

The Song of Peace I Sing Complete
A New Translation by Carole R. Fontaine

Sweep Me Away

Daughters, where is he?
Can you tell me.
Is he with his flock,
Does he search for me?
His sweet wine kisses...

At the House of Wine

Sweep me away...
Is there some space with key and lock
Where two might find themselves alone
And I can be his only one?

I am a wall; he is a tower
Both tumbling down into love's bower.
He is my Temple, I am his Song:
How could such yearning
Ever be wrong?

The Shepherd's Delight

To Pharoah's mare does he compare me,
Adorned in feathers, harnessed in jewels
Prancing through male ordained paces?
Would he ever be so bold!
He knows I run in no man's traces.
My shepherd king is no old fool:
He knows I am his own true gold.

Daughters, *Tell* him!

Gazelle upon the scented mountains,
does and young ones of the fields,
tell me when my friend goes forth,
tell him I will surely yield!
The tracks of flocks will help me trail him,
or rumors of him in the street,

tell him. *tell him!* if you find him,
tell him that my love is sweet!

From Jerusalem in Judah.
South to Sheba and then Kedar,
West to Sharon's old oak forest.
Tell me, Shepherd, where you are.
North in lairs of lions, leopards,
hunting in White Lebanon.
or Eye of the Kid's fresh springs of water,
I will find you, near or far!
Down the Carmel's purple mountains,
through the kingdom's central spine.
whether Samaria or Tirzah.
I come seeking: you are mine!

Let me be your pilgrim garden,
like Pharaoh's mare, seen from afar,
plumed and dressed in shining colors,
leading you here, like a Star!

A Song of My Shepherd

His bed is an altar
on which Love feeds. and is fed,
by souls to flesh forever bound
in day-bright rites that admit no wrong.
His kiss on her cleft is a sacrament.
(all lovers should worship with heads thus bent):
his touch is an anthem, his gaze a Song
of ancient furrows and desire so strong
it calls the seedling from the ground.
Within his arms and mingled breath,
old gods rise and conquer death.

No Fire can burn them
(she is ever kindled
by the oil of his name):
no Floods can quench
these lovers drenched
by Holy Flame!

The Search

He is king of my innermost room.
I am his garden where lilies bloom.
proud in the sun; by moon, I glow
and beckon for his love to grow.
I am his hallowed, straight palm tree;
he climbs to clusters that are all me.
Yes! lay hold of my branches. Love!
Come and eat! Dried fruits and fresh,
between my twinned henna'd breasts
lie waiting for your true love's flesh.
The doves are singing.
rain has softened the fertile ground
as sweet does and gazelles
their true mates have finally found.
My Beloved is mine, and I am all his;
his only desire is for me...

Blow, Tradewinds West,
and waft, Breezes East!
O Come, dearest friend!
Let us keep the feast!

The Dance

Spin, Spin, Sweet Shulamit, spin!
Your feet in sandals as you dance
hold us breathless in a trance!
So spin, Maiden, and return!
Beneath your dancing spell, we burn!

Why should you watch this dancing girl,
with eager thoughts, as I whirl?
Bristling with hostilities,
in your two camps, eyes follow me--
Only my love has ever earned
the right to see me as I turn.
So then, describe me, if you dare:
I am just pretext, I would swear!
What is it that you think you'd see?
It has nothing to do with me.

they shall not hear the Song I sing.

Into the Fields

No matter when the orchard blooms,
beneath the Mother's Sacred Tree,
where Love once woke, it wakes again,
and shall renew, eternally.
He is my tall fruit tree,
my dwelling delight.
his scented kiss, like wine-sweet apples,
ah! simply delicious, from head to feet!

The UnEnding

There is no curse that can prevail
Against this love's sweet, firey gale.
Touched by God transforming sod,
Each made the same in Love's desire,
Both made equal by Love beguiled.

Come,

my Beloved!

As the Day leaves,
and the shadows wreathe,
While the Night breathes,
to the Mountain of Spices.
Run!

no worse than this awaits at court,
where harem schemes have deadly outcomes,
and savage Love for idle sport!
But if some prince has paid a vineyard,
might I still beg Love's chariot race
to rescue me from casual usage,
and bear me far from Solomon's place?

Fearful

He finds me awesome as a goddess,
battle-ready for the fight,
dressed with blood and warrior trophies--
Am I so fierce? Perhaps he's right.
He says he cannot look upon me,
tells me to turn my eyes away,
as though I were some bannered army
deployed to capture, make him stay!

No, he has thousands, my honey-man;
I am but one, my mother's dove.
He is the one who makes *me* fearful,
vulnerable because I love!

Kin and Kingship

Blustering, my brothers quiz me:
Will you be rampart, or a door?
For one, the brideprice;
For the other, a coffin--
isn't that what girls are for?
"We'll make you guardian of the orchard,
safe midst olives, grapes and fig--
a little tanned, a bit ill-used,
and then we'll find out, when you're big!"

Idiots! Get your honor elsewhere;
you shall not find it housed in me!
I am a rampart on a tower,
but my true love has found the key!
Your handpicked suitors
come a-calling,
gladly offering everything;
send them away with no more stalling:

As I lay dreaming

I shiver in anticipation,
then toss and turn in burning heat--
oh, who can name my malady?
It will take more than sweet-wine apples,
more than cultic raisin cakes
to serve me as a remedy!
Faint from love, I lay awake:
Oh, tell my love to come to me!

Halom halamti....

He is the vineyard I cannot keep:
he fills my days, he invades my sleep.
I dream of him: I hear his knock;
his hand drips myrrh upon my lock;
his head is damp with the dew of night--
I stir, trembling; I wake to invite,
but find my phantom has taken flight.

I search in danger, for the dew I thirst,
but watchers, gorged on envy,
cannot countenance such quests;
they seek to stay my steadfast search
in all the ways that suit them best.
Little foxes tear the grapes,
Forestalling joyous harvest-time,
and brothers who would barter brides
count my choosing as a crime.

The Gift of the Desert

Who comes up from the desert wastes
amidst the terrors of the night,
led on by Love's conflagration,
guarded, as if poised for flight?
Inside the litter, cunningly woven,
the perfumed air is filled with spice--
Daughters wove it for his darling,
but Love has fashioned what's inside!
Mothers make the kings and marriage,
and place the crown on wedding day--
but whether Love will find true mating,
even mothers cannot say...

She-demons roam the wildest waste;

