

Lyric Poetry: Nature, Love, and Death

Seminar III – Wednesday, April 2, 2025

Selections from Cazoniere by Petrarch

Sonnet 1

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Voi ch'ascoltate in rime sparse il suono di quei sospiri ond'io nudriva 'l core in sul mio primo giovanile errore quand'era in parte altr'uom da quel ch'i' sono,</p> <p>del vario stile in ch'io piango et ragiono fra le vane speranze e 'l van dolore, ove sia chi per prova intenda amore, spero trovar pietà, nonché perdono.</p> <p>Ma ben veggio or sí come al popol tutto favola fui gran tempo, onde sovente di me mesdesmo meco mi vergogno;</p> <p>et del mio vaneggiar vergogna è 'l frutto, e 'l pentersi, e 'l conoscer chiaramente che quanto piace al mondo è breve sogno.</p>	<p>You who hear the sound, in scattered rhymes, of those sighs on which I fed my heart, in my first vagrant youthfulness, when I was partly other than I am,</p> <p>I hope to find pity, and forgiveness, for all the modes in which I talk and weep, between vain hope and vain sadness, in those who understand love through its trials.</p> <p>Yet I see clearly now I have become an old tale amongst all these people, so that it often makes me ashamed of myself;</p> <p>and shame is the fruit of my vanities, and remorse, and the clearest knowledge of how the world's delight is a brief dream.</p>

Sonnet 2

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Per fare una leggiadra sua vendetta et punire in un dí ben mille offese, celatamente Amor l'arco riprese, come huom ch'a nocer luogo et tempo aspetta.</p> <p>Era la mia virtute al cor ristretta per far ivi et ne gli occhi sue difese, quando 'l colpo mortal là giú discese ove solea spuntarsi ogni saetta.</p> <p>Però, turbata nel primiero assalto, non ebbe tanto né vigor né spazio che potesse al bisogno prender l'arme,</p> <p>overo al poggio faticoso et alto ritrarmi accortamente da lo strazio del quale oggi vorrebbe, et non pò, aitarme.</p>	<p>To make a graceful act of revenge, and punish a thousand wrongs in a single day, Love secretly took up his bow again, like a man who waits the time and place to strike.</p> <p>My power was constricted in my heart, making defence there, and in my eyes, when the mortal blow descended there, where all other arrows had been blunted.</p> <p>So, confused by the first assault, it had no opportunity or strength to take up arms when they were needed,</p> <p>or withdraw me shrewdly to the high, steep hill, out of the torment, from which it wishes to save me now but cannot.</p>

Sonnet 3

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Era il giorno ch'al sol si scoloraro per la pietà del suo factore i rai, quando i' fui preso, et non me ne guardai, ché i be' vostr'occhi, donna, mi legaro.</p> <p>Tempo non mi pareva da far riparo contra colpi d'Amor: però m'andai secur, senza sospetto; onde i miei guai nel commune dolor s'incominciaro.</p> <p>Trovommi Amor del tutto disarmato et aperta la via per gli occhi al core, che di lagrime son fatti uscio et varco:</p> <p>però al mio parer non li fu honore ferir me de saetta in quello stato, a voi armata non mostrar pur l'arco.</p>	<p>It was on that day when the sun's ray was darkened in pity for its Maker, that I was captured, and did not defend myself, because your lovely eyes had bound me, Lady.</p> <p>It did not seem to me to be a time to guard myself against Love's blows: so I went on confident, unsuspecting; from that, my troubles started, amongst the public sorrows.</p> <p>Love discovered me all weaponless, and opened the way to the heart through the eyes, which are made the passageways and doors of tears:</p> <p>so that it seems to me it does him little honour to wound me with his arrow, in that state, he not showing his bow at all to you who are armed.</p>

Sonnet 7

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>La gola e 'l sonno et l'otïose piume ànno del mondo ogni vertú sbandita, ond'è dal corso suo quasi smarrita nostra natura vinta dal costume;</p> <p>et è sí spento ogni benigno lume del ciel, per cui s'informa humana vita, che per cosa mirabile s'addita chi vòl far d'Elicona nascer fiume.</p> <p>Qual vaghezza di lauro, qual di mirto? Povera et nuda vai philosophia, dice la turba al vil guadagno intesa.</p> <p>Pochi compagni avrai per l'altra via: tanto ti prego piú, gentile spirto, non lassar la magnanima tua impresa.</p>	<p>Greed and sleep and slothful beds have banished every virtue from the world, so that, overcome by habit, our nature has almost lost its way.</p> <p>And all the benign lights of heaven, that inform human life, are so spent, that he who wishes to bring down a stream from Helicon is pointed out as a wonder.</p> <p>Such desire for laurel, and for myrtle? 'Poor and naked goes philosophy', say the crowd intent on base profit.</p> <p>You'll have poor company on that other road: So much the more I beg you, gentle spirit, not to turn from your great undertaking.</p>

Sonnet 11

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Lassare il velo o per sole o per ombra, donna, non vi vid'io poi che in me conosceste il gran desio ch'ogni altra voglia d'entr'al cor mi sgombra.</p> <p>Mentr'io portava i be' pensier' celati, ch'anno la mente desiando morta, vidivi di pietate ornare il volto; ma poi ch'Amor di me vi fece accorta,</p> <p>fuor i biondi capelli allor velati, et l'amoroso sguardo in sé raccolto. Quel ch'i' piú desiava in voi m'è tolto:</p> <p>sí mi governa il velo che per mia morte, et al caldo et al gielo, de' be' vostr'occhi il dolce lume adombra.</p>	<p>I have not seen you, lady, leave off your veil in sun or shadow, since you knew that great desire in myself that all other wishes in the heart desert me.</p> <p>While I held the lovely thoughts concealed, that make the mind desire death, I saw your face adorned with pity: but when Love made you wary of me,</p> <p>then blonde hair was veiled, and loving glances gathered to themselves.</p> <p>That which I most desired in you is taken from me:</p> <p>the veil so governs me that to my death, and by heat and cold, the sweet light of your lovely eyes is shadowed.</p>

