



"Amarilli, mia bella"

from *Le nuove musiche*
le nwɔve muzike

Giulio Caccini
dʒuljo kat:ʃini

Poetic idea

"You are my beloved, and you must believe that I am faithful to you." Despite the long tones and minor mode, this song is not sad, but rather persuasive and reassuring.

Background

Caccini was a tenor singer employed by the Medici family, who were the Dukes of Tuscany and famous patrons of art. Caccini was renowned for his singing and he accompanied himself on the archlute. His wife and children were also professional singers, and his daughter Francesca was a respected composer.

Source

(1) *Le nuove musiche*, Florence, 1601, re-published by Performers' Facsimiles, New York. For treble voice (G-clef) and continuo. Key: G minor, with a signature of one flat. Meter: four half-notes (four beats) per measure. For ease of reading, I have added bar-lines so that there are two half-notes (two beats) per measure.

Caccini called "*Amarilli*" a *madrigale*, a through-composed piece with uneven phrase-lengths; he used *aria* to describe strophic songs composed in dance rhythms.

In a few places the placement of syllables is changed to make shorter phrases. In m18 and m35 Caccini tied the first two notes and combined *to e* on the third note. In m25 and m42 Caccini wrote a dotted half-note, with *-li è il* slurred together on the dotted eighth. Caccini slurred m45 to the first note in m46 and combined *-li è il* on the second note. Italian singers frequently adjust notes in these ways for the sake of comfort in breathing.

The familiar version of "*Amarilli*", as edited by Alessandro Parisotti in *Arie Antiche*, vol. 1 (Milan: Ricordi, 1885), changes Caccini's music in still

amaril:li mja bgl:la
Amarilli, mia bella,
Amaryllis, my beautiful-one,

non kredio del mjo kor doltse deziò
Non credi, o del mio cor dolce desio,
not do-you-believe, o of-[the] my heart sweet desire,

dgs:ser tu lamor mjo
D'esser tu l'amor mio?
of-to-be you [the]-love my?

kredilo pur e se timor tas:sale
Credilo pur, e se timor t'assale,
Believe-it nevertheless, and if fear you-assails,

prendi kwesto mio strale
Prendi questo mio strale,
take this my arrow,

aprimil pet:to e vedrai skrit:toil kore
Aprimi il petto e vedrai scritto il core:
Open-to-me the bosom, and you-will-see written the heart:

amaril:li eil mjoamore
Amarilli è il mio amore.
Amaryllis is [the] my love.

more ways. The incorrect meter signature of 4/4 causes singers to take the music too slowly, and the steady quarter-note movement makes the tempo too strict. The text *Prendi questo mio strale* ("Take my arrow") was changed to a gentler, less graphic line, *Dubitar non ti vale* ("To doubt does not avail you").



Amarilli, mia bella

Amarilli, my dear one

Guarini
English version by
James P. Dunn



Giulio Caccini (ca. 1545-1618)
Edited by John Glenn Paton

Moderato, $\text{♩} = 54 - 63$

p *mf*

A - ma - ril - li, mia bel - la, Non
A - ma - ril - li, my dear one, Doubt

4

p *mf*

cre - di, o del mio cor dol - ce de - si -
not my lov - ing heart, you most a -

7

p *mf*

o, D'es - ser tu l'a - mor mi - o?
dored, You a - lone my be - lov ed.

Idiomatic translation: Amaryllis, my beautiful one, do you not believe, O my heart's sweet desire, that you are my beloved?

mf *P*

Cre - di - lo pur, e se ti - mor t'as - sa - le,
 Do but be - lieve, for if dark fear as - sail you,

15 *mf* *f*

Pren - di que - sto mio stra - le, A - pri - mi il pet - to e ve - drai
 Take my ar - row, I pray you, O - pen my bos - om, see all en -

19 *P* *mp*

scrit - to il co - re: A - ma - ril li, A - ma -
 graved be - fore you, A - ma - ril li, A - ma -

23 *mf*

ril - li, A - ma - ril - li, è il mio a - mo -
 ril - li, A - ma - ril - li, I a - dore

Believe it, nevertheless, and if fear assails you, take this arrow, open my bosom, and you will see written on my heart, "Amaryllis is my love."

27

re. Cre - di - lo pur, e se ti -
 you. Do but be - lieve, for if dark

mf *p*



30

mor t'as - sa - le, Pren - di que - sto mio
 fear as - sail you, Love a - lone will not

mf



33

stra - le, A - pri-mi il pet - to e ve-drai
 fail you. Here on my bos - om see all en -

f *mf*



36

scrit - to il co - re: A - ma - ril
 graved be - fore you, A - ma - ril

p



li, A - ma - ril - - - li, A - ma -
li, A - ma - ril - - - li, A - ma -

42

ril - li è il mio a - mo re. A - ma -
ril - li, I a dore you. A - ma -

45

ril - - - li è il mio a - mo
ril - - - li, I a - dore

48

re.
you.