

## 140. 'Amor, che nel pensier mio vive et regna'

Love that lives and reigns in my thought  
and holds the central place in my heart,  
sometimes comes to my brow fully armed,  
takes his stand there, and sets up his banner.  
She who teaches love and suffering,  
and wishes great desire and burning hope  
to be restrained by reason, reverence, shame,  
is angered in herself by our ardour.  
Then Love retreats in fear to the heart,  
relinquishing his aim, trembles, weeps:  
hides himself there, and no more appears.  
What can I do, now my lord's afraid,  
but stay with him until the final hour?  
For he ends well, who dies loving well.

## 164. 'Or che 'l ciel et la terra e 'l vento tace'

Now that the sky and the earth and the wind are silent  
and the wild creatures and the birds are reined in sleep,  
Night leads its starry chariot in its round,  
and the sea without a wave lies in its bed,  
I look, think, burn, weep: and she who destroys me  
is always before my eyes to my sweet distress:  
war is my state, filled with grief and anger,  
and only in thinking of her do I find peace.

So from one pure living fountain  
flow the sweet and bitter which I drink:  
one hand alone heals me and pierces me:  
and so that my ordeal may not reach haven,  
I am born and die a thousand times a day,  
I am so far from my salvation.

### **189. 'Passa la nave mia colma d'oblio'**

My ship, full of oblivion, sails  
on a bitter sea, at winter's midnight,  
between Scylla and Charybdis: at the helm  
sits that Lord, or rather my enemy.  
At each oar there's a cruel eager thought,  
that scorns the tempest and its end:  
the sail's torn by an eternal moist wind  
of sighs, of hopes, and of desire.  
A rain of tears, a mist of disdain  
drench and slacken the already tired shrouds,  
woven from error and ignorance.  
My two usual guiding lights are so hidden:  
reason and art so drowned by the waves,  
that I begin to despair of finding harbour.

### **190. 'Una candida cerva sopra l'erba'**

A pure white hind appeared to me

with two gold horns, on green grass,  
between two streams, in a laurel's shade,  
at sunrise, in the unripe season.

Her aspect was so sweet and proud  
I left all my labour to follow her:  
as a miser, in search of treasure,  
makes his toil lose its bitterness in delight.

'Touch me not,' in diamonds and topaz,  
was written round about her lovely neck:  
'it pleased my Lord to set me free.'

The sun had already mounted to mid-day,  
my eyes were tired with gazing, but not sated,  
when I fell into water, and she vanished.