J’aime la nuit avec passion.[[1]](#footnote-1) Je l’aime comme on aime son pays ou sa maîtresse, d’un amour instinctif, profond, invincible.

I love[[2]](#footnote-2) the night / nighttime passionately / with passion. I love **it** the way one loves one’s country or one’s mistress / you love your country or your mistress,[[3]](#footnote-3) **with[[4]](#footnote-4)** a love that is instinctive, deep / profound, and invincible.

Je l’aime avec tous mes sens, avec mes yeux qui la voient, avec mon odorat qui la respire, avec mes oreilles qui en écoutent le silence, avec toute ma chair que les ténèbres caressent.

I love the night[[5]](#footnote-5) with all my senses, with my eyes that see it, with my smell that breathes it in[[6]](#footnote-6), with my ears that listen **to[[7]](#footnote-7)** its silence, with my whole flesh/body (that is)[[8]](#footnote-8) caressed/stroked[[9]](#footnote-9) by its[[10]](#footnote-10) darkness.

Les alouettes chantent dans le soleil, dans l’air bleu, dans l’air chaud, dans l’air léger des matinées claires.

Larks[[11]](#footnote-11) sing in the sun, in the blue sky,[[12]](#footnote-12) in the light, warm[[13]](#footnote-13) air of fair/clear mornings.

Le hibou fuit dans la nuit, tache noire qui passe à travers l’espace noir, et, réjoui, grisé par la noire immensité, il pousse son cri vibrant et sinistre.

The owl flees into/hides in the night – a black spot/mark/blemish that crosses the black space/darkness –[[14]](#footnote-14) and overjoyed and inebriated/intoxicated with the immense/vast blackness/darkness, lets/gives out its stirring/vibrant/echoing and sinister cry.

Le jour me fatigue et m’ennuie. Il est brutal et bruyant.

[[15]](#footnote-15)Daytimes tires me **out** and bores me. It is/I find it brutal/rough and noisy.

Je me lève avec peine, je m’habille avec lassitude, je sors avec regret, et chaque pas, chaque mouvement, chaque geste, chaque parole, chaque pensée me fatigue comme si je soulevais un écrasant fardeau.

I **get up[[16]](#footnote-16)** with difficulty[[17]](#footnote-17)/I struggle to get up/I have trouble **getting** up, get dressed with weariness/lassitude, go out reluctantly/with reluctance,[[18]](#footnote-18) and every step, movement, gesture, word and thought[[19]](#footnote-19) exhausts me[[20]](#footnote-20), as if I were lifting/carrying an overwhelming burden/weight

1. Remember to indent new paragraphs. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Like” is a bit too weak here and would be a *sous-traduction*. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. I would use “one” or “you” here. “One” would be a more literary register; “you” more familiar and closer to natural speech. I would therefore avoid using “his” afterwards, in relation to country or mistress, and would repeat “one’s” or “your”. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. You do not love someone “of” a love, but “with” [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. A good idea to repeat the subject as we have already used “it” in the previous sentence. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Adding the preposition to *étoffer*. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Lots of you left out the ‘to’! I hear something, but I listen **to** it. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Stuff in brackets may be omitted. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Fondled has erotic connotations so might be a bit much here. He loves the night, but maybe not *that* much. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For continuity, we can carry on personifying the night. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. No article needed (~~the~~ larks), as it is a plural group noun, and doesn’t indicate a specific group of larks. Another example: Doctors work very hard (plural group noun, referring to the general category of doctors). **The** doctors who are fighting coronavirus are very brave (refers to a specific group or type of doctor, not the whole profession). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Modulation. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. “Hot air” means “empty, confused, or exaggerated talk lacking meaning or substance; bluster.” To avoid repetition of “in the air” we can unite these two clauses. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Using two dashes here allows us to qualify or provide more information. For more info about the wonderful world of dashes, see: <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/dash/> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Always remember to indent new paragraphs! Lots of you forget to do this. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. “Wake up” is se réveiller. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Careful: “**avec** peine” here is in the sense of with difficulty, great effort, etc. NOT in the sense of “à peine” (I hardly get up). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. I think reluctance works slightly better than regret here, as it’s more a case of him not having any desire to go out, rather than having remorse for doing so. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Though you may of course repeat the “each” or “every” each time, it is not necessary in English. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. If possible avoid repeating “tires me out” to show off your knowledge of synonyms. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)