Sonnet 14

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Occhi miei lassi, mentre ch'io vi giro nel bel viso di quella che v'à morti, pregovi siate accorti, ché già vi sfida Amore, ond'io sospiro.</p> <p>Morte pò chiuder sola a' miei pensieri l'amoroso camin che gli conduce al dolce porto de la lor salute; ma puossi a voi celar la vostra luce per meno oggetto, perché meno interi siete formati, et di minor virtute. Però, dolenti, anzi che sian venute l'ore del pianto, che son già vicine, prendete or a la fine breve conforto a sí lungo martiro.</p>	<p>My weary eyes, there, while I turn you towards the lovely face of her who slays you, I pray you guard yourself since, already, Love challenges you, so that I sigh.</p> <p>Only Death can close from my thoughts the loving path that leads them to the sweet doorway of their blessing; but your light can hide itself from you for less reason, since you are formed as lesser entities, and of less power. But, grieve, before the hour of tears is come, that is already near, take to the end now brief comfort from such long suffering.</p>

Sonnet 42

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Ma poi che 'l dolce riso humile et piano piú non asconde sue bellezze nove, le braccia a la fucina indarno move l'antiquissimo fabbro ciciliano,</p> <p>ch'a Giove tolte son l'arme di mano temprate in Mongibello a tutte prove, et sua sorella par che si rinove nel bel guardo d'Apollo a mano a mano.</p> <p>Del lito occidental si move un fiato, che fa sicuro il navigar senza arte, et desta i fior' tra l'erba in ciascun prato.</p> <p>Stelle noiose fuggon d'ogni parte, disperse dal bel viso innamorato, per cui lagrime molte son già sparte.</p>	<p>But now that her clear sweet humble smile no longer hides the freshness of her beauty, that Sicilian smith of ancient times works his arms at the forge in vain,</p> <p>for Jupiter lets the weapons fall from his hand, tempered though they were in Etna's fires, and Juno his sister begins to clear the air under Apollo's lovely gaze on every side.</p> <p>A breeze blows from the western shore that makes it safe to sail without art, and fills the grass with flowers in every meadow.</p> <p>Harmful stars vanish from the whole sky, scattered by that beloved, lovely face, for which I've already shed so many tears.</p>

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Io sentia dentr'al cor già venir meno gli spirti che da voi ricevon vita; et perché natural-mente s'aita contra la morte ogni animal terreno,</p> <p>largai 'l desio, ch'i teng'or molto a freno, et misil per la via quasi smarrita: però che dí et notte indi m'invita, et io contra sua voglia altronde 'l meno.</p> <p>Et mi condusse, vergognoso et tardo, a riveder gli occhi leggiadri, ond'io per non esser lor grave assai mi guardo.</p> <p>Vivrommi un tempo omai, ch'al viver mio tanta virtute à sol un vostro sguardo; et poi morirò, s'io non credo al desio.</p>	<p>I felt those spirits weakening in my heart that receive their life from you: and since every earthly creature naturally protects itself from death,</p> <p>loosed my desire, that now I rein in hard, and sent it by a road that is almost lost: so that it draws me there, day and night, and I lead it, against its will, another way.</p> <p>And it brought me, slowly and shamefully, to look on those delightful eyes, that I guard myself from so they may not grow cold.</p> <p>Now I'll live a while, since a mere glance of yours has so much power to bring me to life: then I'll die, if I don't follow my desire.</p>

Sonnet 52

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Non al suo amante piú Dïana piacque, quando per tal ventura tutta ignuda la vide in mezzo de le gelide acque,</p> <p>ch'a me la pastorella alpestra et cruda posta a bagnar un leggiadretto velo, ch'a l'aura il vago et biondo capel chiuda,</p> <p>tal che mi fece, or quand'egli arde 'l cielo, tutto tremar d'un amoroso gielo.</p>	<p>Diana was not more pleasing to her lover, when by chance he saw her all naked in the midst of icy waters,</p> <p>than, to me, the fresh mountain shepherdess, set there to wash a graceful veil, that ties her vagrant blonde hair from the breeze,</p> <p>so that she makes me, now that the heavens burn, tremble, wholly, with the chill of love.</p>

Sonnet 56

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Se col cieco desir che 'l cor distrugge contando l'ore no m'inganno io stesso, ora mentre ch'io parlo il tempo fugge ch'a me fu insieme et a mercé promesso.</p> <p>Qual ombra è sí crudel che 'l seme adugge, ch'al disiato frutto era sí presso? et dentro dal mio ovil qual fera rugge? tra la spiga et la man qual muro è messo?</p> <p>Lasso, nol so; ma sí conosco io bene che per far piú dogliosa la mia vita amor m'addusse in sí gioiosa spene.</p> <p>Et or di quel ch'i' ò lecto mi sovene, che 'nanzi al dí de l'ultima partita huom beato chiamar non si convene.</p>	<p>If, through blind desire that destroys the heart, I do not deceive myself counting the hours, now, while I speak these words, the time nears that was promised to pity and myself.</p> <p>What shade is so cruel as to blight the crop which was so near to a lovely harvest? And what wild beast is roaring in my fold? What wall is set between the hand and grain?</p> <p>Ah, I do not know: but I see only too well that in joyous hope love led me on only to make my life more sorrowful.</p> <p>And now I remember words that I have read: before the day of our final parting we should not call any man blessed.</p>

