

O ma lyre immortelle

from
Sapho

Gounod's opera tells a story of the Greek poetess Sappho (spelled "Sapho" in French). Contrary to what one might expect, the object of Sappho's affection is a tenor — Phaon. Through manipulation and deceit, Sappho's soprano rival has turned Phaon against her. One evening at sunset, in despair, Sappho stands at the top of a rocky cliff and contemplates throwing herself into the sea below.

Émile Augier

Charles Gounod
(1818-1893)

1 *Andante* **Sapho**

Où suis-je?
where am I

recit.

pp a tempo

6

Ah! oui, je me rap-pel - le.
ah yes I remember

recit.

a tempo

11

Tout ce qui m'at-ta-chait à la vi-e est bri - sé.
all that bound me to life is broken

recit.

p a tempo

16

Il ne me re-ste plus que la nuit é-ter - nel-le, Pour re-po-ser mon coeur,— de dou-
 it not me remains more than the night eternal for to rest my heart by

p

21

Andante

leur— é- pui - sé.
 grief exhausted

Andante

pp

p

28

cresc.

f

dim.

34

p espressivo

38

42 *dolce, espressivo*

O — ma
oh — my

dim. *p*

46

lyre im-mor - tel - le, Qui dans les
lyre immortal who during the

50

tris - tes jours, A tous mes
sad days to all my

54

maux fi - dè le, Les con - so-

sorrows faithful them consoled

58

lais - tou - jours.

always

cresc. *(b)* *dim.*

62

En vain ton doux mur - mu - re Veut m'ai - der à souf - fir.

in vain your sweet murmur tries to help me in suffering

cresc.

66

Non, tu ne peux gué - rir Ma der - niè - re bles-

no you not can heal my final

[subito] p

69

su - re, Ma blessure est au coeur.
wound my wound is to the heart

73

Seul le tré - pas peut fi - nir ma dou-
only the death can end my

76 *cresc.*

leur, ma dou - leur.
pain my pain

80

84

dim.

88

A - dieu! — flam - beau — du mon —
 farewell torch of the world (i.e., the sun)

p *pp*

92

de. Des - cends — au sein — des flots.
 sink beneath waves

pp

96

— Moi, je des-cends — sous l'on —
 me I sink into the deep

pp

100

de Dans l'E-ter - nel re - pos.
into eternal rest

104

Le jour qui doit é - clo - re, Pha -
the day that must dawn

108

on, lui - ra pour toi, Mais sans pen - ser à
Phaon will shine for you but without thought of

111

moi Tu re - ver - ras l'au - ro - re.
me you will see the dawn re.

114

Ou - vre - toi gouf - fre_a - mer.
open abyss bitter

cresc. *dim.*

118

Je vais dor - mir pour tou - jours dans la
I go to sleep for forever in the

121

cresc.

mer, dans la
sea in the

124

Poco più lento

mer. sea

129 *poco cresc.* *8va* *fp*

133 *cresc.* *Lento*

Ou-vre-toi — gouf-fre_a-mer, — Ou-vre-toi, — je vais dor-mir pour tou-
 open abyss bitter open I go to sleep for

pp col canto *cresc. molto* *f* *fp*

139 *Allegro*

jours — dans la mer. —
 forever in the sea

143

*Où suis-je?
 Ah! oui je me rappelle.
 Tout ce qui m'attachait à la vie est brisé.
 Il ne me reste plus que la nuit éternelle,
 Pour reposer mon coeur, de douleur épuisé.*

*O ma lyre immortelle,
 Qui dans les tristes jours,
 A tous mes maux fidèle,
 Les consolais toujours.
 En vain ton doux murmure
 Veut m'aider à souffrir.
 Non tu ne peux guerir
 Ma dernière blessure,
 Ma blessure est au coeur.
 Seul le trépas peut finir ma douleur.*

*Adieu! flambeau du monde.
 Descends au sein des flots.
 Moi je descends sous l'onde
 Dans l'Eternel repos.
 Le jour qui doit éclore,
 Phaon, luira pour toi,
 Mais sans penser à moi
 Tu reverras l'aurore.
 Ouvre-toi, gouffre amer.
 Je vais dormir pour toujours dans la mer.*

Where am I?
 Ah! yes, I remember.
 All that bound me to life is broken.
 All that remains for me is eternal darkness,
 Where my heart, exhausted by grief, can rest.

Oh my immortal lyre,
 Who, during sad times,
 Faithful to all my sorrows,
 Always consoled them.
 In vain thy sweet murmur
 Tries to help me in my suffering.
 No, thou canst not heal
 My final wound,
 My wound is to the heart.
 Only death can put an end to my pain.

Farewell, torch of the world.
 Sink beneath the waves.
 I sink into the deep
 Into eternal rest.
 The new day that will dawn,
 Phaon, will shine for you,
 But with no thought of me
 Thou wilt see another dawn.
 Open up, bitter abyss.
 I go to sleep forever in the sea.

Translation by Patricia Kealy

For editorial notes and other information, see
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