

Oh, had I Jubal's Lyre

Thomas Morell (1703-1784) librettist

Oh, had I Jubal's Lyre,
Or Miriam's tuneful voice!
To sounds like his I would aspire,
In songs like hers rejoice.
My humble strains but faintly show,
How much to Heav'n and thee I owe.

O Mistress Mine

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) from Twelfth Night, Act II Scene 3

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O stay and hear; your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low;
Trip no further, pretty sweeting;
Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty;
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Come Again! Sweet love doth now invite

Anonymous (17th century) poet

Come again!
Sweet love doth now invite
Thy graces that refrain
To do me due delight,
To see, to hear, to touch, to kiss, to die,
With thee again in sweetest sympathy.

Come again!
That I may cease to mourn
Through thy unkind disdain;
For now left and forlorn
I sit, I sigh, I weep, I faint, I die
In deadly pain and endless misery.

I need not go

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) poet

I need not go
Through sleet and snow
To where I know
She waits for me;
She will tarry me there
Till I find it fair,
And have time to spare
From company.

When I've overgot
The world somewhat,
When things cost not
Such stress and strain,
Is soon enough
By cypress sough
To tell my Love
I am come again.

Ach, ich fühl's

Emanuel Schikaneder (1751-1812) librettist

Ach, ich fühl's, es ist verschwunden,
Ewig hin der Liebe Glück!
Nimmer kommt ihr Wonnestunde
Meinem Herzen mehr zurück!
Sieh', Tamino, diese Tränen,
Fließen, Trauter, dir allein!
Fühlst du nicht der Liebe Sehnen,
So wird Ruh' im Tode sein!

Des Sennen Abschied

Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805) poet

Ihr Matten, lebt wohl,
Ihr sonnigen Weiden!
Der Senne muß scheiden,
Der Sommer ist hin.

Wir fahren zu Berg, wir kommen wieder,
Wenn der Kuckuck ruft, wenn erwachen die Lieder,
Wenn mit Blumen die Erde sich kleidet neu,
Wenn die Brunnlein fließen im lieblichen Mai.

Ihr Matten, lebt wohl,
Ihr sonnigen Weiden!
Der Senne muß scheiden,
Der Sommer ist hin.

And if someday,
When none cries nay,
I still delay
To seek her side,
Though ample measure
Of fitting leisure
Await my pleasure
She will not chide.

What not upbraid me
That I delayed me,
Nor ask what stayed me
So long? Ah no!
New cares may claim me,
New loves inflame me,
She will not blame me,
But suffer it so

Ah, I can feel it, love's happiness
Is fled forever!
Nevermore, O hours of bliss,
Will you return to my heart!
See, Tamino, these tears
Flow for you alone, beloved.
If you do not feel love's yearning,
I shall find peace in death!
Translation by Richard Stokes

Farewell, you meadows,
You sunny pastures!
The herdsman must leave you,
Summer is over.

We'll return to the mountains, we'll come again,
When the cuckoo calls, when songs awaken,
When the earth is freshly clothed with flowers,
When the brooklets are flowing in lovely May.

Farewell, you meadows,
You sunny pastures!
The herdsman must leave you,
Summer is over.
Translation by Richard Stokes

Schneeglöckchen

Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866) poet

Der Schnee, der gestern noch in Flöckchen
Vom Himmel fiel,
Hängt nun geronnen heut als Glöckchen
Am zarten Stiel.
Schneeglöckchen läutet, was bedeutet's
Im stillen Hain?

O komm geschwind! Im Haine läutet's
Den Frühling ein.
O kommt, ihr Blätter, Blüt' und Blume,
Die ihr noch träumt,
All zu des Frühlings Heiligtume!
Kommt ungesäumt!

The snow that only yesterday fell in flakes
From the sky,
Hangs now, frozen, as a little bell
From a delicate stem.
A bell of snow rings in the silent wood,
What can it mean?

O come quickly! The wood is ringing
Springtime in.
Come quickly, leaves, blossom and flowers,
You who still dream,
Into spring's sanctuary!
Come without delay!

Translation by Richard Stokes

Mondnacht

Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff (1788-1857) poet

Es war, als hätt' der Himmel,
Die Erde still geküßt,
Daß sie im Blütenschimmer
Von ihm nun träumen müßt'.

Die Luft ging durch die Felder,
Die Ähren wogten sacht,
Es rauschten leis die Wälder,
So sternklar war die Nacht.

Und meine Seele spannte
Weit ihre Flügel aus,
Flog durch die stillen Lande,
Als flöge sie nach Haus.

It was as though Heaven
Had softly kissed the Earth,
So that she in a gleam of blossom
Had only to dream of him.