Sonnet 68

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>L'aspetto sacro de la terra vostra mi fa del mal passato tragger guai, gridando: Sta' su, misero, che fai?; et la via de salir al ciel mi mostra.</p> <p>Ma con questo pensier un altro giostra, et dice a me: Perché fuggendo vai? se ti rimembra, il tempo passa omai di tornar a veder la donna nostra.</p> <p>I' che 'l suo ragionar intendo, allora m'agghiaccio dentro, in guisa d'uom ch'ascolta novella che di súbito l'accora.</p> <p>Poi torna il primo, et questo dà la volta: qual vincerà, non so; ma 'nfino ad ora combattuto ànno, et non pur una volta.</p>	<p>The sacred aspect of your native place, makes me sorrow for the evil that is past, crying: 'Arise, you wretch, what is it you do?': and shows me the way to climb to Heaven.</p> <p>But with this thought another one contends and says to me: 'Why do you run away? If you recall, the time now is passing in which you might turn and see our lady.'</p> <p>I understand what it says, and I turn to ice inside, like a man who hears news which suddenly overwhelms him.</p> <p>The first thought returns, the other flies: which will win, who knows: but they've fought till now, and more than one single time.</p>

Sonnet 74. 'Io son già stanco di pensar sí come'

I am already wearied with thinking
of how my thoughts are never weary of you,
and how I've not abandoned life itself yet,
to flee so heavy a weight of sighs:

and how my tongue is never lacking sound
to speak of your face and your hair,
and your lovely eyes I always talk of,
calling on your name day and night:

and how my feet are never tired and weary
of following your footsteps everywhere,
spending so many paces uselessly:

and how from it comes all the ink and paper
where I go writing of you: if that is wrong,
it is Love's fault, not a defect of my art.

Sonnet 294

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Soleasi nel mio cor star bella et viva, com'altra donna in loco humile et basso: or son fatto io per l'ultimo suo passo non pur mortal, ma morto, et ella è diva.</p> <p>L'alma d'ogni suo ben spogliata et priva, Amor de la sua luce ignudo et casso devrian de la pietà romper un sasso, ma non è chi lor duol riconti o scriva:</p> <p>ché piangon dentro, ov'ogni orecchia è sorda, se non la mia, cui tanta doglia ingombra, ch'altro che sospirar nulla m'avanza.</p> <p>Veramente siam noi polvere et ombra, veramente la voglia cieca e 'ngorda, veramente fallace è la speranza.</p>	<p>She used to be lovely and living in my heart, like a noble lady in a humble, lowly place: now by her ultimate passing I am not only mortal, but dead, and she divine.</p> <p>My soul despoiled, deprived of all its good, Love stripped and denuded of her light, are pitiful enough to shatter stone, but there's no one can tell or write the pain:</p> <p>they weep inside, where all ears are deaf, but mine, who so much grief encumbers, that I have nothing left but sighs.</p> <p>Truly we are ashes and a shadow, truly the blind will's full of greed, truly all our hopes deceive us.</p>

Sonnet 311

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Quel rosignol, che sí soave piagne, forse suoi figli, o sua cara consorte, di dolcezza empie il cielo et le campagne con tante note sí pietose et scorte,</p> <p>et tutta notte par che m'accompagne, et mi rammente la mia dura sorte: ch'altri che me non ò di ch'i' mi lagne, ché 'n dee non credev'io regnasse Morte.</p> <p>O che lieve è inganar chi s'assecura! Que' duo bei lumi assai piú che 'l sol chiari chi pensò mai veder far terra oscura?</p> <p>Or cognosco io che mia fera ventura vuol che vivendo et lagrimando impari come nulla qua giú diletta, et dura.</p>	<p>That nightingale who weeps so sweetly, perhaps for his brood, or his dear companion, fills the sky and country round with sweetness with so many piteous, bright notes,</p> <p>and it seems all night he stays beside me, and reminds me of my harsh fate: for I have no one to grieve for but myself, who believed that Death could not take a goddess.</p> <p>Oh how easy it is to cheat one who feels safe! Who would have ever thought to see two lights, clearer than the sun, make earth darken?</p> <p>Now I know that my fierce fate wishes me to learn, as I live and weep: nothing that delights us here is lasting.</p>

Sonnet 319

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>I dí miei piú leggier' che nesun cervo, fuggîr come ombra, et non vider piú bene ch'un batter d'occhio, et poche hore serene, ch'amare et dolci ne la mente servo.</p> <p>Misero mondo, instabile et protervo del tutto è cieco chi 'n te pon sua spene: ché 'n te mi fu 'l cor tolto, et or sel tène tal ch'è già terra, et non giunge osso a nervo.</p> <p>Ma la forma miglior, che vive anchora, et vivrà sempre, su ne l'alto cielo, di sue bellezze ogni or piú m'innamora;</p> <p>et vo, sol in pensar, cangiando il pelo, qual ella è oggi, e 'n qual parte dimora, qual a vedere il suo leggiadro velo.</p>	<p>These days of mine, faster than a hind, fly like shadows, and I have seen no more good than an eye-wink, and few are the calm hours, whose bitterness and sweetness I keep in mind.</p> <p>Wretched world, violent and changeable, wholly blind is he who sets his hopes on you: my heart was stolen away from you, and now is taken by one who is already earth, and looses sinew from bone.</p> <p>But the better form of her that lives, still, and lives forever, in the high heavens, makes me more in love now with all her beauties:</p> <p>and I see, only in thought, as my hair whitens, what she is today, and in what place she is, and what it was to see her graceful veil.</p>

