

7. “Let the dreadful engines”

From *The Comical History of Don Quixote* (1694)

Written by Thomas d’Urfey.

<p>Let the dreadful engines of eternal will, The thunder roar of crooked lighting kill, My rage is hot as theirs, as fatal too, And dares as horrid execution do. Or let the frozen North its rancour show, Within my breast far greater tempests grow; Despair’s more cold than all the winds can blow.</p> <p>Can nothing, nothing warm me? Yes, yes, Lucinda’s eyes. There Etna, there, There, there Vesuvio lies, To furnish Hell with flames That mounting reach the skies.</p> <p>Ye powers, I did but use her name, And see how all the meteors flame; Blue lightning flashes round the court of Sol, And now the globe more fiercely burns Than once at Phaeton’s fall.</p> <p>Ah, where are now those flow’ry groves Where Zephyr’s fragrant winds did play? Where guarded by a troop of Loves, There sung in the nightingale and lark,</p>	<p>Around us all was sweet and gay; We ne’er grew sad till it grew dark, Nor nothing feared but short’ning day.</p> <p>I glow; I glow but ’tis with hate Why must I burn for this ingrate? Cool, cool it then and rail, Since nothing, nothing will prevail.</p> <p>When a woman love pretends, ’This butt ill she gains her ends, And for better or for worse Is marrow of the purse, Where she jilts you o’er and o’er, Proves a slatter or a whore, This hour will tease and vex, And will cuckold ye the next, They were all contrived in spite, To torment us, not delight; But to scold and scratch and bite, And not one of them proves right, But all, all are witches by this light. And so I fairly bid ’em, and the world Good Night.</p>
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7.1 Textual analysis

In the first part of the story of Don Quixote we meet the character Cardinio. He has been seduced by the working girl Lucinda. Cardinio believes that this is true love, but as it turns out, she is only after his money. When he figures this out, he turns mad with love and rage, just like Altisidora in “From Rosy Bowers”.

The first verse introduces us to a mad Cardinio. He is asking higher powers to help him punish the woman that has broken his heart. He is singing about how his anger is as hot as lightning, but at the same time as cold as the frozen north and stronger than any wind.

“Can nothing, nothing warm me? / Yes, yes, Lucinda’s eyes. / There, Etna there, / There, there Vesuvio lies, / To furnish Hell with flames / That mounting reach the skies.”

In this verse he is asking if nothing can ever warm him again, and he reaches the conclusion that only Lucinda’s eyes are capable of that. In those eyes he can see the volcano Etna and Vesuvio, with their warm flames from hell that reaches all the way up to the heavens.

In the third verse Cardinio calls for higher powers, “ye powers”. He says that the moment he said her name the meteorites fell. Ye powers in this verse refers to different Gods from different mythologies. The roman God Sol and the Greek God Helios and his son Phaeton are sung about (Store Norske Leksikon, 2012). Cardinio actually compares his pain with the pain Phaeton felt when he fell down from heaven and to his death. Phaeton was, according to Greek mythology, allowed to ride with his horse and carriage which contained the sun. He lost control over the carriage, and the text “And now the globe more fiercely burns” refers to this incident and that the sun burned a big part of the earth. The only thing that could stop the carriage was a thunderbolt thrown by the God Zeus, which led to Phaeton falling to the earth and his death (National Gallery of Art, n.d.).

In the fourth verse, Cardinio falls even deeper in to his depressed state of mind. He sings about how the flowers have disappeared and that the birds no longer sing – he is wondering where all the pretty and fun things have gone. In this verse it is referred to the God of the west wind, Zephyr, who is responsible for sending the winds and rain that is necessary for the crops to grow (Greek-Gods, n.d.). One can interpret the two last lines of this verse, “We ne’er grew sad till in grew dark, / Nor nothing feared but short’ning day”, as a warning that the seasons are moving towards darker times, and that the sorrow comes with the fall and the

darkness.

