

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Quia ergo femina (Hildegard von Bingen; translated by Marianne Richert Pfau)

Quia ergo femina mortem instruxit
clara Virgo illam interemit.
Et ideo est summa benedictio
in feminea forma
pre omni creatura,
quia Deus factus est homo
in dulcissima et beata Virgine.

As a woman has brought death,
a pure Virgin has conquered it.
Therefore the highest blessing
rests upon the female form
before all creatures,
because God became human
within the sweetest and most beautiful Virgin.

O viridissima virga (Hildegard von Bingen; translated by Marianne Richert Pfau)

O viridissima virga
que in ventoso flabro sciscitationis
sanctorum prodisti.

O greenest branch, hail,
who came forth in blowing wind
from holy wise men.

Cum venit tempus
quod tu floruisti in ramis tuis;
ave, ave sit tibi,
quia calor solis in te sudavit
sicut odor balsami.

When the time came
that you bloomed in your branches
hail, hail to you,
the heat of the sun infused you
with balsamic fragrance.

Nam in te floruit pulcher flos
qui odorem dedit omnibus aromatibus
que arida erant.

The beautiful flourished in you
gave its aromatic fragrance
to all that was withered.

Et illa apparuerunt omnia
in viriditate plena.

And thus all appeared
in full greenness.

Unde celi dederunt rorem super gramen
et omnis terra leta facta est,
quoniam viscera ipsius frumentum protulerunt,
et quoniam volucres celi nidos in ipsa habuerunt.

The heaven spread dew over the grass
and the whole earth was made glad
because her womb brought forth fruit
and the birds of the skies had their nests in her.

Deinde facta est esca hominibus,
et gaudium magnum epulantium;
unde, o suavis virgo,
in te non deficit ullum gaudium.

Thus was made the food for humanity
and great joy among the dinner companions.
And therefore, of mild Virgin,
no joy is missing in you.

Hec omnia Eva contempsit.
Nunc autem laus sit Altissimo.

All of this Eve had disdained.
But now praise be to the highest.

Ave generosa (Hildegard von Bingen; translated by Marianne Richert Pfau)

Ave, generosa, gloriosa et intacta puella;
tu, pupilla castitatis,
tu, materia sanctitatis,
que Deo placuit!

Nam hec superna infusio
in te fuit,
quod supernum verbum in te carnem induit.

Tu, candidum liliū,
quod Deus ante omnem creaturam inspexit.

O pulcherrima et dulcissima;
quam valde Deus in te delectabatur!
cum amplexionem caloris sui in te posuit
ita quod Filius eius de te lactatus est.

Venter enim tuus gaudium habuit,
cum omnis celestis symphonia de te sonuit,
quia, virgo, filium Dei portasti,
ubi castitas tua in Deo claruit.

Viscera tua gaudium habuerunt
sicut gramen super quod ros cadit
cum ei viriditatem infusit;
ut et in te factum est,
o Mater omnis gaudii.

Nunc omnis Ecclesia in gaudio rutillet
acin symphonia sonet
propter dulcissimam Virginem
et laudabilem Mariam Dei genitricem. Amen.

Hail to you charitable, glorious, and pure girl.
You are the pupil of chastity,
the mother of holiness,
as it pleased God.

Because this power of the Highest was infused
into you,
the Word assumed flesh in you.

You are the white lily
whom God has beheld before all creatures.

O most beautiful and sweet,
how greatly God delighted in you
when He issued into you His awe-inspiring heat
so that His Son took nourishment of you.

Therefore your womb had joy
when all heavenly symphony sounded forth from you,
because, Virgin, you carried the Son of God
in chastity and clarity of God.

Your flesh had joy
just as the grass upon which the dew falls
when it infuses it with greening power.
This has been fashioned in you
o Mother of all joy.

Now let the whole Church redden in joy
and reverberate in symphony
on account of the sweetest Virgin
and laudable Mary, mother of God. Amen.

