges adorned with a tall crown of beautiful rays, weep sadly now with Mary, who weeps and brings with her a dark and rainy day.</p>

<p>O Luna, cinta di procelle intorno, E voi spargete ancor di pianto un nembo, Pallide Stelle, a l'ampia Terra in grembo.</p> <p>Tasso, <i>Lagime</i> 2</p>	<p>And you, weep for the pain that makes her pale and grieves her, O Moon, ringed about with storms; and you, pour forth once more a cloud of tears, pale Stars, into the vast Earth's bosom.</p>
<p><i>In lode de la Mesola</i></p> <p>Ha Ninfe adorn'e belle la casta Margarita, ed essa è Dea, se virtù fa gli Dei come solea; però boschi, palaggi e prati e valli, secchi et ondosi calli le fece il grande Alfonso e cinse intorno navi, e d'erranti fere ampio soggiorno, e gionse i porti e i lustri in cui le serra, perché sia la prigion campo di guerra, e i diletti sian glorie et tante prede sue tutte vittorie.</p> <p>Tasso, <i>Rime</i> 930</p>	<p><i>In praise of Mesola</i></p> <p>The chaste Margherita has beautiful, richly adorned nymphs, and she is a Goddess, if virtue makes gods as it used to; but woods, palaces and fields and valleys, dry and winding lanes were made for her by the great Alfonso, and he brought boats around them, and made ample abode for wandering beasts, and built the gates and dens in which he encloses them, that their prison might be a field of battle, and pleasures be glories, and such prey of his all be victories.</p> <p><i>Mesola</i> a castle surrounded by extensive hunting grounds, near Ferrara, built 1578-83 by Alfonso d'Este for his wife Margherita Gonzaga</p>