In the fifth and sixth verses, Cardinios feelings move from sorrow and over to anger and hatred. "I glow; I glow but 'tis with hate / Why must I burn for this ingrate?" He is singing of how Lucinda has betrayed him, and how she managed to trick him. He feels that all females only pretend to love a man, in order to achieve their goals. He sings about opinions such as that women are whores and witches that first "will tease and vex" before they "cuckold ye the next". It is quite clear that Cardinio have given up in women, and he ends the song with saying good night to both them and the world.

One can find a lot of similarities between "From Rosy Bowers" and "Let the Dreadful Engines". Both characters have become mad with love, and they would both rather die than live with this terrible pain anymore. Another similarity one can find is the need to call on higher powers, which they both do. They hope that the gods can help them out of the situation they find themselves in. They both also compare their feelings with things found and occurring in nature.

There are also some differences in the way the madness is portrayed. One of the differences I found, and feel is important to mention, is that the male madness is more aggressive than the female version. And, because of the hard and aggressive nature of the role, the rhythm is harder, the intervals are in general bigger and the music is more triumphant and self-confident. Cardinio call on the powers of the gods to help him punish the woman he feels betrayed him, while Altisidora calls on gods of love to help her win back the love and affection of man she loves. Cardinio feels it is the woman that must change for his needs, while Altisidora tries to change herself to fit Don Quixotes needs.

7.2 Music analysis

This piece can, like "From rosy bowers", be divided into different sections depending on the feeling or mood that is meant to be portrayed, but one can also divide the different parts of "Let the dreadful Engines" by looking at the different key signatures. From the beginning one can see that Purcell wrote the recitative beginning in F Major, and we are introduced to the man Cardinio who is having a heated conversation with himself. He speaks, as mentioned in the text analysis, about the forces of nature and especially lightning and wind. One can hear lightning strokes and the sharp winds in the quick sixteenth notes. In bar 17 the piece changes to F Minor, which introduces a new thought. He is no longer as sure of himself and one can clearly hear despair, "despair's more cold than all the winds can blow" (Appendix part 1, Example 1). In bar 29, it changes rather abruptly back to F Major again, and a danceable aria in double pace of what has previously been introduced begins. Although this aria is in F Major, there is a pull towards C Major, which prepares the listener for the shift in key signature in bar 70, where it again changes back to a recitative. In this recitative the volcanoes Etna and Vesuvio are mentioned, and one can hear the heat rising in both the text and the music when it once again steers the listener towards the dominant C Major.

"To furnish Hell with flames That mounting reach the skies", is sung on melisma written as dotted eighths and sixteenth notes climbing upwards with the flames Cardinio is singing about. After the C Major part, a melancholic aria in C Minor follows. Also in this aria the listener is pulled towards other keys, as we briefly enter the G Minor. The wandering bassline finally finds peace in F Major in bar 116. F Major is the main key for the rest of the piece, with some exceptions. In bar 130 the piece wanders in to both F Minor, B Major and G Minor, before it once again returns and ends in F major.

Based on this analysis, one can see that "Let the dreadful engines", like "From Rosy Bowers", is quite unpredictable. There are several rapid shifts in emotions and style, usually without any kind of notice. This helps to make the thought process to Cardinio very clear. There is one point I feel is particularly exciting to show; from bar 128 to 133 he sings about how everything is cold and nothing will grow up, and mood of the music is bleak. But then in bar 134 a whole new thought is presented, and Cardinio sings bitterly about how all women tricks and scams you. What is interesting is that the gloomy text from the previous section continues

but the tonality is much easier, happier and uplifting. Personally, I think it sounds like Purcell wrote this part as a way of teasing the character of Cardenio.

Just as in "From Rosy Bowers", leading-notes and suspensions are used as a way of underlining special moments and feelings, often sadness, in the music. Purcell used very specific musical tools to underline and, in a way, explain the text. He uses melisma, distinct rhythm and the use of small and large intervals to highlight the different moods. The way Purcell writes upwards moving melody lines to bring out the joy and ease and downward melody lines to show anger and despair, is also a way of reinforcing the different feelings Cardenio goes through.