



LIVE

Wolfgang Holzmair
Imogen Cooper

Wolf Songs



Wolfgang Holzmair *baritone*

Imogen Cooper *piano*

Recorded live at Wigmore Hall, London, on 19 February 2008

WHLive0029

Made & Printed in England

HUGO WOLF

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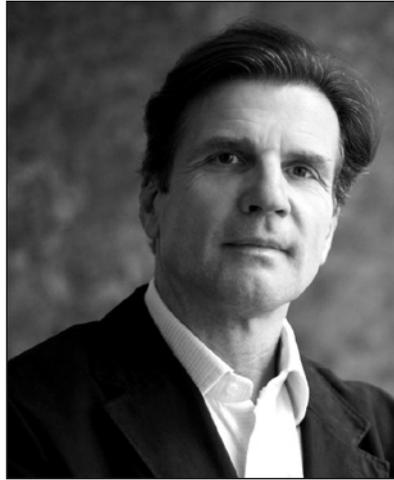
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WOLFGANG HOLZMAIR



The Austrian baritone Wolfgang Holzmair is particularly noted for his intelligent and committed performances of Lieder and has appeared in recital throughout the world. Alongside his outstanding artistic relationship with Imogen Cooper, his partners have also included Till Fellner, Andreas Haefliger and Lars Vogt. Equally in demand on the concert platform, Wolfgang Holzmair has performed with many leading orchestras under eminent conductors including Boulez, Chailly, Dohnányi, Frühbeck de Burgos, Haitink, Harnoncourt, Norrington, Hickox and Ozawa. He is also active in the opera world, most recently appearing as Papageno in Dallas, Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in Seattle and Hong Kong, Don Alfonso in Lyon and Toronto, the Music Master (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in Madrid, and Wolfram in Erfurt. Wolfgang Holzmair has made numerous recordings and since 1998 has taught Lied and oratorio at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, as well as giving masterclasses throughout Europe and North America.

IMOGEN COOPER



Recognized worldwide as a pianist of virtuosity and poetic poise, Imogen Cooper has established a reputation as one of the finest interpreters of the classical repertoire. She has dazzled audiences and orchestras throughout her distinguished career, bringing to the concert platform her unique musical understanding and lyrical quality. She has appeared with, among many other orchestras, the New York Philharmonic Orchestra with Sir Colin Davis and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra with Sir Simon Rattle. She has given recitals in New York, Chicago, Paris, Vienna, Rotterdam, Prague and at London's Wigmore and Queen Elizabeth Halls. As a committed chamber music player she performs regularly with the Belcea Quartet, and as a Lieder recitalist she has had a long collaboration with Wolfgang Holzmair. Her solo recital on Wigmore Hall Live (WHLive0018) received widespread acclaim.



HUGO WOLF (1860–1903)

Lieder to texts by Eduard Mörike

Eduard Mörike, the poet of this disc's twenty-seven Wolf songs, used to be regarded as a naïve romantic, untouched by the events of his time, the epitome of Biedermeier, the author of poetic idylls and delightful fairy tales, a bucolic, charmingly inadequate, ineffectual clergyman at one with his surroundings in Cleversulzbach, a nature poet par excellence with an engaging sense of humour. Gottfried Keller unwittingly encouraged this assessment when, on Mörike's death in 1875, he said: 'that it was as if a fine June day had passed away with Mörike'; and the sweet, bespectacled face that stares at us from many portraits, especially in the sketch by Kurtz in the Schiller National Museum in Marbach am Neckar, has also been partially responsible for this distorted picture of one of Germany's greatest lyric poets. The truth is rather different. The naivete, the idylls and the humour of many Mörike poems are, in fact, a bastion erected by the poet against those extreme emotions which threatened to overwhelm him throughout his life: the idyll protects him from the demonic, humour helps him cope with emotional turmoil, and the quest for moderation banishes or at least controls erotic undercurrents.

Hugo Wolf's obsession with Mörike matched Schubert's passion for Goethe or Schumann's for Heine, and it was with a volume of his poems that Wolf withdrew to Perchtoldsdorf after his father's death on 9th May 1887. Bereavement now paralysed his creative urge, and for the rest of 1887 he composed nothing and was inconsolable. At Perchtoldsdorf, however, the Mörike poems unleashed within him a period of creativity, comparable to Schubert's in 1815 and Schumann's in 1840. Between 10th February and 26th November 1888 he composed the fifty-three songs of the *Mörike-Liederbuch*, and symbolically placed 'Der Genesene an die Hoffnung' ('He who has recovered addresses hope') at the head of the published volume. The rate of composition was astounding. Although the seasons partially dictated his choice of poem – 'Er ists', 'Fußreise', 'Im Frühling' and 'Zitronenfalter im April', all spring songs, were composed in March and May, while the approach of Christmas inspired 'Auf eine Christblume I', 'Schlafendes Jesuskind' and 'Zum neuen Jahr' – he was composing maniacally, almost somnambulistically, in much the same way as Mörike wrote many of his poems. In March alone he composed no fewer than