Oh, Ken (from *What's That Spell?*)

I love you, Ken. You know I do. You know I always only love you.
Oh, Ken. What can I do? I'm plastic, just like you.
I love it when we have our talks when you and I get put back in a box.
Oh, Ken. What can we do? You know I'm plastic—so are you.

Dulcissime

Dulcissime, totam tibi subdo me!

Sweetest boy, I give myself to you totally!

Ave formosissima

Ave formosissima, gemma pretiosa,
ave, decus virginum, virgo gloriosa,
ave, mundi luminar,
ave, mundi rosa,
Blanziflor et Helena, Venus generosa.

Hail, fairest of women, precious gem,
Hail, pride among virgins, glorious virgin,
Hail, light of the world,
Hail, rose of the world,
Blanziflor and Helen, noble Venus.

Louis Andriessen: *Hadewijch* (part II from *De Materie*)

Hadewijch: Zevende Visioen (Seventh Vision) (English translation by Jacques Kruithof)

Hadewijch

...thereupon I was hopelessly thrown upon my own poor resources.

One early morning at Pentecost, attending matins sung in church, I received a vision. My heart, my veins, and all my body shook and trembled with desire. As so often before, I felt intensely and frightfully touched, and I was afraid that I would not satisfy my Love, but my Love did not allow me to die, to die grieving. Gradually, my passion became so terrible and painful that all my bones seemed to break one by one, and my blood, and my blood flowed more swiftly than ever. My desire is inexpressible, both words and people fail, and what I could tell about it would be absurd to anyone who never learned Love's effects and who was by Love neglected. This at least I can say: I longed to enjoy my Love to the fullest, to know and taste Him through and through; His human nature united with mine...

Chorus

...and mine received in His.

Hadewijch

I did hope I would have the strength to let myself fall into completeness, so as to prove in turn to be inexhaustible for Him, pure; I alone, would be satisfactorily virtuous in all virtues. Therefore I wished deep inside that He, with His divinity, would elevate me into a unity of our minds, without withholding anything from me. For this gift I prefer above all other gifts I ever chose: to satisfy in unending submission. For this is the most perfect thing: to grow enough to become God with God—because it is endurance and pain, misery and unprecedented sorrow, and one has to let all this come and go without succumbing, and without feeling anything but marvelous love, embraces and kisses. Thus I wished God would be for me, as I for him.

Chorus

While it became unbearable to me, I saw a giant eagle flying towards me from the altar, and he said to me: "If you desire to be one with God, prepare yourself." I kneeled, and my heart beat in my throat, worshipping his greatness. I know very well that I was not ready for this, and God knows it too, always to my grief and sorrow.

Hadewijch

Then He came from the altar, showing Himself in the shape of a child, such as He looked in the first three years of His life. He turned to me and out of the ciborium He took His body with His right hand, and with His left hand He took a goblet that seemed to come from the altar, but I do not know that for certain. Then He came to me, now in the clothes and in the form of the man He was the day when He first gave us His body, enchanting and beautiful, with a ravishing face, and with the humble attitude of someone who already belongs to another. Then He gave Himself to me in the form of the Sacrament, and afterwards He gave me to drink from the goblet; it seemed and tasted as usual.

Then He came very close to me, took me in His arms, and pressed me to His chest. All my limbs felt His, to their total satisfaction as my heart and my humanness longed. I felt truly satisfied and saturated. Also, I had just the power to bear this for a while, but soon, I lost sight of this handsome man, and I saw Him fading and melting away, until I could no longer feel Him next to me, or perceive Him within myself. At that very moment I felt that we were one together, without any difference. All this was real, tastable and tangible—like one really sees and feels the Sacrament, or the way lovers, taking pleasure in seeing and hearing each other, can get lost. After this I stayed one with my Love, melting with Him, until nothing was left of me. I was beside myself, in exaltation, and in my mind I was raised up to a place where many different Hours were shown to me.

