

Foreword

The *Plaint O, O, let me Weep!* is part of the masque at the end of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, where Juno appears and sings first the Epithalamium *Thrice happy lovers*, and then The *Plaint*. This song "was evidently added in 1693, for it is not in the Royal Academy score, and its text is not in the 1692 quarto. The main source is *Orpheus Britannicus* i.....", and it is from this source the present edition is drawn.¹

Peter Holman suggests that the quality and the range of the obligato instrument suggest a recorder, rather than the violin indicated: if this were so it would be the only instance in Purcell's works of his writing for a single recorder. However, Holman draws attention to Wood and Pinnock's suggestion of the oboe as the appropriate instrument.² Accordingly, the piece is presented here as a song with oboe obligato, which recorder players may also like to add to their repertoire.

Editorial

In this edition, as much of the original has been retained as possible: the spelling has not been modernised; all the original accidentals are shown (save repeated accidentals not needed by current convention). Editorial accidentals are shown above the staff. Changes to the figured bass are noted in the footnotes. The slurs are original, except where shown with a line through them. An upper staff has been provided for the continuo, and this is editorial: the intention here is not to present a full 'realisation', but to provide continuo players with a guide on which they can elaborate as they wish. An additional score with figured bass only is provided for those who prefer to work with the figured bass on its own. A separate part for a string continuo instrument is also provided.

Cedric Lee
Richmond, 2001

The Text

O, O let me Weep!

O let me for ever weep!
My Eyes no more shall welcome sleep.
He hide me from the sight of Day,
and sigh, and sigh my Soul away.
He's gone, he's gone, his loss deplore,
and I shall never see him more.

¹ Holman, Peter (1994) *Henry Purcell*, Oxford, OUP, p 213.

² Op. cit.