

# Agony

## Stephen Sondheim

Did I abuse her or show her disdain  
Why does she run from me  
If I should lose her how shall I regain  
The heart she has won from me  
Agony, beyond power of speech  
When the one thing you want  
Is the only thing out of your reach  
High in her tower she sits by the hour  
Maintaining her hair  
Blithe and becoming and frequently humming  
A light-hearted air  
Ah  
Agony, far more painful than yours  
When you know she would go with you  
If there only were doors  
Agony, all the torture they teach  
What's as intriguing or half so fatiguing  
As what's out of reach  
Am I not sensitive, clever  
Well-mannered, considerate  
Passionate, charming  
As kind as I'm handsome  
And heir to a throne?  
You are everything maidens could wish for  
Then why no  
Do I know?  
The girl must be mad  
You know nothing of madness  
'Til you're climbing her hair  
And you see her up there as you're nearing her  
And all the while hearing her  
Ah  
Agony, misery, though it's different for each  
Always ten steps behind, always ten steps below  
And she's just out of reach  
Agony, that can cut like a knife  
I must have her to wife  
High in a tower like yours was but higher  
A beauty asleep  
All 'round the tower a thicket of briar  
A hundred feet deep  
Agony, no frustration more keen

When the one thing you want  
Is a thing that you've not even seen I've found a casket entirely of glass  
No, it's unbreakable  
Inside, don't ask it, a maiden alas  
Just as unwakeable  
What unmistakeable  
Agony, is the way always hard  
She has skin white as snow  
Did you learn her name, no  
There's a dwarf standing guard  
Agony such that princes must weep  
Always in thrall 'most to anything almost  
Or something asleep If it were not for the thicket  
A thicket's no trick, is it thick  
It's the thickest  
The quickest is pick it apart with a stick  
Yes but even one prick, it's my thing about blood  
Well it's sick  
It's no sicker than your thing about dwarfs  
Dwarves  
Dwarfs  
Dwarves are very upsetting  
Not forgetting  
The task's unachievable, mountains unscalable  
If it's conceivable but unavailable  
Ah  
Agony, misery, woe not to know what you miss  
While they lie there for years  
And you cry on their biers  
What unbearable bliss  
Agony that can cut like a knife  
Ah well, back to my wife

Songwriters

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Lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group

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