

W1 Claudio Monteverdi, *L'Arianna* (1608), from Scene 6 based on

GB:Lbl, Add 30,491; I:Ffn, RR 238; I:Vc, Torre Franca 250; and *Lamento d'Arianna* (Venice, 1623)

The following excerpt is all that survives of Monteverdi's opera. It consists of the part for Arianna in scene 6 and includes her famous lament. In order to establish the context for this music, the words of the chorister and of Dorilla are given without their music, which has been lost.

Let me die, *let me die;*

La- scia- te- mi mo- ri- re, La- scia- te- mi mo- ri- re;

7 *and why do you want to comfort me* *in such a harsh fate,* *in such*

E chi vo- le- te voi che mi con- for- te In co- si du- ra sor- te, In co- si

13 *a great martyrdom?* *Let me die,* *let me die.*

gran mar- ti- re? La- scia- te- mi mo- ri- re, la- scia- te- mi mo- ri- re.

Coro: In van lingua mortale.
In van porge conforto
Dove infinito è il male.

Chorister: Mortal language is useless.
It cannot give comfort
where suffering is boundless.

21 *Oh Theseus,* *oh my Theseus,* *although I want to call you mine more than you are really mine,*

O Te- seo, o Te- seo mi- o, Si che mio ti vo' dir, che mio pur se- i,

30 *although you have vanished, ah cruel man!* *from my eyes.* *Come back, my Theseus,*

Ben- che t'in- vo- li, ah cru- do! a gli oc- chi mie- i. Vol- gi- ti Te- seo mi-

37 *come back, Theseus,* *oh God!* *Come back* *to see again*

o, Vol-gi-ti Te-seo, oh Di-o! Vol-gi-ti in-die-tro a ri-mi-rar co-

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43 *she who gave up her homeland and reign for you,* *and on these sands, once more,*

le-i Che la-scia-to ha per te la pa-tria e re-gno, E in que-ste a-re-ne an-co-ra, Ci-bo di

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49 *you will leave the bare bones of food for wild beasts.* *Oh Theseus,*

fe-re di-spie-ta-te e cru-de, La-sce-rà l'os-sa i-gnu-de. O Te-seo, o

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55 *oh my Theseus,* *if you but knew,* *oh God!* *if you but knew,* *alas!*

Te-seo mi-o, Se tu sa-pes-si, o Di-o! Se tu sa-pes-si, oi-

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61 *how poor Ariadne suffers,* *perhaps,* *perhaps*

me! co-me s'af-fan-na La po-ve-ra A-ri-an-na, For-se, for-se pen-

b b b b

66 *you would repentent, and turn your ship's bow toward the shore.* *But with soft breezes,*

ti-to Ri vol-ge-re sti an-cor la pro-ra al li-to. Ma, con l'au-

b 2 4 #

72 *you sail away, happy; and I stay behind. For you*

re se- re- ne Tu te ne vai fe- li- ce et io qui pian- go; A te

78 *Athens prepares a superb celebration, and I stay behind as food for*

pre- pa- ra A- te- ne Lie- te pom- pe su- per- be, et io ri- man- go Ci- bo di

84 *for beasts on these deserted sands. One and another old relative will happily embrace you,*

fe- e in- so- li- ta- rie a- re- ne; Te l'u- no e l'al- tro tuo vec- chio pa- ren- te Strin- ge- ran lie-

90 *and I will no longer see you, oh mother, oh my father.*

to, et io Piu non ve- drov- vi, o ma- dre, o pa- dre mi- o.

Coro: Ahi! che 'l cor mi si spezza.
A qual misero fin correr ti veggio,
Senturata bellezza!

Chorister: Ah! how my heart breaks.
To what a miserable end I see you rush,
Star-crossed beauty!

98 *Where, where is the promise that you swore to me? Thus, in heaven, you put me away*

Do- ve, do- ve è la fe- de, Che tan- to mi giu- ra- vi? Co- si ne l'al- ta fe- de Tu mi ri-

106 *with your ancestors? Are these the crowns with which you adorn my head? Are these the scepters,*

pon de- gli a- vi? Son que- ste le co- ro- ne, on- de m'a- dor- ni il cri- ne? Que- sti gli scet- tri so-

114 *are these the jewels and the gold: are you leaving me abandoned to the beasts which tear me apart*

no, Queste le gemme e gli ori: Lasciar mi in abbandono A fera che mi strazi e mi divoriri?

