

Air de la gaillarde appelee
J'aymerois mieulx dormir seulette

from Orchesographie, 1588/89

I Would Rather Lie Alone

Thoinot Arbeau (1520-1595)

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled 'J'aymerois mieulx dormir seulette'. It consists of two systems of four staves each. The top system includes a vocal line and three instrumental lines. The bottom system also includes a vocal line and three instrumental lines. The music is written in a 16th-century style with a key signature of one flat and a 6/8 time signature. The notation includes various note values, rests, and bar lines.

Mes pas semez

Setting by Steven Hendricks

1. Mes pas semez et loing allez
 Par diuers solitaires lieux:
 Sont de pensers entremellez,
 Qui rendent humides mes yeux,
 Et tant plus i'ay ma voix haucée,
 Tant moins ie me sens exaucée,
 Et si ne sçay quand i'aurai mieux.

2. Je n'ai tenu mes pas si chers,
 Ny mon esprit tant endormy,
 Que par montaignes et rochers
 Je n'aye cherche mon amy:
 L'oeil au guet, l'aureille ententiuie,
 La parole prompte et naïfue,
 Mais de luy n'ay mot ne demy.

3. Quand quelqu'un parle il m'est ausis
 Que Narcissus ha quelque ennuy,
 Je me presente vis à vis
 Pour tenir propos à celuy
 Que telle parole prononce,
 En luy faisant mesme response,
 Mesme propos et mesmes dicts.

4. Narcissus, respons s'il te plaist,
 Ois tu mon cry, ie croy que non:
 Rien ne sera mon piteaux plaïd,
 Fors par tout espandre ton nom.
 Donce ie te pry ne me nie
 Ta bien amée compaignie,
 Et tu seras en bon renom.

5. Ton bon sçauoir ny parler prompt
 Ne m'acquierent aucun plaisir:
 Car l'absence de l'amy, rompt
 Tout ce qu'en espere mon desir:
 Mais plus que c'est ma destinée,
 Que ie soye amante obstinée,
 Je quitte propos et plaisir.

6. Respondant á plusieurs parleurs,
 Je n'en y sceu trouuer aucun,
 Qui s'aprochast de tes valeurs:
 Pour cela i'entretiens chacun,
 C'est en attendant ta presence:
 C'est ie suis en ferme constance,
 Parler á tous, et n'aimer qu'un.

-translation-
 1. My steps, wandering and scattered,
 Through many lonely places,
 Are mingled with thoughts
 That wet my eyes with tears.
 And the more I've called out,
 The less I've felt I was heard.
 Yet I do not know when I shall have things better.

2. I have never found my steps so precious,
 Nor my mind so benumbed,
 As in this searching among mountains and boulders
 For my beloved.
 My eyes watchful, my ears alert,
 My tongue ready and open --
 But not a word or syllable of him.

3. When someone speaks, it seems to me
 That Narcissus is vexed at something --
 I turn to face him
 Who says this thing
 And talk with him,
 Answering him with the same answer,
 The same subject, the same words.

4. Narcissus, answer me, please.
 Do you not hear my cry? I fear not;
 Nothing will come of my woeful plea, except
 To spread your name everywhere.
 I beg you not to deny me
 Your affectionate company,
 And then you will be well spoken of.

5. Your learning, your ready speech
 Bring me no pleasure;
 For the absence of my beloved shatters
 Everything my longing hopes for.
 But since it's my destiny
 To be a stubborn lover,
 I abandon my purpose and my pleasure.

6. Answering several suitors,
 I've not found any
 Who came near to your value --
 And I entertain each of them
 Only in awaiting your return;
 For I am constant;
 To speak to all and love only one.