

There is no happy love

We never truly possess anything,
Neither our strength, nor our weakness
Nor our heart.
And when we open our arms
Our shadow is that of a cross.
And when we try to embrace
Happiness, we crush it.
Our life is a strange and painful divorce.
There is no happy love.

Like warriors who are now disarmed,
Having been groomed for greater glory –
Why bother getting up in the morning?
If we find ourselves in the evening
Still not knowing what we're here for?
Repeat these words and hold back your tears.
There is no happy love.

My dear sweet love tears me apart;
I carry it inside me like a wounded bird.
And people don't know, as they watch us go by,
That these words I have spun for you die
As soon as they meet your eyes.
There is no happy love.

It's already too late to learn how to live,
Let our hearts mourn together at night.
For the least little song we pay with sadness
For each thrill we pay with regret
Even a sweet melody we pay with weeping.
There is no happy love.

There is no love without pain
There is no love that cannot be bruised
There is no love that cannot fade
Even the love of your country.
There is no love without tears.
There is no happy love.

But this love is ours; for both of us!

Louis Aragon, 1946

Translation, Dora and Patricia Daniel, 2015