






Refrain


[Cantus] 
 1. En mon cuer a un descort


Tenor 

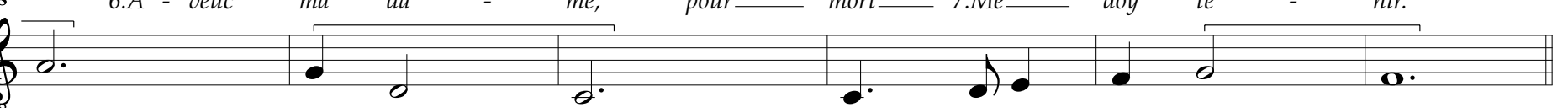
[Ca.] 
 2. Qui si fort le point et mort 3. Que, sans men - tir,

T. 

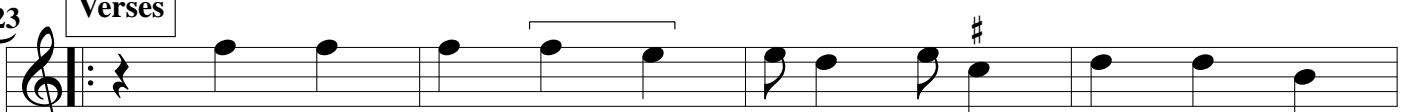
[Ca.] 
 4. S'A - mours par son doulz plai - sir 5. N'i met ac - cort

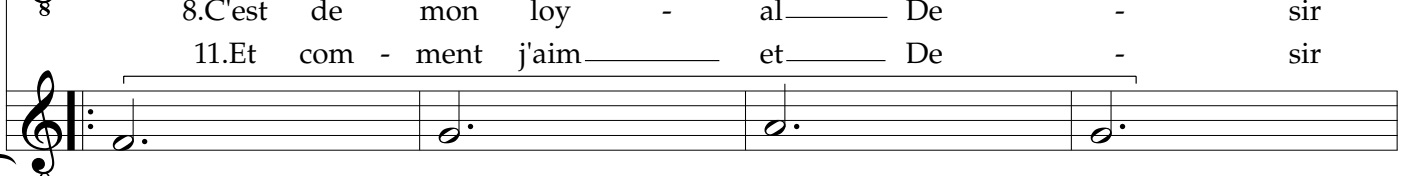
T. 


[Ca.] 
 6. A - veuc ma da - me, pour mort 7. Me doy te - nir. **Fine**

T. 

Verses


[Ca.] 
 8. C'est de mon loy - al De - sir

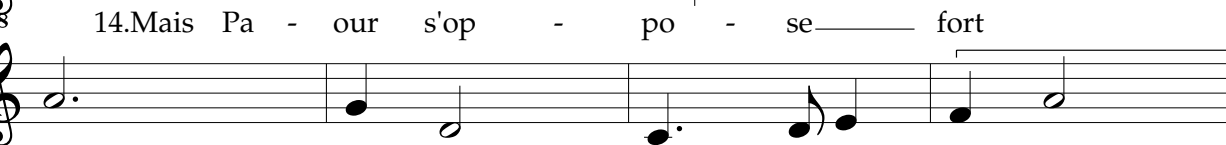
T. 
 11. Et com - ment j'aim et De - sir


[Ca.] 
 9. Qui me wet fai - re ge - hir 10. Le mal que port

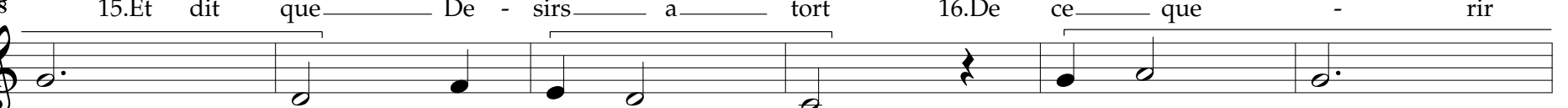
T. 
 12. Ma da - me sans re - pen - tir 13. Et sans con - fort.

Tierce

[Ca.] 
 14. Mais Pa - our s'op - po - se fort

T. 

[Ca.] 
 15. Et dit que De - sirs a tort 16. De ce que - rir

T. 

[Ca.] 
 17. Qu'el - le crient Re - fus o - ir 18. Qui pas ne dort

T. 