The breeze passed through the fields,
The corn swayed gently to and fro,
The forests murmured softly,
The night was so clear with stars.

And my soul spread
Her wings out wide,
Flew across the silent land,
As though flying home.
Translation by Richard Stokes

Er ist's

Eduard Mörike (1804-1875) poet

Frühling lässt sein blaues Band
Wieder flattern durch die Lüfte;
Süße, wohlbekannte Düfte
Streifen ahnungsvoll das Land.

Veilchen träumen schon,
Wollen balde kommen.
Horch, ein Harfenton!
Frühling, ja du bist's!
Dich hab ich vernommen!

Spring is floating its blue banner
On the breezes again;
Sweet, well-remembered scents
Drift portentously across the land.

Violets, already dreaming,
Will soon begin to bloom.
Listen, the sound of a harp!
Spring, that must be you!
It's you I've heard!
Translation by Richard Stokes

In der Fremde

Eichendorff - poet

Aus der Heimat hinter den Blitzen rot
Da kommen die Wolken her,
Aber Vater und Mutter sind lange tot,
Es kennt mich dort keiner mehr.

Wie bald, ach wie bald kommt die stille Zeit,
Da ruhe ich auch, und über mir
Rauscht die schöne Waldeinsamkeit,
Und keiner kennt mich mehr hier.

From my homeland, beyond the red lightning,
The clouds come drifting in,
But father and mother have long been dead,
Now no one knows me there.

How soon, ah! how soon till that quiet time
When I too shall rest
Beneath the sweet murmur of lonely woods,
Forgotten here as well.

Translation by Richard Stokes

Waldesgespräch

Eichendorff - poet

Es ist schon spät, es ist schon kalt,
Was reit'st du einsam durch den Wald?
Der Wald ist lang, du bist allein,
Du schöne Braut! Ich führ' dich heim!

„Groß ist der Männer Trug und List,
Vor Schmerz mein Herz gebrochen ist,
Wohl irrt das Waldhorn her und hin,
O flieh! Du weißt nicht, wer ich bin.“

So reich geschmückt ist Roß und Weib,
So wunderschön der junge Leib,
Jetzt kenn' ich dich—Gott steh' mir bei!
Du bist die Hexe Loreley.

„Du kennst mich wohl—von hohem Stein
Schaut still mein Schloß tief in den Rhein.
Es ist schon spät, es ist schon kalt,
Kommst nimmermehr aus diesem Wald!“

It is already late, already cold,
Why ride lonely through the forest?
The forest is long, you are alone,
You lovely bride! I'll lead you home!

‘Great is the deceit and cunning of men,
My heart is broken with grief,
The hunting horn echoes here and there,
O flee! You do not know who I am.’

So richly adorned are steed and lady,
So wondrous fair her youthful form,
Now I know you—may God protect me!
You are the enchantress Lorelei.

‘You know me well—from its towering rock
My castle looks silently into the Rhine.
It is already late, already cold,
You shall never leave this forest again!’

Translation by Richard Stokes

Wehmut

Eichendorff - poet

Ich kann wohl manchmal singen,
Als ob ich fröhlich sei,
Doch heimlich Tränen dringen,
Da wird das Herz mir frei.

True, I can sometimes sing
As though I were content;
But secretly tears well up,
And my heart is set free.

Es lassen Nachtigallen,
Spielt draußen Frühlingsluft,
Der Sehnsucht Lied erschallen
Aus ihres Kerkers Gruft.

Da lauschen alle Herzen,
Und alles ist erfreut,
Doch keiner fühlt die Schmerzen,
Im Lied das tiefe Leid.

Frühlingsnacht

Eichendorff - poet

Überm Garten durch die Lüfte
Hört' ich Wandervögel zieh'n,
Das bedeutet Frühlingsdüfte,
Unten fängt's schon an zu blühen.

Jauchzen möcht' ich, möchte weinen,
Ist mir's doch, als könnt's nicht sein!
Alte Wunder wieder scheinen
Mit dem Mondesglanz herein.

Und der Mond, die Sterne sagen's,
Und im Traume rauscht's der Hain
Und die Nachtigallen schlagen's:
Sie ist Deine, sie ist Dein!

Claire de Lune

Paul Verlaine (1844-1896) poet

Votre âme est un paysage choisi
Que vont charmant masques et bergamasques
Jouant du luth et dansant et quasi
Tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques.

Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune,
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire à leur bonheur
Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de lune,

Au calme clair de lune triste et beau,
Qui fait rêver les oiseaux dans les arbres
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,
Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les marbres.

