

*Tormentatemi pur*

Tormentatemi pur, Furie d'amore.  
Aprite questo seno,  
laceratemi il core,  
giunga il vostro veleno  
ad infertarmi ancor quella speranza  
ch'è vita degl'amanti.  
Vivrà la mia costanza  
ad ontà de miei pianti,  
al dispetto d'amore:  
Senza sen, senza speme, e senza core.

Schieratevi a cento a cento,  
ch'io non pavento.  
Armatevi a stuolo a stuolo  
ch'un punto solo resisterà,  
che la fede per me scudo si fà.

Ma dove mi trasporta  
un temerario ardire?  
Voi mi volete morta,  
e non posso morire;  
e quando son per voi di vita priva,  
voi volete ch'io viva!  
Perdono, ò pene mie, perdon vi chiedo,  
troppo vi provocai marrendo, e cedo.

1) Per pietà deh non scoccate  
contro me più fiero il dardo,  
è viltà se voi v'armate  
contro un cor tanto codardo  
2) Passa il telo e non abbatte  
coraggioso un setto humile,  
ma le torri arse e disfatte  
son trofeo del foco hostile.

1) Non tanto ardite  
pene venite  
contro il mio cor.  
Sì, sì, già parmi  
delle vostr'armi  
spento il furor.  
2) Tormenti fieri,  
meno severi  
vi brama Amor.  
Sì, sì, già miro  
del mio martire  
vinto il rigor.

Più non mi tormentate. ò almen fingete  
e vi basti saper che vinto havete.

Torment me then, Furies of Love,  
Lay open my breast, tear my heart,  
and with your venom,  
poison that hope  
which is life to lovers.  
My faithfulness shall live  
to the shame of my weeping,  
In spite of love:  
without spirit, without hope,  
and without heart.

Rally yourselves in ranks, hundred upon  
a hundred, and I shall not fear.  
Arm yourselves in multitudes, and you  
shall meet just one point of resistance.  
Let constancy be my shield.

But where does the temerity of my  
passion lead me?  
You wish me dead, and I cannot die.  
And when I am empty of life for your  
sake, you want me to live!  
Forgive me, forgiveness I beg for my  
suffering, I have provoked you too far;  
I give up, I surrender.

1) For mercy, ah, do not aim  
at me your fierce dart.  
It is ignoble of you  
to take arms against me,  
a heart so feeble.  
2) Give up your weapons and fight not  
with courage against the submissive.  
Towers burned and undone are the  
trophy of enemy fire.

1) Burn not so fiercely  
against my heart,  
Yes already the fury  
of your weapons seems spent.  
2) Fierce torments,  
Love prefers less harshness.  
Yes, already I see the severity  
of my suffering overcome.

Torment me no longer, or at least pretend,  
and may it be enough for you to know  
that you have conquered.

## *Tormentatemi pur – Alessandro Scarlatti*

Source: Lbl Add. 31488, ff. 116-123.

Watermark: fleur-de-lys in double circle

Cantatas by Gregorio Cola, [G.] Bononcini, [A.] Scarlatti, Carissimi (*Li Naviganti*), Stradella (*La Tirannide di Nerone*). The Scarlatti works include the duet *Amica hora che Aprile* and two cantatas on ancient Roman subjects, *Lucretia Romana* and *Il Coriolano*. *Tormentatemi pur* 'del Sigr. Alesso. Scarlatti' is copied by the same scribe as the copy of the duet cantata with violins (ca. 1693), *Amica hora che Aprile* in Add. 31488.

Owners of the Manuscript GB-Lbl Add. Ms 31488

The manuscript carries the names of two English musician/collectors: 'Savage' (probably William Savage, 1720-1789, a bass who performed in works of Handel, including the *Messiah*), and 'R.J. Stevens, Charterhouse 1817'. (R.J.S. Stevens, 1757-1837 – he was organist of Charterhouse from 1796, and 'gradually assembled a considerable collection of old music with an emphasis on Italian music for the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries' (GroveMusic Online). Stevens wrote a 'Life of Mr William Savage' (MS, GB-Ge).

Like *Lucretia Romana* (See Edition by R. Halton, WLSCM No.7), *Tormentatemi pur* almost certainly dates from the late 1680s. Clearly pre-dating the period of the Da Capo aria (established in Scarlatti's cantatas from at least 1692), this work shows the colourful and dramatic scope of Scarlatti's vocal writing in this period.

With its boldly virtuoso vocal demands and its fluid transitions from dramatic recitative to arioso, aria and back, *Tormentatemi pur* is a fine and highly individual example of Scarlatti's cantata style in the seventeenth-century concept inherited from composers such as Cesti and Stradella.

### *Editorial procedure*

Key signatures are retained. Accidentals apply throughout the bar. Cautionary accidentals in square brackets are supplied in cases where accidentals are repeated in the manuscript, leaving no doubt of the reading. Accidentals in parenthesis indicate an editorial suggestion where the accidental is omitted in the manuscript, or where there may be a choice of readings. Beaming of quavers and semiquavers follows the copyist's beaming. The cantata is sparingly figured in the manuscript: figures in square brackets are editorial suggestions.

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