120 *and devour me? Ah, Theseus, ah my Theseus,*

Ah Teseo, ah Teseo mio, Lascierai tu morire, In van piangendo, in van gridando a--

126 *you will leave me to die, crying in vain, wailing in vain for help.*

i-ta, La misera Arianna Che a te fidossi e ti die gloria e vita?

132 *The miserable Ariadne, who trusted you and who gave you glory and life?*

Ahi, che non pur risponde! Ahi, che piu d'aspe è sor-do a miei lamenti.

Coro: Vinta da l'aspro duolo
Non s'accorge la misera ch'indarno
Vanno i preghi e i sospir con l'aure a volo.

Chorister: *Overcome with bitter sorrow,
the wretched maiden is not aware that in vain
her prayers and sighs are carried off by the wind.*

141 *Alas, he does not even respond! Alas, he is more deaf than a snake to my lamentation.*

Ahi, che piu d'aspe è sor-do a miei lamenti.

147 *Oh clouds, oh storms, oh winds, sink him* *beneath those waves!* *Hurry, orcas and whales*

O nem- bi, o tur- bi, o ven- ti, Som- mer- ge- te- lo voi den- tr'a quel- l'on- de! Cor- re- te, or- che e ba- le- ne, E

151 *and with his impure body* *fill up the deepest abyss.* *What am I saying, alas!*

de le mem- bra im- mon- de Em- pie- te le vo- ra- gi- ni pro- fon- de. Che par- lo, ah! che va-

156 *how am I raving? Miserable, alas!* *what do I ask?* *Oh Theseus,* *oh my Theseus,*

neg- gio? Mi- se- ra, ohi- mè! che chieg- gio? O Te- seo, o Te- seo

162 *I am not, I am not she,* *I am not she who released those beasts:*

mi- o, Non son, non son quel- l'i- o, Non son quel- l'io che i fe- ri det- ti sciol- se: Par-

168 *My anger was speaking,* *my sorrow was speaking;* *my tongue spoke, yes,* *but not my heart.*

lo l'af- fan- no mi- o, par- lo il do- lo- re; Par- lo le lin- gua sī, ma non gia'l co- re.

Coro: Verace amor, degno ch'il mondo ammiri!
Ne le miserie estreme
Non sai chieder vendetta e non t'adiri.

Chorister: True love, worthy of being admired by the world!
In the most extreme misery
you do not know how to ask for revenge and you do not accuse him.

176 *Wretch!* *I still give in* *to my betrayed hope,* *and it is not extinguished.*

Mi-se-ra! an-cor do lo-co A la tra-di-ta spe-me, e non si spe-gne.

182 *Amidst such scorn* *still the fire of love?* *Extinguish, oh Death,* *those unworthy flames.*

Fra tan-to scher-no an-cor d'a-mo-re il fo-co? Spe-gni tu, Mor-te, o-mai le fiam-me in-de-gne. O

188 *Oh mother, oh father, oh lofty palaces of the ancient realm,* *where I was raised!*

ma-dre, o pa-dre, o del-l'an-ti-co re-gno Su-per-bi-al-ber-ghi, o-v'eb-bi d'or la cu-na, O

194 *Oh servants, oh faithful friends (alas, unworthy fate!) see where cruel fate has brought me!*

ser-vi, o fi-di-a-mi-ci (ahi fa-to in-de-gno!) Mi-ra-te, o-ve m'ha scor-to em-pia for-

200 *See the sorrow I have inherited* *from my love,* *my faithfulness,*

tu-na! Mi-ra-te di che duol m'han fat-to e-re-de L'a-mor mi-o, la mia fe-de,

205 *and the betrayal of* *another. That happens* *to her who loves too much and believes too much.*

e l'al-trui in-gan-no. Co-si va chi trop-p'a-ma e trop-po cre-de.