Sonnet 321

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>É questo 'l nido in che la mia fenice mise l'aurate et le purpuree penne, che sotto le sue ali il mio cor tenne, et parole et sospiri ancho ne elice?</p> <p>O del dolce mio mal prima radice, ov'è il bel viso, onde quel lume venne che vivo et lieto, ardendo mi mantenne? Sol' eri in terra; or se' nel ciel felice.</p> <p>Et m'ài lasciato qui misero et solo, talché pien di duol sempre al loco torno che per te consecrato honora et còlo;</p> <p>veggendo a' colli oscura notte intorno onde predesti al ciel l'ultimo volo, et dove li occhi tuoi solean far giorno.</p>	<p>Is this the nest in which my phoenix spread her gold and purple plumage, she who held my heart beneath her wing, and from it still elicits words and sighs?</p> <p>O the first root of my sweet ills, where is the lovely face, living and joyful from which that light came that set me burning?</p> <p>You, unique on earth, are happy in heaven.</p> <p>And you have left me wretched and alone, so that grief-filled I always turn to honour and adorn that place that you made sacred:</p> <p>seeing night darkening round the hills from which you took your final flight, where those eyes of yours once made it day.</p>

Sonnet 347

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Donna che lieta col Principio nostro ti stai, come tua vita alma rechiede, assisa in alta et gloriosa sede, et d'altro ornata che di perle o d'ostro,</p> <p>o de le donne altero et raro mostro, or nel volto di Lui che tutto vede vedi 'l mio amore, et quella pura fede per ch'io tante versai lagrime e 'nchiostro;</p> <p>et senti che vèr te 'l mio core in terra tal fu, qual ora è in cielo, et mai non volsi altro da te che 'l sol de li occhi tuoi:</p> <p>dunque per amendar la lunga guerra per cui dal mondo a te sola mi volsi, prega ch'i' venga tosto a star con voi.</p>	<p>Lady, who dwell now, with our Creator, happily, as your virtuous life deserved, seated on a noble, glorious throne, adorned with more than purple robes and pearls,</p> <p>O high and rare prodigy among women, you see my love, before the face of Him who sees all things, and that pure faith for which such tears and ink were shed:</p> <p>and know that my heart was yours on earth as much as now, in heaven, and I never wished for anything from you but your eyes' sun:</p> <p>so as to make amends for the long war in which I turned to you only, from the world, pray that I soon may come to dwell with you.</p>

Sonnet 348

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>Da' piú belli occhi, et dal piú chiaro viso che mai splendesse, et da piú bei capelli, che facean l'oro e 'l sol parer men belli, dal piú dolce parlare et dolce riso,</p> <p>da le man', da le braccia che conquiso senza moversi avrian quai piú rebelli fur d'Amor mai, da' piú bei piedi snelli, da la persona fatta in paradiso,</p> <p>prendeian vita i miei spirti: or n'à diletto il Re celeste, i Suoi alati corrieri; et io son qui rimaso ignudo et cieco.</p> <p>Sol un conforto a le mie pene aspetto: ch'ella, che vede tutt'i miei pensieri, m'impetre grazia, ch'i' possa esser seco.</p>	<p>From lovelier eyes, and from a brighter glance, than ever shone, and from lovelier hair, that made gold and the sun seem less lovely, from a sweeter speech, and sweeter smile,</p> <p>from hands, from arms that conquered, without moving, those who were ever most rebellious in Love, from lovelier slender feet, from the whole form made in Paradise,</p> <p>my spirit took its life: now Heaven's King and his winged messengers take delight: and I who remain am naked and blind.</p> <p>I have only one comfort in my bitter pain: that she, who sees my every thought, may win me grace, so I may be with her.</p>

Sonnet 365

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<p>I' vo piangendo i miei passati tempi i quai posi in amar cosa mortale, senza levarmi a volo, abbiend'io l'ale, per dar forse di me non bassi esempi.</p> <p>Tu che vedi i miei mali indegni et empi, Re del cielo invisibile immortale, soccorri a l'alma disviata et frale, e 'l suo defecto di tua gratia adempi:</p> <p>sí che, s'io vissi in guerra et in tempesta, mora in pace et in porto; et se la stanza fu vana, almen sia la partita honesta.</p> <p>A quel poco di viver che m'avanza et al morir, degni esser Tua man presta: Tu sai ben che 'n altrui non ò speranza.</p>	<p>I go weeping for my time past, that I spent in loving something mortal, without lifting myself in flight, for I had wings that might have freed me for spaces not so low.</p> <p>You who see my shameful and impious sins, King of Heaven, invisible, immortal, help this frail and straying soul, and mend its defects through your grace:</p> <p>So that, if I have lived in war and tempest, I may die in peaceful harbour: and if my stay was vain, let my vanishing, at least, be virtuous.</p> <p>Deign that your hand might rest on that little life that is left to me, and on my death: You truly know I have no other hope.</p>

Poem 366

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
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Vergin bella, che di sol vestita,
 coronata di stelle, al sommo Sole
 piacesti sí, che 'n te Sua luce ascose,
 amor mi spinge a dir di te parole:
 ma non so 'ncominciar senza tu' aita,
 et di Colui ch'amando in te si pose.
 Invoco lei che ben sempre rispose,
 chi la chiamò con fede:
 Vergine, s'a mercede
 miseria extrema de l'humane cose
 già mai ti volse, al mio prego t'inchina,
 soccorri a la mia guerra,
 bench'i' sia terra, et tu del ciel regina.

