

Johann Nauwach, *Cruda Amarilli*

From *Il Pastor Fido*, Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538-1612)

*Versi sciolti*¹

Cruda Amarilli², che co'l nome ancora,
D'amar, ah! lasso! amaramente insegna;
Amarilli, del candido ligustro
Più candid'e più bella,
Ma de l'aspidio sordo
E più sord'e più fero e più fugace;
Poi che co'l dir t'offendo,
I mi morrò tacendo.

*Cruel Amaryllis, whose very name
Teaches bitterly, alas, of love,
Amaryllis, whiter and more beautiful
Than the white privet,
But than the deaf adder
Deaf, fiercer, and more fleeting
Since in speaking I offend you
I will die in silence.*

Alternative translation by Richard Fanshawe (1608-1666):

*O Amarillis, Authress of my flame,
(Within my mouth how sweet now is thy name!
But in my heart how bitter!) Amarillis,
Fairer and whiter than the whitest Lilies,
But crueller than cruell Adders far,
Which having stung (least they should pitie) bar
Their ears and flie: If then by speaking I
Offend thee, I will hold my peace and die.*

Cipriano de Rore, *Anchor che col partire*

Alfonso d'Avalos (1502-1546)

*Madrigal*³

Anchor che col partire
Io mi sento morire
Partir vorrei ogn'hor, ogni momento
Tant'è il piacer ch'io sento
De la vita ch'acquisto nel ritorno
Et così mill'e mille volte'l giorno
Partir da voi vorrei
Tanto son dolci gli ritorni miei.

*Even though on parting
I feel myself dying
I would part from you every hour, every moment,
Such is the pleasure I feel
In the life I gain on my return
And so, a thousand, thousand times a day
Would I part from you,
So sweet are my returns.*

¹ *Versi sciolti*, literally 'free lines' are a common poetic form in Italian plays in the 16th century. They have much more rhythmic variation than English blank verse, using a mixture of lines of seven and eleven syllables. *Versi sciolti* became the standard form for recitative.

² The speaker is Mirtillo, whose love for Amaryllis is – at this early stage of the play – hopeless, since she is promised to another.

³ This is in fact the only 'true' madrigal sung in the programme. The form is freer than the sonnet or canzona, with no fixed metre or rhyme.

Claudio Monteverdi, *Ah, dolente partita (Il quarto libro de madrigali a cinque voci)*

From *Il Pastor Fido*, Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538-1612)

Versi sciolti

Ah, dolente partita!⁴
Ah, fin de la mia vita!
Da te parto e non moro? E pur i provo
La pena de la morte
E sento nel partire
Un vivace morire,
Che da vita al dolore
Per far che moia immortalmente il core.

Ah, sorrowful parting!
Ah, end of my life!
Do I take your leave without dying? And yet I feel
The pain of death
And sense in departing
A dying full of life,
That gives life to my grief
So that my heart might die immortally.

Claudio Monteverdi, *Ahi troppo è duro (Il Ballo dell'ingrate, final scene)*

Ottavio Rinuccini (1562-1621)

Versi sciolti

Ahi troppo, ahi troppo è duro
Crudel sentenza e viè più cruda pena
Tornar a lagrimar ne l'antro oscuro

Ah, too, too hard
Is the cruel sentence and even harsher punishment
To return to weep in the dark cave

Aer sereno e puro
Addio per sempre, addio ò Cielo ò sole
Addio lucide stelle
Apprendete pietà Donn'e Donzelle

Clear, pure air
Farewell for ever, farewell O Heaven, O sun
Farewell shining stars
Learn pity, ladies and maidens

Al fumo a' gridi a' pianti
A sempiterno affanno
Ahi dove son le pompe ove gli amanti
Dove, dove sen vanno
Donne che sì pregiato al mondo furo?

To the fumes, to the cries, to the weeping
To everlasting torment
Ah, where is the ceremony, where are the lovers
Where, where are they going,
Ladies who once enjoyed such worldly esteem?

Aer sereno e puro
Addio per sempre, addio o Cielo o sole
Addio lucide stelle
Apprendete pietà Donn'e Donzelle.

Clear, pure air
Farewell for ever, farewell O Heaven, O sun
Farewell shining stars
Learn pity, ladies and maidens

Giulio Caccini, *Ahi troppo è duro (Quarto Intermedio)*

Giambattista Strozzi (1551-1634)

Madrigal

Io che dal ciel cader farei la luna
A voi ch'in alto sete
e tutt'il ciel vedete, voi commando
Ditene quando il somm'eterno Giove
Dal ciel in terra ogni sua gratia piove.

I, who could make the moon fall from the heavens,
Command you, who are on high
And see the whole of heaven
To tell us when the great eternal Jove
Will pour his every grace from heaven to earth.

⁴ The speaker is once again Mirtillo.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, *Vestiva i colli*

Anonymous Petrarchist, 16th century

Sonnet (first part)

Vestiva i colli e le campagne intorno
La primavera di novelli onori
E spirava soavi arabi odori,
Cinta d'erbe, di fronde il crin adorno,
Quando Licori, a l'apparir del giorno,
Cogliendo di sua man purpurei fiori,
Mi disse in guidardon di tanti ardori:
A te li colgo et ecco, io te n'adorno.

