

Cantata No.1 'The Rose'

2 Buffeted one day
 by a raging storm
 all forlorn was the lovely Rose,
 her petals faded, her fragrance gone.
 Nysa and Chloris spurned her,
 breezes and shepherds reviled her,
 the bee no longer flew to her heart
 seeking sweet and welcome nectar.

3 Then one fine morning a ray of sun,
 supping from her languishing leaves
 the moisture that bowed her
 groundwards, gave her back some strength;

 Thus restored, little by little
 she bravely began
 to raise her head,
 and ere long she saw around her
 the Bee, the Breezes, the Nymph and the fair Shepherd,
 admiring once more her vivid hues.

4 Now she stands in splendour again
 and scorns
 the protection of other flowers,
 tall and proud,
 she is become their mistress.
 And if Chloris and Phylenus approach
 to touch her crimson heart,
 she warns them off with her sharp thorns.

Cantata No.2 'Honest love'

5 Timid little shepherdess,
 innocent little maiden,
 flee not, ah, come to me.

 For I love you,
 I long only
 for the pure affection
 of your heart,
 and ask naught else of you.

6 Yet, modest damsel,

your cheeks are flushed scarlet!
Blush not, hear me.
When once you know
what sweet delight is Love
when in the company of Honesty;
you will regret the time
spent idly, refusing to love.
Oh! What rare joy
is to be found in love, and oh, what tender pain
lies in the words "My love;
for you am I dying". And then to hear: "My life;
you too have pierced my heart".

- 7 Listen to the little turtle-dove
on that branch up above;
she seems to say: I love you.
And after a happy kiss,
her beloved flies away.
Listen to the little swallow
in her nest up above,
who with piteous cries
keeps calling her mate,
who knows not his way home.

Cantata No.3 'The elm'

- 8 There where clothed in sombre shade
a cavern gaped its mossy, dripping mouth,
Phylenus, as he sat one day,
saw an Elm, which was bereft
of the fair adornment of its friend the vine,
and whose dreadful countenance
appeared to weep for this terrible loss.
Filled with pity at this sight,

he turned toward it to watch the dry
leaves falling from that lifeless trunk:
he gazed intent upon it;
then did he thus address the tree.

- 9 Unhappy tree,
tell me, for pity's sake,
if Nysa was
unfaithful to you too.
Most familiar

to my heart,
is the awful pallor
I see in you.

- 10 I know that that faithless girl,
sitting awhile beneath your gentle shade,
would find most welcome repose
in the wearisome days of summer.
I know that oft she praised
the kind shelter of your green branches;
I know that happily she would sit by you
and with sweet song declare to the breeze
my devoted love,
back then when it had hope:
but, o God, I know that then
she cruelly turned her affections to another tree,
and traitorously left you,
abandoning you as she did my love.
- 11 The little bird no longer flies
to your withered limbs,
nor does the weary pilgrim
take rest beneath you.
Shall we now unite in grief over
that cruel and thankless heart,
the inconstancy of her love,
her perfidy?

Cantata No.4 'Freedom acquired through love'

- 12 Cruel Nysa, your chains weigh
too heavily upon my heart;
I who, trapped and bound for so long,
drew sighs from my heart, tears from my eyes,
out of reason, anger or your cruelty;
longing for freedom I break my bonds.
The wound is now healed, the fire extinguished,
and I take from you the pleasure of my torment.
- 13 Serving thus without reward,
loving thus without hope,
is a trophy of pointless fidelity.
My feet are now free from ties,
and scorning all constancy
no longer do I yearn for any other prize.

- 14 Think not that after this unhappy love
I will now go from yoke to yoke.
I know that I could find
if not a fairer face, a more welcoming heart
in another woman, o Nysa.
Yet having scarce escaped a fatal storm
no longer am I tempted by calm winds to the sea.
- 15 Let Love's flame be quenched in me,
for it brings destruction wherever it blazes,
as he who feels it will be able to tell.
When it is born, it seems good sport,
yet with its cruel, pitiless ways,
it becomes the tyrant of every heart.

Cantata No.5 'Impending shipwreck'

- 16 The waves crash, the wind roars,
the skies thunder, the sun shines not,
and the harbour is still far away.
I can feel my ship being broken,
and the helmsman at the wheel
is now overcome with fear.
- 17 There is no escape. I see that,
I am lost, and shipwreck is certain.
Oblivious heaven no longer hears
my tears and prayers; indeed cruelly
it sends ever stronger gales; and from the
depths of darkness dreadful flashes
light up for me a stage on which appear
different perils and deaths.
Sails and rigging scattered, anchors cut loose,
masts broken, oars dashed to pieces; o God,
I can no longer hold the rudder,
half-alive, all I can hear around me
is the tumult of wind and waves,
and their dreadful combat,
painting a picture of impending death.
- 18 My wrecked ship,
I see you break apart,
and can but weep
for your destiny.

Whoever would believe
that shipwreck
would inevitably
await him
on the tempestuous seas.

Cantata No.6 'Jealousy'

- 19 Ah, what pain, what torture,
what suffering can this be
that I feel coursing through my veins?
Alas, what dreadful torment
with hidden power sucks my blood
and consumes my heart at every hour!
What is it I still seek! Ah, what do I hear!
Nysa, who faithlessly seeks her
delight in the arms of another,
is the cause of my bitterness and misery.
- 20 If I am right, it is cruel Jealousy
who has entered my heart
and broken it for ever.
She alone knows
how to bring both
ice and fire to the soul.
- 21 O rapacious harpy, implacable monster
from the pitiless inferno,
digging your claws
into my naked flank
you tear and rip my flesh,
and drinking the best blood from my veins
with your hooked beak
you are worse than a pestilent serpent
wrapped round me. Ah, take pity
perfidious Jealousy
for the repose I have already lost,
and give my soul a moment's peace.
- 22 That another is happy with my beloved
is an affliction
far crueller than death.
Only he who has felt such
terrible grief,
can tell of its dread nature.

Translated by Susannah Howe