Vergine saggia, et del bel numero una
 de le beate vergini prudenti,
 anzi la prima, et con piú chiara lampa;
 o saldo scudo de l'afflicte genti
 contra colpi di Morte et di Fortuna,
 sotto 'l qual si triúmpha, non pur scampa;
 o refrigerio al cieco ardor ch'avampa
 qui fra i mortali sciocchi:
 Vergine, que' belli occhi
 che vider tristi la spietata stampa
 ne' dolci membri del tuo caro figlio,
 volgi al mio dubbio stato,
 che sconsigliato a te vèn per consiglio.

Vergine pura, d'ogni parte intera,
 del tuo parto gentil figliola et madre,
 ch'allumi questa vita, et l'altra adorni,
 per te il tuo figlio, et quel del sommo Padre,
 o fenestra del ciel lucente altera,
 venne a salvarne in su li extremi giorni;
 et fra tutt'i terreni altri soggiorni
 sola tu fosti electa,
 Vergine benedetta,
 che 'l pianto d'Eva in allegrezza torni.
 Fammi, ché puoi, de la Sua gratia degno,
 senza fine o beata,
 già coronata nel superno regno.

Vergine santa d'ogni gratia piena,
 che per vera et altissima humiltate

Lovely Virgin, who, clothed in glory
 crowned with stars, so pleased
 the high Sun, that he hid his light in you,
 love urges me to speak of you:
 but I cannot begin without your help,
 and His, who lovingly was set in you.
 I call on her who always replies truly
 to those who call to her with faith:
 Virgin, if the final
 misery of human life can forever
 turn to you for mercy, bow down to hear my
 prayer,
 and help me in this, my war,
 though I am earth, and you the queen of
 heaven.

Wisest Virgin, and of that lovely number
 one of the virgins blessed with prudence,
 rather the first of them, and with the
 brightest lamp:
 O solid shield for the oppressed peoples
 against the blows of Death and Fortune,
 under whom we triumph, not just escape:
 O coolness for blind heat that flares
 among foolish mortals here:
 Virgin, turn those lovely eyes,
 that saw in sadness the pitiless wounds
 in the sweet limbs of your dear Son,
 on my uncertain state,
 who, without counsel, come to you for
 counsel.

Virgin, pure, perfect in every way,
 daughter and mother to your noble Son,
 you who illuminate this life, adorn the other,
 through you that Son of the highest Father,
 O highest shining window of heaven,
 came to save us in these latter days:
 and from all the other earthly wombs
 you alone were chosen,
 Virgin, so blessed,
 that Eve's weeping turned to happiness.
 Make me, as you can, worthy of His grace,
 O forever blessed,

salisti al ciel onde miei preghi ascolti,
 tu partoristi il fonte di pietate,
 et di giustitia il sol, che rasserena
 il secol pien d'errori oscuri et folti;
 tre dolci et cari nomi ài in te raccolti,
 madre, figliuola et sposa:
 Vergina gloriosa,
 donna del Re che nostri lacci à sciolti
 et fatto 'l mondo libero et felice,
 ne le cui sante piaghe
 prego ch'appaghe il cor, vera beatrice.

Vergine sola al mondo senza exempio,
 che 'l ciel di tue bellezze innamorasti,
 cui né prima fu simil né seconda,
 santi pensieri, atti pietosi et casti
 al vero Dio sacrato et vivo tempio
 fecero in tua verginità feconda.
 Per te pò la mia vita esser ioconda,
 s'a' tuoi preghi, o Maria,
 Vergine dolce et pia,
 ove 'l fallo abondò, la gratia abonda.
 Con le ginocchia de la mente inchine,
 prego che sia mia scorta,
 et la mia torta via drizzi a buon fine.

Vergine chiara et stabile in eterno,
 di questo tempestoso mare stella,
 d'ogni fedel nocchier fidata guida,
 pon' mente in che terribile procella
 i' mi ritrovo sol, senza governo,
 et ò già da vicin l'ultime strida.
 Ma pur in te l'anima mia si fida,
 peccatrice, i' no 'l nego,
 Vergine; ma ti prego
 che 'l tuo nemico del mio mal non rida:
 ricorditi che fece il peccar nostro,
 prender Dio per scamparne,
 humana carne al tuo virginal chiostro.

Vergine, quante lagrime ò già sparte,
 quante lusinghe et quanti preghi indarno,
 pur per mia pena et per mio grave danno!
 Da poi ch'i' nacqui in su la riva d'Arno,

already crowned in the highest kingdom.

Sacred Virgin, filled with every grace,
 that through true and noblest humility
 leapt to heaven, where you hear my prayers,
 you gave birth to pity's fountain,
 and the sun of justice, you who shine
 through
 this age filled with darkness, thick with error:
 three sweet, beloved, names combine in
 you,
 mother, daughter, spouse:
 Glorious Virgin,
 queen to that King who has loosed our
 bonds,
 and made the world free and happy,
 I pray you satisfy my heart
 with his sacred wounds, true blessed one.

