

# Caro mio ben

Ah, dearest love

Poet unknown  
English version by  
James P. Dunn



Tommaso Giordani (1730-1806)  
Edited by John Glenn Paton

Larghetto,  $\text{♩} = 36 - 42$

Ca - ro mio ben,      Cre - di - mi al - men,      Sen - za di te      Lan - gui - sce il  
Ah, dear - est love,      If you should leave,      Heav - en a - bove      knows how I'd

Idiomatic translation: My dear beloved, believe me at least, without you

12

cor, *grieve.* Ca - ro mio ben, Sen - za di  
Ah, dear - est love, Heav - en a -

*poco f* *p*

15

te — Lan - gui - sce il cor. Il tuo fe -  
bove — knows - how I'd grieve. Your faith - ful

*f* *p*

19

del friend So - spi - ra o - gnor, Ces - sa, cru - del, Tan - to ri -  
Sighs with - out end, This cru - el tor - ment, Cease — now, I

*f* *p*

22

gor! pray! Ces - sa, cru - del, Tan - to ri - gor, Tan - to ri -  
Cease now, I pray! This cru - el tor - ment Cease now, I

*sf*

my heart languishes. Your faithful one always sighs; cruel one, cease so much punishment.

25

gor! pray!

Ca - ro mio ben Cre - di - mi al - men, Sen - za di  
 Ah, dear - est love, If you should leave, Heav - en a -

*p*

28

te - Lan - gui - sce il cor, Ca - ro mio ben, Cre - di - mi al -  
 bove - Knows - how I'd grieve, Ah, dear - est love, If you should

31

men, Sen - za di te Lan - gui - sce il cor.  
 leave, Heav - en a - bove Knows how I'd grieve.

*poco f* *f* *p* *f*

35



# “Caro mio ben”

Tommaso Giordani  
tom:mazo dzordani

## Poetic idea

“Dear, I love you so much that when you stay away, I feel ill. Please be kind to me.”

## Background

English enthusiasm for Italian opera continued throughout the 1700s, and it continues today. Sixty years after Bononcini composed *Griselda* for London, Tommaso Giordani composed “*Caro mio ben*” for a concert there. A native of Naples, Giordani lived most of his life in London and published many vocal and instrumental compositions there.

## Source

“*The Favorite Song as Sung by Sigr. Tenducci at the Pantheon & Mr. Abel’s Concerts, Composed by Sigr. Giordani*” (London: Preston, 1782?), copy at University of Kansas at Lawrence. For voice (treble clef) and 4-part strings. Key: F.

The accompaniment in this edition is a reduction of the scoring for strings. The staccato markings given here are present in the string parts; one must judge whether they sound well when played on a piano.

The double grace-notes in the accompaniment and those in the voice in m29 and m30 are included in the original publication. The remaining ornaments are adapted from a manuscript volume of miscellaneous music that belonged to an unnamed British lady in 1788 or later: Additional 54,331, British Library, London. The ornaments have no particular authority, but they certainly reflect the amount and kind of ornamentation that a cultivated listener expected to hear.

## Bibliography

John Glenn Paton, “*Caro mio ben*: Some Early Sources,” *NATS Bulletin*,

karo mjo ben  
**Caro mio ben,**  
Dear, my beloved,

krədimalmən  
**Credimi almen,**  
believe-me at-least,

səntsa di te  
**Senza di te**  
without [of] you

lɑŋgwɪf:feɪl kər  
**Languisce il cor.**  
languishes [the] (my) heart.

ɪl tuo fedel  
**Il tuo fedel**  
[The] your faithful-one

sospiraɔn:nɔr  
**Sospira ognor.**  
sighs always.

tʃɛs:sa krudəl  
**Cessa, crudel,**  
Cease, cruel-one,

tanto rɪɡɔr  
**Tanto rigor!**  
so-much severity.

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The familiar edition, edited by Parisotti in 1890, names the composer as Giuseppe Giordani (no relation to Tommaso). The evidence for Tommaso as the actual composer is given in the above article.