



“Sebben, crudele”

from *La costanza in amor vince l'inganno*
la kostantsa in amor vintʃe lingan:no

Antonio Caldara
antɔnjo kaldara

Poetic idea

“I will go on loving you until my persistence makes you love me.” The singer is Aminta, a shepherd, who is puzzled by the unresponsive behavior of Silvia, a shepherdess, who used to love him.

Background

Like Antonio Lotti, Caldara was a choirboy at St. Mark's Basilica in Venice under the direction of Giovanni Legrenzi. In 1710 Caldara wrote *Faithfulness in Love Defeats Treachery* for the public theater at Macerata. He was the music director of a princely household in Rome, where the opera was repeated the next year. The moralistic title assured the audience no religious person would be offended by the story.

In 1716 Caldara moved to Austria to serve the Imperial Court in Vienna. There he composed new music to the libretto of this opera. Entitled *Opera Pastorale*, it includes an aria, “*Sebben crudele*,” but with a different melody.

Sources

(1) *La costanza in amor vince l'inganno*, manuscript score of the opera, Biblioteca musicale governativa del Conservatorio di Musica “S. Cecilia,” Rome, G ms 184. In Act I, scene 3. For voice (tenor clef), two violins, viola and continuo (the upper strings play only when the voice is silent). Original key: E minor; (2) Libretto for the 1711 performance, same library, Libretto XII.13.

The essential parts of this aria consist of 30 measures of vocal music, which are repeated in various ways, by the voice and by the instruments, to form a full-length aria. With all of its repetitions, the original is 160 measures long. This edition omits some repetitions, shortening the aria

seb:bɛn krudɛle
Sebben, crudele,
Although, cruel one,

mi fai langwir
Mi fai languir,
me you-make languish,

sempre fedele
Sempre fedele
always faithful,

ti vɔl:ʎoamar
Ti voglio amar.
you I-want to-love.

kon la lunget:tʃa
Con la lunghezza
With the length

del mjo servir
Del mio servir
of[-the] my servitude

la tua fjeret:tʃa
La tua fierezza
[the] your pride

saprɔ stankar
Saprò stancar.
I-will-know-how to-wear-down.

to 94 measures; nothing essential is left out.

The familiar version was edited by Parisotti in *Arie Antiche*, Vol. 1 (Milan: Ricordi, 1885). He used an eighth-note pulse throughout, lessening the minuet character of the aria.

Sebben, crudele

Savage and heartless is your cruel scorn

Poet unknown
English version by
James P. Dunn



Antonio Caldara (ca. 1670-1736)
Vocal Ornamentation by Arthur Schoep
Realization by John Glenn Paton

Allegretto, ♩ = 116 - 132

mp

Seb - ben, cru -
Sav - age and

6

de - le, — Mi fai — lan - guir, —
heart - less — Is your — cruel scorn, —

12

Seb - ben, cru - de - le, — Mi fai — lan - guir, —
Sav - age and heart - less — Is your — cruel scorn, —

Idiomatic translation: Cruel one, although you make me languish,

17

Sem - pre fe - de - le, Sem - pre fe - de - le Ti
 Faith - ful and daunt - less, Faith - ful and daunt - less Is

21

vo - glio a - mar.
 my love in turn.

26

Seb - ben, cru - de - le, Mi fai lan - guir,
 Sav - age and heart - less Is your cruel scorn,

31

Sem - pre fe - de - le Ti vo - glio a - mar.
 Faith - ful and daunt - less Is my love in turn.

Seb - ben, cru - de - le, Mi fai lan - guir,
Sav - age and heart - less Is your cruel scorn,

39

Sem - pre fe - de - le Ti vo - glio a - mar.
Faith - ful and daunt - less Is my love in turn.

44

Con la lun - ghez - za
Your slave for - ev - er,

49

Del mi - o ser - vir La tua fie - rez - za, la tua fie -
Each wish I'd serve, For - swear - ing nev - er, for - swear - ing

With the persistence of my servitude, I will know how to wear down your pride.

*In the original, m39-m42 are repeated.

54

rez - za Sa - prò stan - car, La tua fie - rez - za
nev - er, Give me your love, For - swear - ing nev - er,

59

Sa - prò stan - car.
Give me your love.

65

Seb - ben, cru - de - le, Mi fai lan - guir, Sem - pre fe -
Sav - age and heart - less Is your cruel scorn, Faith - ful and

70

de - le, Sem - pre fe - de - le Ti vo - glio a - mar.
daunt - less, Faith - ful and daunt - less Is my love in turn.

Seb - ben, cru - de - le,
Sav - age and heart - less

81

Mi fai lan - guir, Is your cruel scorn, Sem - pre fe - de - le Ti vo - glio a in

86

mar. turn, Seb - ben, cru - de - le, Sav - age and heart - less, Mi fai lan - guir, Is your cruel

90

guir, scorn, Sem - pre fe - de - le Ti vo - glio a - mar. in turn.

*In the original, m91-m94 are repeated.