Virgin sole on earth without a peer,
 who enamoured heaven of your beauty,
 whom no other equalled or came near,
 holy thoughts, chaste and merciful actions
 made you sacred to the one true God,
 a living temple, fruitful in virginity.
 You have the power to render my life joyful,
 since with your prayers, O Maria,
 sweet, virtuous Virgin,
 grace abounds where sin abounded.
 I bow to you on my knees, in thought,
 I beg you to be my guide
 and direct my crooked path to a good end.

Bright Virgin, established in eternity,
 star of this tempestuous sea,
 faithful guide to every faithful sailor,
 consider in what fearful danger
 I find myself alone, without a helm,
 and already near the final shout.
 But my soul trusts in you completely,
 sinful, I don't deny it,
 Virgin: but I pray to you
 that your enemy derive no mockery from my
 evils:

cercando or questa et or quel'altra parte,
non è stata mia vita altro ch'affanno.
Mortal bellezza, atti et parole m'anno
tutta ingombrata l'alma.

Vergine sacra et alma,
non tardar, ch'i' son forse a l'ultimo anno.
I dí miei piú correnti che saetta
fra miserie et peccati
sonsen' andati, et sol Morte n'aspetta.

Vergine, tale è terra, et posto à in doglia
lo mio cor, che vivendo in pianto il tenne
et de mille miei mali un non sapea:
et per saperlo, pur quel che n'avenne
fôra avenuto, ch'ogni altra sua voglia
era a me morte, et a lei fama rea.
Or tu donna del ciel, tu nostra dea
(se dir lice, e convensi),
Vergine d'alti sensi,
tu vedi il tutto; e quel che non potea
far altri, è nulla a la tua gran vertute,
por fine al mio dolore;
ch'a te honore, et a me fia salute.

Vergine, in cui ò tutta mia speranza
che possi et vogli al gran bisogno aitar me,
non mi lasciare in su l'extremo passo.
Non guardar me, ma Chi degnò crearme;
no 'l mio valor, ma l'alta Sua sembianza,
ch'è in me, ti mova a curar d'uom sí basso.
Medusa et l'error mio m'àn fatto un sasso
d'umor vano stillante:
Vergine, tu di sante
lagrime et pïe adempi 'l meo cor lasso,
ch'almen l'ultimo pianto sia devoto,
senza terrestre limo,
come fu 'l primo non d'insania vòto.

Vergine humana, et nemica d'orgoglio,
del comune principio amor t'induca:
miserere d'un cor contrito humile.
Che se poca mortal terra caduca
amar con sí mirabil fede soglio,

you know that our sin made God,
take on human flesh,
in your virgin cloister, to save us.

Virgin, what tears I have already scattered,
what pleadings and what prayers in vain,
solely for my pain and my grave hurt!
From the time I was born on the banks of the
Arno,
searching in this place or in that,
my life has been nothing but trouble.
Mortal beauty, actions and speech
have all hampered my soul.

Sacred, kindly Virgin,
do not delay, since perhaps this is my last
year.
And my days have flown, swifter
than an arrow
in misery and sin, and I only wait for Death.

Virgin, she is so much earth, and has sunk
my heart in sadness, that living she held
weeping,
who never knew even one of my thousand
ills:
and for her to know them, what was would
have had to not be: for any other will than
hers
would have been death to me, ill fame to her.
Now lady of heaven, our goddess
(if it is right to call you so)
Virgin of noble feelings,
you see all: and what no other can do
is as nothing to your great power,
making an end to sorrow:
that honours you, and is my salvation.

Virgin, in whom is all my hope,
who can and will aid me in my great need,
do not abandon me in this last strait.
No one protects me but he who deigned to
make me:

che devrò far di te, cosa gentile?
 Se dal mio stato assai misero et vile
 per le tue man' resurgo,
 Vergine, i' sacro et purgo
 al tuo nome et pensieri e 'ngegno et stile,
 la lingua e 'l cor, le lagrime e i sospiri.
 Scorgimi al miglior guado,
 et prendi in grado i cangiati desiri.

Il dí s'appressa, et non pòte esser lunge,
 sí corre il tempo et vola,
 Vergine unica et sola,
 e 'l cor or coscìentia or morte punge.
 Raccomandami al tuo figliuol, verace
 homo et verace Dio,
 ch'accolga 'l mïo spirto ultimo in pace.

not for my worth, but because His noble
 image,
 that is in me, moves you to care for a man so
 vile.

Medusa and my error turned me to stone,
 dripping with vain moisture:
 Virgin, you with holy tears
 and mercy fill my weary heart,
 so that at least my final tears will be pious,
 free of earthly mire,
 just as the first were unmarked by its
 sickness.

Kindly Virgin, and enemy of pride,
 may love of our common origin guide you:
 to take pity on a humble contrite heart.
 Since I used to love a little fallen mortal dust
 with such marvellous faith, what
 must I do towards your noble person?
 If by your hand I rise from this
 wretched and vile state,
 Virgin, I'll consecrate my purified
 thoughts, intellect and style, to your name,
 tongue and heart, tears and sighs.
 Urge me to better ways,
 and be pleased to accept my altered
 passions.

The day is coming, and cannot be long,
 time runs so fast, and flies,
 Virgin, unique, alone,
 remorse and death sting my heart.
 Commend me to your Son, truly
 Man, and truly God,
 that he might receive my last breath, in
 peace.

Selections From Vita Nuova by Dante

(Translators are noted)

To every captive soul and gentle heart,
 I now address these words of mine to you
 In hope you will return with a reply,
 As I salute our lord, the god of Love.
 A third of night already had eclipsed
 The shining of the brightest stars on high,
 When suddenly Love came before my eyes—
 The thought of him still haunts my troubled mind.
 He held my heart in hand and seemed all joy,
 My sleeping lady wrapped inside his arms.
 Then he awakened her and she, in fright,
 Began to humbly eat my burning heart.
 And then I saw him disappear in tears.