En mon cuer a un descort (v27/24) by **Guillaume de Machaut** (c.1300-1377)

Guillaume de Machaut was an important poet and composer, who served as a Royal secretary to John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia in the first half of the fourteenth century. Since its modern rediscovery and editing, his music has been widely performed and recorded, although this particular song seems to have escaped so far. The poetry of this two-voice virelai takes a musical conceit and applies it to a love relationship mediated by a number of personifications and impelled at all times by the idea of paradoxical (and impossible) reconciliation of opposites. Desire makes the lover bear the discord in the lover's heart caused by his lady's lack of agreement ('accort', accord). But Fear bids him listen to Refusal and Rebuff. Love makes the love suffer the pains caused by the lady's Sweetness and Beauty and only his mental image ('Souvenir') of her, Sweet Thought, and his own loving service allow him to hazard the lot that is thrown to him: whether gaining the return of his love or death in the attempt. Ultimately the lover claims that the discord in his heart 'accords with him' (i.e. suits him) because the only good in his life is provided by serving his lady. His stoical final tierce text (before the final refrain) asserting his happiness to endure shows Machaut's use of the sonic properties of language at its finest: each line but the last starts with either 'La' or 'Et la', identical in sound to cries of 'Las!' and 'Hélas!', which lead him inevitably 'jusqu'au morir'—to death.

Elizabeth Eva Leach 2012

Most of the Machaut manuscripts can now be viewed online.

A list of links to them can be found at: <http://www.stanford.edu/group/dmstech/cgi-bin/drupal/machautmss>.

This virelai is on folios 330v-331r in the earliest source (CAMBRIDGE, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library MS. Vg (Ferrell 1)).

A set of online tutorials for understanding the notation can be found at: <http://diamm.nsms.ox.ac.uk/moodle/login/index.php> (access using the key: DIAMM).

Refrain	
1	<i>En mon cuer a un descort</i>
2	<i>Qui si fort le point et mort</i>
3	<i>Que sans mentir</i>
4	<i>S'amours par son doulz plaisir</i>
5	<i>N'i met accort</i>
6	<i>Aveuc ma dame pour mort</i>
7	<i>Me doy tenir.</i>
Verses 1	
8	<i>C'est de mon loyal desir</i>
9	<i>Qui me wet faire gehir</i>
10	<i>Le mal que port;</i>
11	<i>Et comment j'aim et desir</i>
12	<i>Ma dame sans repentir</i>
13	<i>Et sans confort.</i>
Tierce 1	
14	<i>Mais Paour s'oppose fort</i>
15	<i>Et dit que Desirs a tort</i>
16	<i>De ce querir;</i>
17	<i>Qu'elle crient Refus oïr,</i>
18	<i>Qui pas ne dort,</i>
19	<i>Et Dangiers qui fait a mort</i>
20	<i>L'amant venir.</i>
21-27, <i>Refrain: En mon cuer...</i>	
Verses 2	
28	<i>Si ne scay que devenir</i>
29	<i>Quant de ma dame remir</i>
30	<i>Le gentil port,</i>
31	<i>Car Paour me fait fremir</i>
32	<i>Et trembler et tressaillir</i>
33	<i>Par son enort.</i>

Tierce 2	
34	<i>Et Desirs sans nul deport</i>
35	<i>Fait mon cuer par son effort</i>
36	<i>Teindre et palir;</i>
37	<i>Biaute me vient assaillir;</i>
38	<i>Douceur m'endort;</i>
39	<i>Mais Amours me fait au fort</i>
40	<i>Taire et souffrir.</i>
41-47, <i>Refrain: En mon cuer...</i>	
Verses 3	
48	<i>Las! einssi m'estuet languir,</i>
49	<i>Pleindre, plourer et gemir</i>
50	<i>En desconfort;</i>
51	<i>Ne bien n'ay fors Souvenir,</i>
52	<i>Doulz Penser, et li servir:</i>
53	<i>La me confort,</i>
Tierce 3	
54	<i>La seulement me deport,</i>
55	<i>La sont getté tuit mi sort,</i>
56	<i>Et la me tir;</i>
57	<i>La weil je vivre et morir,</i>
58	<i>Et la m'accort;</i>
59	<i>La seront tuit mi ressort</i>
60	<i>Jusqu'au morir.</i>
61-67, <i>Refrain: En mon cuer...</i>	

Translation: Elizabeth Eva Leach
(with thanks to Helen J. Swift)

