

# NOTES, TEXTS, AND TRANSLATIONS

## *Ich habe genug, BWV 82*

This cantata refers to the story of Simeon, a Jewish priest who held the Savior in his arms when the infant Jesus was brought to the temple in Jerusalem to be blessed. The opening words of the first aria, “Ich habe genug” (I have enough), capture the longing to move on from this life—a longing which is also held in the lamenting vocal line throughout the aria. The voice and flute, through exchanging phrases, often have dissonant harmonies together, which may represent how Simeon is at odds with the loss of what he will leave behind, despite his desire to leave this world. In “Schlummert ein,” one is almost lulled to sleep, with the strings carrying you away—then a pause, as if the speaker has fallen asleep. This continues throughout the aria, as if someone is continually drifting off. The last aria seems to be at odds with itself. Simeon says, “Ich freue mich auf meinen Tod” (I joy in my death), but the music seems to convey frustration or even anger, as if he is upset that he has not passed yet. In the preceding recitative, he had said his goodbyes to the world; therefore, I believe that in the aria, Simeon feels unable to help himself in his desire for death.

*A personal note:* I chose this cantata because of the passing of my grandfather this past spring. He was a man of deep spirituality. He said hello and goodbye through the words, “Stay the course, keep the faith.” His wife had passed eight years earlier, and he missed her dearly. Leading up to his death, he longed more and more to be with his wife and see his Savior. Though many sorrowed at his death, we also all rejoiced as he rejoined my grandmother and went to meet his Savior.

### **1. Arie**

Ich habe genug,\*  
Ich habe den Heiland, das Hoffen der  
Frommen,  
Auf meine begierigen Arme genommen;  
Ich habe genug!  
Ich hab ihn erblickt,  
Mein Glaube hat Jesum ans Herze gedrückt;  
Nun wünsch ich, noch heute mit Freuden  
Von hinnen zu scheiden.

### **1. Aria**

I have enough,\*\*  
I have taken the Savior, the hope of the  
righteous,  
into my eager arms;  
I have enough!  
I have beheld him,  
my faith has pressed Jesus to my heart;  
now I wish, even today with joy  
to depart from here.

\* Other versions of the cantata spell the word “genug,” as in modern German.

\*\* While “I have enough” is the literal translation, “It is enough” was chosen as this recital’s subtitle for its more poignant poetic resonance.

**2. Rezitativ**

Ich habe genug.  
 Mein Trost ist nur allein,  
 Daß Jesus mein und ich sein eigen möchte  
 sein.  
 Im Glauben halt ich ihn,  
 Da seh ich auch mit Simeon  
 Die Freude jenes Lebens schon.  
 Laßt uns mit diesem Manne ziehn!  
 Ach! möchte mich von meines Leibes Ketten  
 der Herr erretten;  
 Ach! wäre doch mein Abschied hier,  
 Mit Freuden sagt ich, Welt, zu dir:  
 Ich habe genug.

**3. Arie**

Schlummert ein, ihr matten Augen,  
 Fallet sanft und selig zu!  
 Welt, ich bleibe nicht mehr hier,  
 Hab ich doch kein Teil an dir,  
 Das der Seele könnte taugen.  
 Hier muß ich das Elend bauen,  
 Aber dort, dort werd ich schauen  
 Süßen Frieden, stille Ruh.

**4. Rezitativ**

Mein Gott! wenn kömmt das schöne: Nun!  
 Da ich im Friede fahren werde  
 Und in dem Sande kühler Erde  
 Und dort bei dir im Schoße ruhn?  
 Der Abschied ist gemacht,  
 Welt, gute Nacht!

**5. Arie**

Ich freue mich auf meinen Tod,  
 Ach, hätt' er sich schon eingefunden.  
 Da entkomm ich aller Not,  
 Die mich noch auf der Welt gebunden.

**2. Recitative**

I have enough.  
 My comfort is this alone,  
 that Jesus might be mine and I His own.

In faith I hold him,  
 there I see, along with Simeon,  
 already the joy of the other life.  
 Let us go with this man!  
 Ah! if only the Lord might rescue me from the  
 chains of my body;  
 Ah! were only my departure here,  
 with joy I would say, world, to you:  
 I have enough.

**3. Aria**

Fall asleep, you weary eyes,  
 close softly and pleasantly!  
 World, I will not remain here any longer,  
 I own no part of you  
 that could matter to my soul.  
 Here I must build up misery,  
 but there, there I will see  
 sweet peace, quiet rest.

**4. Recitative**

My God! When will the lovely 'now!' come,  
 when I will journey into peace  
 and into the cool soil of earth,  
 and there, near you, rest in your lap?  
 My farewells are made,  
 world, good night!