Dorilla: Di magnanimo cor, che morte sprezza
 Odo le voci. O figlia, o regia figlia,
 Arma contr'il destin l'animo altero;
 Mira se ricovrar nel sen di morte
 E di donna real degno pensiero.

*Dorilla: I hear the words of a generous heart
 who defies death. Oh daughter, oh royal daughter,
 arm your proud soul against destiny.
 See that to take refuge in the embrace of death
 is a thought worthy of a royal lady.*

211 *I was born a queen, and in Crete of old my life was beautiful while it pleased heaven.*

Nac- qui re- gi- na, e ne l'an- ti- ca Cre- ta Fu bel- l'il vi- ver mio men- tre al ciel piac-

217 *It is time that I die. According to my wish, I appease you.*

que: Tem- po è ch'io mo- ra; al mio vo- ler t'ac- que- ta.

Dorilla: Qual si raggira e per lo ciel si sente
 Confuso mormorar di voci e squille?
 Odi, ch'a mille a mille
 Di timpani e di corni il rauco grido:
 Regina, al lido, al lido;
 Ecco Teseo, che riede:
 Ecco l'amato sposo.
 Che temi omai, che tardi?
 Movili incontra il piede,
 Ecco lo sposo tuo: che fai, che guardi?

*Dorilla: What is turning about and is heard from the sky,
 the confusing sounds of voices and noises?
 Listen to the blare of thousands of warlike trumpets; listen to the
 harsh cry of thousands of drums and horns:
 Queen, to the beach, to the beach.
 Behold, Theseus returns:
 behold the beloved spouse.
 What do you fear, why do you delay?
 Go to meet him.
 behold your spouse: what are you doing, what are you looking at?*

222 *Do I live, do I die, or am I delirious? Or am I merely ghost or a shade? Alas! what should I do, what should I believe?*

Vi- vo, mo- ro, o va- neg- gio? O pur son lar- va od om- bra? Las- sa! che far deb- b'i- o, che cre- der deg- gio?

Dorilla: Sgombra ogni tema, sgombra:
 Affisati col \ddagger dond'il suon venne.
 Non vedi omai, non vedi
 Il porto ingombro gi \ddagger da mille antenne?

*Dorilla: Rid yourself of every fear:
 affix yourself whence comes the sound.
 Do you not see by now
 the port crowded with a thousand ships' masts?*

230 *But what of Theseus? Who will reassure me? Are you still thinking of nurturing your*

Ma che sia di Te- seo chi m'as- si- cu- ra? An- cor pen- si nu- drir gli a-

235 *bitter sorrows, your wretched hope? Ah, die; do not seek another destiny, Ariadne.*

spri do- lo- ri, Spe- ran- za i- ni- qua? ah mo- ri; Non cer- car, A- ri- an- na, al- tra ven- tu- ra.

Dorilla: Ne l'ampio sen di morte
 Ricovrar ponno ogn'or gli egri mortali,
 Refugio estremo a disperata sorte:
 Ma de' tuoi gravi mali
 Forse non lungi è il fin: deh vienne, al lido;
 Non sprezzar le mie voci, alma gentile,
 S'ospite pur ti fui cortese e fido.

*Dorilla: In the ample embrace of death,
 mortal ills can always be cured,
 in that ultimate refuge from cruel destiny.
 But your extreme woes
 are perhaps not far from their end. Oh come to the shore.
 Do not ignore my words, gentle soul,
 if it was your courteous and faithful guest.*

242 *I am, I am content; however you may perceive me. But that he leaves me and disdains me*

Io son, io son con- ten- ta; Scor- gi- mi o- v'a te pia- ce: Ma ch'ei mi la- sci e spre gi, Or'

250 *and now returns and takes me back, is a mad hope: One's thoughts are not relieved when one changes rulers.*

tor- ni e mi rac- col- ga, è fol- le spe- me: Non si le- ve i pen- sier can- gia- no i re- gi.

[The opera ends with a celebration, in which Ariadne is joined by the gods Bacchus, Venus, and Jove.]