

Woman's Love Life

Acht liederen voor vrouwenstem en piano

1. Émilie du Châtelet - I

The more our happiness depends on ourselves, the surer it is;
yet passion, which can give us greater pleasure and make us happiest,
makes our happiness dependent on others:
it is clear that I am talking of love.

This passion is perhaps the only one
which can make us want to live,
and make us thank the author of nature, whoever he is,
for having given us our life.

Of this mutual desire, which is a sixth sense, and the finest,
the most delicate, the most precious of all,
can bring together two souls equally sensitive to happiness, to pleasure,
everything is said, one needs nothing more to be happy;
all that one needs is health.

2. Simone de Beauvoir

The highest goal of human and mystic love
is the identification with the beloved.

The woman tries to see with his eyes,
she reads the books he reads
and loves the paintings and the music he loves

and she is interested only in landscapes that she sees with him,
in ideas that originate from him,
she takes over his friendships, his enmities and his opinions.

The center of the world is no longer where she is, but where he is.
She is another embodiment of her beloved,
she is his reflection, his double, she is him.

3. Hildegard von Bingen

When a woman is making love with a man,
a sense of heat in her brain,
which brings with it sensual delight...

4. Leontion - I

(via Walter Savage Landor)

Do not make us melancholy:
never let us think that the time can come
when we shall lose our friends.
Glory, literature, philosophy have this advantage over friendship:
remove one object from them,
and others fill the void;
remove one from friendship,
not the earth, nor the universality of worlds,
no, nor the intellect that soars above and comprehends them,
can replace it.

5. Mary Wollstonecraft

Independence I have long considered as the grand blessing of life,
the basis of every virtue;
and independence I will ever secure by contracting my wants,
though I were to live on a barren heath.

6. Émilie du Châtelet - II

The great secret, to make sure that love does not make unhappy,
is to try never to be in the wrong with your lover,
never to show him urgency when he cools off,
but always to be one degree cooler than he is;
it will not bring him back,
but nothing will bring him back;
there is nothing to be done
but forget someone who stops loving us.

7. Leontion - II

(via Walter Savage Landor)

When Friendship has taken the place of Love,
she ought to make his absence as little a cause of regret as possible,
and it is gracious in her to imitate his demeanour and his words.

8. Belle van Zuylen (Isabelle de Charrière)

I say goodbye to you, but not without thanking you
for the music in my life.

No-one ever knew
how to touch the strings of my soul so fiercely.

Maybe I'll ever find the melody that is
a true echo of everything I've felt for you.

The sun is almost gone
and throws one last deep red beam

on a single house, on a single rock,
and lifts it up one more time from the falling darkness.
Everything is sunk in deep repose now, all but

this last afterglow,
which wants to shimmer for the sake of life,
for the sake of remembrance.

Adieu.