**5. Aria**

I delight in my death,  
 ah, if it were only present already!  
 Then I will emerge from all the suffering  
 that still binds me to the world.

Text by Christoph Birkmann  
 Translation by Pamela Dellal

***The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation, Z. 196***

This text sets part of the story of Mary and Joseph losing Jesus in Jerusalem when he was twelve years of age. Nahum Tate, the librettist, and Purcell have extrapolated a dramatic scene from Mary's words in Luke 2:48. On finding Jesus, she says, "thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." The storytelling puts Mary in a very humanistic light. She goes through intense emotions, heard through expressive recitatives and the songs nestled between them. This setup, as well as the dramatic nature of the writing, suggests a sort of sacred opera. One interesting moment comes about two-thirds of the way through Tate's text, in which he uses juxtaposition so stark it is almost a joke (despite this being a sacred work!). In a light-hearted aria, Mary describes herself as, "... of mothers the most bless'd," but turns it around dramatically in the next phrase: "Now (fatal change!) of mothers most distress'd."

Tell me, some pitying angel, quickly say,  
 Where does my soul's sweet darling stray,  
 In tiger's, or more cruel Herod's way?  
 Ah! rather let his little footsteps press  
 Unregarded through the wilderness,  
 Where milder savages resort:  
 The desert's safer than a tyrant's court.  
 Why, fairest object of my love,  
 Why dost thou from my longing eyes remove?  
 Was it a waking dream that did foretell  
 Thy wondrous birth? no vision from above?  
 Where's Gabriel now that visited my cell?

I call; he comes not; flatt'ring hopes, farewell.

Me Judah's daughters once caress'd,  
 Call'd me of mothers the most bless'd

Now (fatal change!) of mothers most  
 distress'd.

How shall my soul its motions guide?  
 How shall I stem the various tide,  
 Whilst faith and doubt my lab'ring soul  
 divide?

For whilst of thy dear sight beguil'd,  
 I trust the God, but oh! I fear the child.

Text by Nahum Tate

## Orphée, RCT 27

*Orphée* is based on the classic Greek tale of Orpheus and Euridice. Orpheus, demi-god of music, is married to his one true love, Euridice. She, however, is mortal, and early in their marriage (or on her wedding day, depending on the version of the story) she is bitten by a venomous serpent and dies. Orpheus goes to the underworld to ask Pluto for Euridice, so that she may rejoin him in the living world. On account of the beautiful songs he sings for Pluto, Orpheus is allowed to have Euridice back on one condition: that he not look at her until they reach the surface of the earth. Rameau's telling begins as he takes Euridice toward the surface, followed by small cupids that sing to his triumph.

In French baroque cantatas, it is typical for the singer to take on multiple characters. You will hear me take on three identities. First, I will sing as the *Narrator*, second, as one of the *Cupids* that sing to Orpheus, and third as *Orphée* himself.

Typically, these cantatas were performed without staging or dancing. However, we feel that the dance, staging, and costumes add to the story, turning it into a mini French opera. The dancing is French baroque dance, true to the era as far as scholars can surmise. The style of dress is also an attempt to recreate what may have been worn in early 18th-century France.

### Récitatif

*Narr.* Par le charme vainqueur d'un chant  
harmonieux  
Orphée à l'empire des ombres  
Arrachoit l'objet de ses vœux,  
Et le fils de Vénus, dans ces routes trop  
sombres  
Conduisoit son triomphe à l'éclat de ses feux.  
Un plaisir seul manquoit à ce mortel heureux:  
Pluton, par une loi bizarre,  
Avoir, jusqu'au pied du Ténare\*  
Contraint ses regards amoureux;  
Mais de jeunes Amours une escorte riante  
Essayoit d'amuser son ame impatiente  
Par ces chants gracieux.

### Recitative

By the winning charm of a harmonious song  
  
Orpheus, from the empire of shadows,  
Snatched the object of his desire.  
And the son of Venus, in these too dark roads  
  
Led his triumph to the brightness of his fires.  
One pleasure only lacked this happy mortal:  
Pluto, by a strange law,  
He had to, right up to the foot of Taenarus,\*  
Constrained his amorous glances;  
But a laughing escort of young Cupids  
Tried to amuse his impatient soul  
With these graceful songs.

\*A gateway to the underworld

**Air**

*Cupids* Que du bruit de tes hauts exploits  
L'univers toujours retentisse,  
Et qu'aux sons vainqueurs de ta voix  
Désormais la terre obéisse.  
L'enfer en respecte les lois.  
Elle a su réparer l'outrage  
Que t'avait fait l'injuste sort,  
Et l'avare sein de la mort  
Te rend la beauté qui t'engage.