Nightingales, when spring breezes
Play outside, sing
Their song of longing
From their dungeon cell.

Then all hearts listen
And everyone rejoices,
Yet no one feels the pain,
The deep sorrow in the song.
Translation by Richard Stokes

Over the garden, through the air
I heard birds of passage fly,
A sign that spring is in the air,
Flowers already bloom below.

I could shout for joy, could weep,
For it seems to me it cannot be!
All the old wonders come flooding back,
Gleaming in the moonlight.

And the moon and stars say it,
And the dreaming forest whispers it,
And the nightingales sing it:
'She is yours, is yours!'
Translation by Richard Stokes

Your soul is a chosen landscape
Bewitched by masquers and bergamaskers,
Playing the lute and dancing and almost
Sad beneath their fanciful disguises.

Singing as they go in a minor key
Of conquering love and life's favours,
They do not seem to believe in their fortune
And their song mingles with the light of the moon,

The calm light of the moon, sad and fair,
That sets the birds dreaming in the trees
And the fountains sobbing in their rapture,
Tall and svelte amid marble statues.
Translation by Richard Stokes

Mandoline

Verlaine - poet

Les donneurs de sérénades
Et les belles écouteuses
Échangent des propos fades
Sous les ramures chanteuses.

C'est Tircis et c'est Aminte,
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre,
Et c'est Damis qui pour mainte
Cruelle fait maint vers tendre.

Leurs courtes vestes de soie,
Leurs longues robes à queues,
Leur élégance, leur joie
Et leurs molles ombres bleues,

Tourbillonnent dans l'extase
D'une lune rose et grise,
Et la mandoline jase
Parmi les frissons de brise.

En Sourdine

Verlaine - poet

Calmes dans le demi-jour
Que les branches hautes font,
Pénétrons bien notre amour
De ce silence profond.

Mêlons nos âmes, nos cœurs
Et nos sens extasiés,
Parmi les vagues langueurs
Des pins et des arbousiers.

Ferme tes yeux à demi,
Croise tes bras sur ton sein,
Et de ton cœur endormi
Chasse à jamais tout dessein.

Laissons-nous persuader
Au souffle berceur et doux
Qui vient, à tes pieds, rider
Les ondes des gazons roux.

Et quand, solennel, le soir
Des chênes noirs tombera
Voix de notre désespoir,
Le rossignol chantera.

The gallant serenaders
And their fair listeners
Exchange sweet nothings
Beneath singing boughs.

Tircis is there, Aminte is there,
And tedious Clitandre too,
And Damis who for many a cruel maid
Writes many a tender song.

Their short silken doublets,
Their long trailing gowns,
Their elegance, their joy,
And their soft blue shadows

Whirl madly in the rapture
Of a grey and roseate moon,
And the mandolin jangles on
In the shivering breeze.

Translation by Richard Stokes

Calm in the twilight
Cast by loft boughs,
Let us steep our love
In this deep quiet.

Let us mingle our souls, our hearts
And our enraptured senses
With the hazy languor
Of arbutus and pine.

Half-close your eyes,
Fold your arms across your breast,
And from your heart now lulled to rest
Banish forever all intent.

Let us both succumb
To the gentle and lulling breeze
That comes to ruffle at your feet
The waves of russet grass.

And when, solemnly, evening
Falls from the black oaks,
That voice of our despair,
The nightingale shall sing.

Translation by Richard Stokes

Prison

Verlaine - poet

Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit,
Si bleu, si calme!
Un arbre, par-dessus le toit,
Berce sa palme.

La cloche, dans le ciel qu'on voit,
Douxement tinte.
Un oiseau sur l'arbre qu'on voit
Chante sa plainte.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, la vie est là,
Simple et tranquille.
Cette paisible rumeur-là
Vient de la ville.

– Qu'as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà
Pleurant sans cesse,
Dis, qu'as-tu fait, toi que voilà,
De ta jeunesse?

The sky above the roof –
So blue, so calm!
A tree, above the roof,
Waves its crown.

The bell, in the sky that you see,
Gently rings.
A bird, on the tree that you see,
Plaintively sings.

My God, my God, life is there,
Simple and serene.
That peaceful murmur there
Comes from the town.

O you, what have you done,
Weeping without end,
Say, what have you done
With your young life?
Translation by Richard Stokes

I've never been in love before

Frank Loesser (1910-1969) music and lyrics

I've never been in love before
Now all at once it's you
It's you forever more

I've never been in love before
I thought my heart was safe
I thought I knew the score

But this is wine that's all too strange and strong
I'm full of foolish song
And out my song must pour

So please forgive this helpless haze I'm in
I've really never been in love before