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All ye that pass along Love's trodden way

All ye that pass along Love's trodden way,
 Pause ye awhile and say
 If there be any grief like unto mine:
 I pray you that you hearken a short space
 Patiently, if my case
 Be not a piteous marvel and a sign.
 Love (never, certes, for my worthless part,
 But of his own great heart),

Vouchsafed to me a life so calm and sweet
 That oft I heard folk question as I went
 What such great gladness meant:--
 They spoke of it behind me in the street.

But now that fearless bearing is all gone
 Which with Love's hoarded wealth was given me
 Till I am grown to be
 So poor that I have dread to think thereon.

And thus it is that I, being like as one
 Who is ashamed and hides his poverty,
 Without seem full of glee,
 And let my heart within travail and moan.

(Translated by [Dante Gabriel Rossetti](#))

.....

(The following selections from Dante's *Vita Nuova* are translated by by A. S. Kline)

Weep you lovers, since Love is also weeping,
 and hear the reason that makes him full of tears.
 Amor feels ladies calling on Pity,
 revealing a bitter sorrow in their eyes,
 because the villain Death in gentle heart
 has set his cruel machinations,
 destroying what the world has given praise to
 in gentle lady, all except honour.
 Hear how Amor has honoured her,

who in his true form I saw lamenting
 bending above the lifeless image:
 and often gazing upwards to the heavens,
 where the gentle soul had already fled,
 that was a lady of such joyful semblance.

.....

Riding the other day along a track,
 thinking of the journey I disliked,
 I found Amor in the middle of the way
 in the simple dress of a traveller.
 In his countenance, wretched, he seemed to me
 as if he had lost a ruler-ship:
 and he came sighing thoughtfully
 not seeing anyone, with head bowed low.
 When he saw me he called me by name,
 and said: 'I come from a distant place
 from where your heart was according to my wish:
 and bring it back to serve new pleasures.'
 Then I took from him so great a part
 that he vanished, and I did not see how.

.....

Every one of my thoughts speaks of Love:
 and they have in them such great variance,
 that one makes me wish for his ruler-ship,
 another claims that his worth is nothing,

another by hoping brings me sweetness,
 another makes me weep constantly,
 and they only agree in asking pity,
 trembling with the fear that is in the heart.

Therefore I do not know which theme to choose:

and wish to speak, and know not what to say:

so that I find myself in a lover's maze!

And if I wish to make them all accord,

I am forced to call on my enemy,

my lady Pity, and ask her to defend me.

.....

With the other ladies you mock my looks,

and do not think, lady, why it is

that I am seized by such a strange appearance

when I gaze upon your beauty.

If you knew, Pity could not be

held from me in the usual way,

that Amor, when he finds me so close to you,

gains so in boldness and temerity,

that he sets upon my frightened spirits,

and some he kills, and some he scatters,

till only he remains to gaze at you:

so that I change to another form,

but not so that I cannot then still hear

the wail of those tormented scattered ones.

.....
 All I encounter in my mind dies,
 when I come to gaze on you, sweet joy:
 and when I am near you, I feel Love
 who says: 'Run, if you care about dying'.
 The face shows the colour of the heart,
 that, fainting, leans for support:
 and in the vast intoxicating tremor
 the stones beneath me cry: Death, death.
 They commit a sin who see me then,
 if they do not comfort my bewildered soul,
 if only by showing that they care for me,
 through pity, which your mocking killed,
 that is desecrated in the dying vision
 of eyes that have wished for death.

.....
 Often it is brought home to my mind
 the dark quality that Love gives me,
 and pity moves me, so that frequently
 I say: 'Alas! is anyone so afflicted?':
 since Amor assails me suddenly,
 so that life almost abandons me:
 only a single spirit stays with me,
 and that remains because it speaks of you.
 I renew my strength, because I wish for help,

and pale like this, all my courage drained,
 come to you, believing it will save me:
 and if I lift my eyes to gaze at you
 my heart begins to tremble so,
 that from my pulse the soul departs.

.....

Love and the gentle heart are one thing,
 as the wise man puts it in his verse,
 and each without the other would be dust,
 as a rational soul would be without its reason.

Nature, when she is loving, takes
 Amor for lord, and the heart for his home,
 in which sleeping he reposes
 sometimes a short, sometimes a longer day.

Beauty may appear, in a wise lady,
 so pleasant to the eyes, that in the heart,
 is born a desire for pleasant things:
 which stays so long a time in that place,
 that it makes the spirit of Love wake.

And likewise in a lady works a worthy man.

.....

So gentle and so pure appears
 my lady when she greets others,
 that every tongue trembles and is mute,
 and their eyes do not dare gaze at her.

She goes by, aware of their praise,
 benignly dressed in humility:
 and seems as if she were a thing come
 from Heaven to Earth to show a miracle.
 She shows herself so pleasing to those who gaze,
 through the eyes she sends a sweetness to the heart,
 that no one can understand who does not know it:
 and from her lips there comes
 a sweet spirit full of love,
 that goes saying to the soul: 'Sigh.'

.....

So long has Love held power over me
 and accustomed me to his lordship,
 that as he seemed harsh to me at first,
 so now he seems sweet in my heart.
 And so when he takes away my courage,
 and my spirits seem to fly away,
 then I feel throughout my soul
 such sweetness that my face pales,
 and then Love holds such power over me,
 that he makes my spirits go speaking,
 and always calling on
 my lady to grant me greater welcome.
 That happens to me whenever I see her,
 and is so humbling, no one can understand.