**Récitatif**

*Narr.* Mais son ame sensible à le seule Eurydice,  
Ne songe qu'au plaisir dont le terme est  
prochain:  
"Cessez," dit-il, "cessez un éloge si vain."

**Air**

*Orphée* J'ai pour témoin de ma victoire  
Les beaux yeux qui m'ont enflammé.  
C'est le seul prix, la seule gloire,  
Dont mon cœur puisse être charmé.

**Récitatif**

*Narr.* À ce penser flatteur, il s'émeut, il se trouble,  
  
Il cède enfin au violent transport  
De se flamme qui se redouble.  
Attends, fais sur ton cœur encor quelques  
efforts!  
C'en est fait... et ses yeux ont vu ceux  
d'Eurydice!  
Triste jouet de l'inferral caprice,  
Prête à quitter les sombres bords,  
Une barbare main la retient chez les morts.

**Aria**

May the sound of your high exploits  
Always resonate throughout the world,  
And, by the victorious sounds of your voice,  
The earth must obey.  
Hell respects its laws.  
It has repaired the insult  
Unjust fate had done thee,  
And the miserly breast of death  
Restores to thee the beauty that engaged  
thee.

**Recitative**

But his soul, responsive to Eurydice alone,  
Thinks only of the pleasure which is near:  
  
"Cease," he says, "cease such vain praise."

**Aria**

My victory is witnessed by  
The beautiful eyes that set me on fire.  
This is the only prize, the only glory  
With which my heart can be charmed.

**Recitative**

At this flattering thought, he is moved, he is  
troubled,  
He gives in at last to the violent emotion  
Of his redoubling passion.  
Wait, make a few more exertions on your  
heart!  
It is done... and his eyes have seen those of  
Eurydice!  
Sad plaything of the inferral caprice,  
Ready to leave the dark shores,  
A barbarous hand holds her among the dead.

*(continued on the next page)*

**Air**

*Narr.* Ému par des nouveaux accords,  
Ce malheureux époux croit attendrir Mégère.

Elle est sourde, et ce n'est qu'à l'enfant de  
Cythère  
Qu'il fait entendre ainsi sa plainte et ses  
remords:

*Orphée* Amour, Amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime,

C'est à toi de le réparer.  
Des feux que tu sus m'inspirer  
Ma chère épouse est la victime.  
Amour, Amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime,

Vole aux enfers le réparer.  
Ah! Devaient-ils nous séparer  
Pour un transport si légitime?  
Amour, Amour, c'est toi qui fais mon crime.

Ne saurois-tu le réparer?

**Récitatif**

*Narr.* Inutiles regrets! à sa douleur mortelle  
Tout l'abandonne sans retour.  
Ce n'est plus qu'en quittant le jour  
Qu'il peut rejoindre ce qu'il aime.

\* I.e. by dying.

**Air**

En amour il est un moment  
Marqué pour notre récompense.  
Si quelquefois par indolence  
On échappe ce point charmant,  
Plus souvent encor un amant  
Le perd par trop d'impatience.  
De ses désirs impétueux  
L'amant habile est toujours maître;  
Il tâche avec soin de connaître  
L'instant qui doit combler ses vœux.  
Tel aujourd'hui seroit heureux  
S'il n'avant voulu trop tôt l'être!

**Aria**

Moved by new agreements,  
This unfortunate husband thinks to soften  
Megaera.

She is deaf, and it is only to the child of  
Cythera  
That he makes heard his complaint and his  
remorse:

Cupid, Cupid, it is you who committed my  
crime,

It is up to you to make amends.  
Of the passion you knew how to inspire in me  
My dear wife is the victim.

Cupid, Cupid, it is you who committed my  
crime,

Fly to hell to make amends.

Ah! Should they separate us

For a pleasure if legitimate?

Cupid, Cupid, it is you who committed my  
crime.

Can't you put it right?

**Recitative**

Useless regrets! To his mortal pain  
All abandon him without return.  
Only by leaving the day\*  
May he be reunited with his beloved.

**Aria**

In love there is a moment  
Marked for our reward.  
If sometimes by indolence  
We miss this charming point, but  
More often a lover  
Loses it by too much impatience.  
Of his impetuous desires,  
The skillful lover is always master;  
He carefully tries to know  
The moment that must fulfil his wishes.  
Such a person would be happy today  
If he had not wanted it too soon!

Author unknown

Translation from VMII.org, adapted by Sariah Seare Young