

Texts/translations

O Viridissima Virga

O branch of freshest green,
O hail! Within the windy gusts of saints
upon a quest you swayed and sprouted
forth.

When it was time, you blossomed in your
boughs—
“Hail, hail!” you heard, for in you seeped the
sunlight’s warmth
like balsam’s sweet perfume.

For in you bloomed
so beautiful a flow’r, whose fragrance
wakened
all the spices from their dried-out stupor.

And they all appeared in full viridity.

Then rained the heavens dew upon the
grass
and all the earth was cheered,
for from her womb she brought forth fruit
and for the birds up in the sky
have nests in her.

Then was prepared that food for
humankind,
the greatest joy of feasts!
O Virgin sweet, in you can ne’er fail any joy.

All this Eve chose to scorn.
But now, let praise ring forth unto the
Highest!

Green

You and I and Amyas to the greenwood
must we go.
Alas, you and I, my lyf, and Amyas.

Le Chant des Oiseaux

Awake, sleepy hearts,

The god of love calls you.
On this first day of May,
The birds will make you marvel.
To lift yourself from dismay,
Unclog your ears.
And fa la la la la (etc...)
You will be moved to joy,
For the season is good.

You will hear, I advise you,
A sweet music
That the royal song thrush will sing (the
blackbird, too)
In a pure voice.
Ti, ti, pi-ti (etc...)

You, what are you saying?
The little starling of Paris,
The little thing: (who’s there? Pass, villain.
By the holy head of God
It is time to go drinking)
Wise, courteous and well versed.
Go to the sermon, my mistress.
Get thee to Mass, Madam.
To St. Troitin to show off
your sweet looks.
To laugh and rejoice is my device,
Each with abandon.

Nightingale of the pretty woods,
Whose voice resounds,
So you don’t become bored,
Your throat jabbars away:
Friar, friar (etc...)
Flee, regrets, tears and worries,
For the season commands it.

Turn around, master cuckoo
Get out of our company.
Each of us gives you a ‘bye-bye’
For you are nothing but a traitor.
Cuckoo, cuckoo (etc...)
Traacherously in others' nests,
You lay without being called.

Awake, sleepy hearts,
The god of love is calling you.

Sweet Suffolk Owl

Sweet Suffolk owl, so trimly dight,
With feathers like a lady bright,
Thou sing'st alone, sitting by night:
Te-whit, te-who...
Thy note, that forth so freely rolls,
With shrill command the mouse controls,
And sings a dirge for dying souls:
Te-whit, te-who...

Il Bianco e Dolce Cigno

The white and sweet swan
dies singing, and I,
weeping, reach the end of my life.
Strange and different fate,
that he dies disconsolate
and I die a blessed death,
which in dying fills me
full of joy and desire.
If in dying, were I to feel no other pain,
I would be content to die a thousand deaths
a day.

Il Mio Più Vago Sole

My loveliest sun is dead,
and yet it seems that the more it burns,
the more it warms the field of souls
in the shade of a lovely trunk;
and it is indeed a hard stone
deprived and extinguished of every humor
or a thorny and completely lost land
which denies its fruits
to such beautiful rays.

O Radiant Dawn

O Radiant Dawn,
splendor of eternal Light,
Sun of Justice: come,
shine on those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death.

Isaiah had prophesied,
“The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
upon those who dwell in the land of gloom
a light has shone”

Alma Beata et Bella

Delightful and beautiful soul,
Free from bondage,
You have risen naked to celestial cloisters,
Where, together with your star,
You may be gathered in joy.
Like a beautiful sun, you reveal yourself
Among the most luminous spirits.
Other mountains, other plains,
Other groves and streams,
You see in heaven and in the newly
bloomed flowers.
Betwixt sweet scents,
Sweetly singing in the shade,
Dwells our Androgeo,
Encumbering the heavens with rare
sweetness,
Tempering the elements.

Delightful and beautiful soul,
Like a beautiful sun, you reveal yourself
Among the most luminous spirits.

Solhyme - Movements II & III

II.
When thou hast set in the western horizon,
Then the earth is in darkness,
As it were dead.
They sleep now within their chambers,
Their faces are covered
Their eyes in slumber see no one among
them.
They sleep now the sun has set.

Every lion cometh forth from his hiding,
All the serpents sting now;

In darkness they lie in waiting.
And silence reigneth and their creator
rest-eth
Now the sun has set.

III.

When though at daybreak risest in thy
splendor,
Every land then thou fillest with thy beauty.
Darkness drivest thou hence,
Thou shinest bright in thy glory.

All earth. All earth is in thy hand.
For thou hast made its inhabitants.
For thou hast made all earth
And shinest bright in thy glory.
When thou art on high, they live by thee.
When thou hast set, they perish.
All gavest thou being as thou desiredst.
One sole God almighty.
All creatures live through thee
For thou vivifiest all that thou hast made.
Beautiful sun.

Octonaires de la Vanité et Inconstance du Monde

Quand la Terre au Printemps

When the Earth in spring takes its green
color,
And the tree is reclad in a fairer flower,
Its flower is a herald of the expected fruit.
Worldling, who bears no fruit, however
much you flourish
With goods, in honor, in pleasure and
delight,
Thy flower that deludes and lies is but a
plaything for the wind.

Le glace est luisante et belle.

The ice and the world are glittering and fair.
One falls into the water through the ice,
And from the world one falls into eternal
death.

Both vanish in the end
But the ice melts into water,
The world and what is of the world
disappears into nothingness.

Lors que la feuille va mourant

When the leaf dies in Autumn
Dishonoring with its ugliness the lovely face
of the year
It is a mirror of your life, now green, now
withered,
Worldling, whose life departs
Without leaving either leaf or fruit behind.

Vois tu l'Hyver accroupi

Do you see winter huddled, shaggy,
Scowling with ice and cold?
Such are we; that is our image
When our best years are past.
After winter, spring begins again.
But you, worldling who puts your hope in
this life
And lays claim to nothing else,
Your winter has no hope of spring.

Ce luy qui pense pourvoir

Those who think they can find rest in this
world,
And base their hopes on such grounds,
What does such a person imagine they are
doing?
They imagine sitting quite securely atop a
round ball
Floating in the middle of the ocean.

Ce Monde est un pelerinage

The world is a pilgrimage,
The wicked, frantic with rage
Are its devout pilgrims.

Led astray from the straight ways,
Fall into death's deep pit.
But you, o my God, guiding my steps
On other paths lead me

From the way of the world.

Revecy Venir du Printemps

Refrain: Here again comes the Spring,
the amorous and fair season.

The currents of water that seek
The canal in summer become clearer;
And the sea calms her waves,
Softens the sad anger.
The duck, elated, dives in,
And washes itself happily in the water.
And the crane breaks its path,
Crosses back and flies away.

(Refrain)

The sun shines brightly
With a most serene clarity:
From the cloud the shadow flies
And plays and runs and darkens
And forests and fields and hillsides,
Human labor makes green again,
And the prairie unveils its flowers.

(Refrain)

From Venus' son, Cupid,
The universe is seeded in milk,
Is warmed by his flames.
Animals that fly in the air,
Animals that slither in the fields,
Animals that swim in the seas,
Even the unsentient ones,
Once in love, are melted by pleasure.

(Refrain)

So let us laugh: and let us seek out
The frolicking and the games of Spring
All the world laughs in pleasure:
Let us celebrate the happy season,

(Refrain)