.....
 The colour of love and the semblance of pity
 no woman's face has more miraculously
 shown, from often seeing
 gentle eyes or grievous weeping,
 than yours, when before you
 you can see my sorrowing mouth:
 such thoughts come to my mind through you,
 I cannot hold my heart firm in its distress.
 I cannot keep my wasted eyes
 from gazing at you continually,
 because of their desire for weeping:
 and their will increases seeing you,
 so that they are all consumed by that wish:
 but in your presence they cannot shed tears.

.....
 Alas! Through the power of many sighs,
 that are born of the thoughts in my heart,
 the eyes are conquered, and have no virtue
 to gaze at anyone who looks at them.
 And they are now become two passions
 for weeping and revealing sorrow,
 and they grieve so much that Love
 rings them with the crown of suffering.
 These thoughts, and the sighs I sigh,

become so anguished in my heart,
 that Amor lies near death, with grieving look:
 since they have in this sadness of theirs
 that sweet name of my lady written,
 and many words about her death.

.....

Selections from Sir Thomas Wyatt

They Flee from Me

They flee from me that sometime did me seek
 With naked foot, stalking in my chamber.
 I have seen them gentle, tame, and meek,
 That now are wild and do not remember
 That sometime they put themself in danger
 To take bread at my hand; and now they range,
 Busily seeking with a continual change.

Thanked be fortune it hath been otherwise
 Twenty times better; but once in special,
 In thin array after a pleasant guise,
 When her loose gown from her shoulders did fall,
 And she me caught in her arms long and small;

Therewith all sweetly did me kiss

And softly said, "Dear heart, how like you this?"

It was no dream: I lay broad waking.

But all is turned thorough my gentleness

Into a strange fashion of forsaking;

And I have leave to go of her goodness,

And she also, to use newfangledness.

But since that I so kindly am served

I would fain know what she hath deserved.

Whoso List To Hunt

Whoso list to hunt, I know where is an hind,

But as for me, *hélas*, I may no more.

The vain travail hath wearied me so sore,

I am of them that farthest cometh behind.

Yet may I by no means my wearied mind

Draw from the deer, but as she fleeth afore

Fainting I follow. I leave off therefore,

Sithens in a net I seek to hold the wind.

Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt,

As well as I may spend his time in vain.

And graven with diamonds in letters plain

There is written, her fair neck round about:

Noli me tangere, for Caesar's I am,

And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.

I have sought long with steadfastness

I have sought long with steadfastness
To have had some ease of my great smart
But naught availeth faithfulness
To grave within your stony heart.

But hap and hit or else hit not
As uncertain as is the wind:
Right so it fareth by the shot
Of Love, alas, that is so blind.

Therefore I played the fool in vain
With pity when I first began
Your cruel heart for to constrain,
Since love regardeth no doleful man.

But of your goodness all your mind
Is that I should complain in vain.
This is the favour that I find:
Ye list to hear how I can plain.

But though I plain to please your heart,
Trust me I trust to temper it so
Not for to care which do revert:
All shall be one in wealth or woe.

For fancy ruleth though right say nay,
Even as the good man kissed his cow:
None other reason can ye lay
But as who sayeth, "I reckon not how."

Selections from Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey

Sonnet 7 (The soot season, that bud and bloom forth brings)

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings
 With green hath clad the hill and eke the vale;
 The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
 And turtle to her mate hath told her tale.
 Summer is come, for every spray now springs;
 The hart hath hung his old head on the pale;
 The buck in brake his winter coat he flings;
 The fishes flete with new repaired scale;
 The adder all her slough away she slings;
 The swift swallow pursueth the flies small;
 The busy bee her honey now she mings;
 Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.
 And thus I see among these pleasant things
 Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.

Alas, so all things now do hold their peace!"

Alas, so all things now do hold their peace!

Heaven and earth disturbèd in no thing;
 The beasts, the air, the birds their song do cease,
 The nightè's car the stars about doth bring;
 Calm is the sea; the waves work less and less:

So am not I, whom love, alas! doth wring,
 Bringing before my face the great increase
 Of my desires, whereat I weep and sing,
 In joy and woe, as in a doubtful case.
 For my sweet thoughts sometime do pleasure bring:
 But by and by, the cause of my disease
 Gives me a pang that inwardly doth sting,
 When that I think what grief it is again
 To live and lack the thing should rid my pain.

When Raging Love

When raging love with extreme pain
 Most cruelly distrains my heart,
 When that my tears, as floods of rain,
 Bear witness of my woeful smart;
 When sighs have wasted so my breath
 That I lie at the point of death,

I call to mind the navy great
 That the Greeks brought to Troye town,
 And how the boisterous winds did beat
 Their ships, and rent their sails adown;
 Till Agamemnon's daughter's blood
 Appeased the gods that them withstood.

And how that in those ten years' war
 Full many a bloody deed was done,
 And many a lord that came full far
 There caught his bane, alas! too soon;
 And many a good knight overrun,

Before the Greeks had Helen won.

Then think I thus: sith such repair,
So long time war of valiant men,
Was all to win a lady fair,
Shall I not learn to suffer then,
And think my life well spent to be,
Serving a worthier wight than she?

Therefore I never will repent,
But pains contented still endure;
For like as when, rough winter spent,
The pleasant spring straight draweth in ure,
So, after raging storms of care,
Joyful at length may be my fare.