

0735-0804- Alcuinus – Cella Alcuini
“Alcuin’s Cell”

Blank verse translation

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My cell, for me a dwelling sweet, beloved,
Into eternity I wish thee well.
Wind-whistled branches close thee on all sides,
A tiny forest ever bearing bloom.
Your fields will flourish with those healthful herbs 5
The doctor’s hand seeks for his healing arts.
On all sides rivers glide with flow’ring banks
Where fishermen stretch forth their nets with joy.
Through garden cloisters branches breathe their scents,
The lilies white with small red roses mixed. 10
Each winged creature sings out morning odes
And with its mouth lauds its creator God.
In you the teacher’s nurt’ring voice once cried,
Transmitting wisdom’s books with sacred lips.
In you at times the thund’rer’s holy praise 15
Resounded with pacific sound and soul.
My cell, I now lament with tearful songs,
And groaning grieve your downfall in my breast.
The prophets’ songs you suddenly have fled,
And now a band unknown calls you its own. 20
Now Flaccus will not have thee, Homer nay,
Nor sing the boys the muses through thy roof.
The glory of this age is sudden turned,
For all things in their order suffer change,
And nothing stays forever as it was. 25
The shady night obscures the sacred day,
At once the frigid winter casts off blooms,
A harsher wind disturbs the placid sea.
The sacred youth that chased deer through the fields
Now tired reclines in age upon its staff. 30
Alas! Why love we you, o fleeting world?
From us you ever flee, always in rush.
May you who flee, flee on! Let us love Christ.
May love of God our hearts forever hold.
May He His servants from their foe defend, 35
Taking our hearts, His own dear ones, to Heav’n.
Him let us praise and love with our whole hearts,
That Holy One, our glory, life, and health.