

# Lasciatemi morire!

*O soul, I long to perish!*

Ottavio Rinuccini  
English version by  
James P. Dunn



Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)  
Edited by John Glenn Paton  
Vocal Ornamentation by Arthur Schoep

Lento, ♩ = 66 - 76

*f*

La - scia - te - mi mo - ri - re!  
O soul, I long to per - ish!

4

La - scia - te - mi mo - ri - re!  
No more to live in an - guish!

7

*p*

E che vo - le - te voi che mi con - for - te  
Think you to com - fort me, or give me sol - ace,

*p*

*Idiomatic translation:* Let me die! And what consolation is there for me,

11

In co - sì du - ra sor - te, In co - sí gran mar -  
Or from mis - for - tune shield me, Or give re - lease from

14

scia - - - te - mi mo - ri - re!  
ti - re? La - scia - te - mi mo - ri - re!  
tor - ment? O soul, I long to per - ish!

17

mi - - - mo - ri - re!  
La - scia - te - mi mo - ri - re!  
No more to live in an - - - guish!

enduring such a cruel fate, in such suffering? Let me die!



# "Lasciatemi morire!"

from *Arianna*  
arian:na

Claudio Monteverdi  
klaudjo monte'ver'di

## Poetic idea

"I cannot live without my beloved. Nothing you do can comfort me." The person who sings this is Ariadne (or Arianna in Italian), the daughter of King Minos of Crete. Ariadne helped a foreign hostage, Theseus, to escape from death in the Labyrinth. Theseus took Ariadne to the island of Naxos, where he deserted her. Her grief is expressed in a long scene, which begins with the brief section given here. (In the end, Ariadne did not die. The god Dionysus married her and took her to live with the gods.)

## Background

As a young composer Monteverdi published fine choral works in Renaissance style, but he adopted the new Baroque style wholeheartedly. As an employee of the Duke of Mantua, he certainly knew about the first opera performances and may have gone to hear them. When the Duke wanted an opera, he obtained a libretto, or opera text from Rinuccini, who had written the texts of the Florentine operas. Monteverdi wrote *Orfeo* in 1607 and *Arianna* the next year. The whole opera was a huge success; an eyewitness said that Arianna's lament "moved the ladies to tears." The lament became famous; it was sung all over Italy. The rest of the opera is lost.

Monteverdi's genius appears clearly in the first measure, in the wrenching dissonance between the voice and the bass part; nothing like it had ever been heard before.

## Source

Manuscript Mus. G239, Biblioteca Estense, Modena, Italy. Another manuscript, in the handwriting of composer Luigi Rossi, British Library Add. 30491, is reproduced in *New*

laf:ʃatemi morire  
**Lasciatemi morire!**  
Let-me die!

e ke volete voi ke mi konforte  
**E che volete voi che mi conforte**  
And what do-wish you that me should-comfort

in kozì dura sorte  
**In così dura sorte,**  
in such hard fate,

in kosì gran martire  
**In così gran martire?**  
in such great martyrdom?

*Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. For voice (soprano clef, starting on a1) and continuo. Original key: D minor, no signature. Meter signature: C, with irregular bar-lines. Bibliography: "Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna*" by J. A. Westrup, *Music Review*, Vol. I, 1940.

The familiar version of "Lasciatemi morire!" edited by Parisotti in *Arie Antiche*, Vol. 2 (Milan: Ricordi, 1890), softened Monteverdi's music to suit the sentimental taste of the times. Parisotti altered the bass part to avoid the dramatic dissonances in m1 and m15, altered word accentuation in m11, and avoided other harsh and colorful harmonies. The harmonization in this edition is based on Monteverdi's madrigal version for five voices (1614).