*Spring clothed the hills and countryside around
With fresh honours⁵
Wafting sweet Arabian fragrances,
Encircled by grasses, her hair adorned with blossoms,
When Licori, at break of day,
Gathering purple flowers in his hand,
Said to me, in recompense for such longing,
I gather these for you, and see, I adorn you with them.*

Claudio Monteverdi, from *L'Orfeo*

Alessandro Striggio (c.1573-1630)

Prologo (La Musica)

Hendecasyllable quatrains, ABBA⁶

Dal mio Permessus⁷ amato à voi ne vegno,
Incliti Eroi, sangue gentil de' Regi,
Di cui narra la Fama eccelsi pregi,
Né giunge al ver, perch'è tropp'alto il segno⁸.

*From my beloved Permessus I come to you,
Glorious heroes, noble blood of royalty,
Of whom Fame relates such high praises
Yet falls short of the truth, for the mark is too high.*

Io la Musica son, ch'ai dolci accenti
Sò far tranquillo ogni turbato core,
Et hor di nobil ira, et hor d'Amore
Poss'infiammar le più gelate menti.

*I am Music, who, with sweet accents,
Knows how to sooth every troubled heart,
And now with noble anger, now with love
Can inflame the iciest of minds.*

Io su Cetera d'or cantando soglio,
Mortal orecchio lusingar talora;
E in questa guisa à l'armonia sonora
De la lira del ciel più l'alme invoglio.

*Singing to my golden cithara, it is my wont
Now and then to flatter mortal ears;
And in this guise, I draw souls in
To the sonorous harmony of the heavenly lyre*

Quinci à dirvi d'Orfeo desio mi sprona,
D'Orfeo che trasse al suo cantar le fère,
E servo fé l'Inferno à sue preghiere,
Gloria immortal di Pindo e d'Elicon.

*And so, desire spurs me on to tell you of Orpheus
Orpheus, whose singing drew in wild beasts,
And made Hell servant of his prayers,
Immortal glory of Pindus and Helicon.*

Hor mentre i canti alterno, hor lieti, or mesti,
Non si mova Augellin fra queste piante,
Né s'oda in queste rive onda sonante,
Et ogni aretta in suo camin s'arresti.

*Now while I sing now happily, now sadly,
Let no bird stir among these plants,
Nor murmuring waves be heard upon these shores,
And let every breeze stop in its path.*

⁵ *Novelli honori* was a common metaphor in the 16th and 17th centuries, with Petrarchan origins, for the budding flowers and fragrances of spring.

⁶ This became the standard form for the operatic prologue, with instrumental ritornelli, and sometimes simple choreographic steps, between quatrains.

⁷ Permessus was a river sacred to the muses. It is the first of three such sacred locations named in the prologue, the others being the mountain range Pindus, sacred to Apollo in particular, and the mountain Helicon, when the river Permessus rises.

⁸ This first quatrain is the expected flattering address to the ruling Gonzaga family.

Ahi caso acerbo

Versi sciolti

Ahi caso acerbo! ahi fato empio e crudele!
ahi stelle ingiuriose! ahi cielo avaro!
Non si fidi uom mortale
di ben caduco e frale
che tosto fugge, e spesso
a gran salita il precipizio è presso.

*Ah, bitter fate! Ah, fate, wicked and cruel!
Ah, hurtful stars! Ah, covetous heaven!
Let mortal man trust not
In fragile, fleeting goods
Which soon slip away; for often
Downfall follows on the heels of a great ascent.*

Ma io ch'in questa lingua (Messaggiera)

Versi sciolti

Ma io ch'in questa lingua⁹
Ho portato il coltello
C'ha svenato ad Orfeo l'anima amante
Odiosa à i Pastori ed à le Ninfe
Odiosa à me stessa, ove m'ascondo?
Nottola infausta, il Sole fuggirò sempre
E in solitario speco
Menerò vita al mio dolore conforme.

*But I, who with this tongue
Brought the knife
Which bled the life from Orpheus' loving soul
Hateful to the shepherds and the nymphs
Hateful to myself, where can I hide?
An ill-fated bat, I will ever flee the sun,
And in a lonely cave
Lead a life fitting to my sorrow.*

Vanne Orfeo (Choro)

Canzonetta melica, ottonari, ABABCC¹⁰

Vanne Orfeo, felice a pieno,
A goder celeste honore
La ve ben non mai vien meno,
La ve mai non fu dolore,
Mentr'altari, incensi e voti
Noi t'offriam lieti e devoti.

*Go, Orpheus, full of joy
To enjoy heavenly honour
Where good never diminishes,
Where sorrow has never existed,
While we offer you altars, incense
And prayers, happy and devoted.*

Così va chi non s'arresta
Al chiamar di Nume eterno,
Così gratia in Ciel impetra
Chi qua giù provo l'inferno;
E chi semina fra doglie
D'ogni gratia il frutto coglie.

*Such is the fate of him
Who shrinks not from the call of the eternal Gods,
Thus he gains heavenly grace
Who here below experienced hell;
And he who sows in sorrow
Gathers every grace's fruit.*

⁹ The unfortunate messenger has brought the tragic news of Euridice's death to Orfeo and cannot forgive herself for shattering his dreams.

¹⁰ The *canzonetta melica* was one of the new forms devised especially for musical setting around the turn of the 17th century. The use of even numbers of syllables per line (typically 4 or 8) favoured easy adaptation to a number of regular musical forms.