twenty songs, often in rapid succession. From this recital, ‘Bei einer Trauung’ dates from 1st March; ‘Der Gärtner’ and ‘Elfenlied’ were composed on the 7th March, followed by ‘Denk’ es, o Seele!’ on the 10th. ‘Auf einer Wanderung’ was begun on the 11th and finished on the 25th, between which dates he also wrote ‘Gebet’ (13th), ‘Lied eines Verliebten’ (14th), ‘Fußreise’ (21st) and ‘Begegnung’ (22nd). He ended the month with undiminished inspiration, composing ‘Frage und Antwort’ on the 29th and ‘Lebe wohl’ on the 31st – and all this in a month during which he travelled twice weekly to Vienna to give piano lessons to Countess Harrach, thus earning much needed income.

No other composer in the history of the Lied has chronicled so minutely the creation of his songs. Not only are the dates preserved, but thanks to his correspondence with friends such as Edmund Lang and Friedrich Eckstein, we can share Wolf’s excitement as the masterpieces poured from his pen. The letters are suffused with a self-ironic hyperbole in keeping with his heightened mood. From the composition of ‘Der Tambour’, the first of the *Mörike-Liederbuch* to be set, he regularly communicates his excitement to his friends, keeps insisting that his most recent song is his greatest, only to renounce such claims the very next day. In this booklet we print extracts from these wonderful letters, so that his extraordinary fervour can be properly appreciated.

We begin with ‘Auf einer Wanderung’. Mörike’s poem exists in two versions, the first of which – ‘Auf zwei Sängern’ (12th August 1841) – introduces two travellers who wax lyrical about the beautiful voice of Marie Mörike, wife of his cousin Karl Mörike. The first verse of the second version, set by Wolf, dates from 1845 and repeats a purple passage from the earlier poem: Marie’s voice is referred to in line 6 – ‘Und eine Stimme scheint ein Nachtigallenchor’. The second stanza is new and describes how Mörike was affected by the intoxicating beauty of nature and music. Wolf took a fortnight to compose his song – a rarity with a composer who would often compose several songs a day; as in ‘Im Frühling’, he abandons the strophic form and lets the voice declaim the poem with a new-found freedom. The ♩ rhythm of the piano’s opening bar dominates the entire song in a series of miraculous transformations, while the vocal line weaves its way in and out of this texture, highlighting some phrases, musing on others.



Wolf's pleasure at composing the delicious fantasy 'Der Tambour' can be felt from the initial drum-roll in the piano and heard in the astonishing prodigality of musical themes that he lavishes on the poem. As he put it in a letter to Lang, dated 22nd February, six days after completing the song:

'I have just written down a new song. A divine song, I tell you! Quite divinely wonderful! By God! it will soon be all over with me, for my cleverness increases from day to day. How far shall I progress? I shudder to think about it [...].

My cheeks glow with excitement like molten iron, and this state of happiness is more like rapturous torture than unadulterated happiness'.

'Denk' es, o Seele!' ends Mörike's *Novelle Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*, which describes the largely apocryphal events that befall Mozart and Constanze on their journey to Prague. They are invited to share in the festivities at Count von Schinzberg's castle, celebrating the engagement of his niece Eugenie to a nobleman. All appears to end happily. But then, in the epilogue, Eugenie closes the piano, which Mozart had played, and jealously locks it, lest the keys be touched by another hand than Mozart's. She knows she has said farewell to a composer of genius. She senses that his days are numbered, that he is doomed to die a premature death. Pensively, she tidies away several volumes of songs, and in doing so dislodges an old sheet of paper which flutters to the ground. On it is written, we are told, an old Bohemian folksong. She reads it, and sensing the theme of transience and its relevance to Mozart, begins to weep ... It is, of course, not a folksong at all, but a wonderfully constructed lyric that describes the approach of death. Wolf's sepulchral D minor setting (the key of *Don Giovanni*, which Mozart was to produce in Prague) is permeated with tolling bells and ends in a funeral march that dies away in the final bars.

Though Wolf's setting of 'Der Gärtner' is one of his most delicate Lieder – the exquisite depiction of the princess's curvetting horse dominates the entire song – Mörike's poem bristles with an astonishing number of sexual metaphors, none more unequivocal than in the final verse where the gardener offers the princess a thousand flowers in return for *eine*, where the italicised indefinite article quite clearly symbolizes the flower of her maidenhead. Wolf, the most meticulous of Lieder composers, could, contrary to received opinion, be guilty of false accentuation, as 'Der Gärtner' illustrates in the opening line, which should be stressed:



‘Auf ihrem *Leibrößlein*’, and not, as Wolf sets it, ‘Auf ihrem *Leibrößlein*’. But what matter? This is a delicious song with a most angular melody to illustrate the delicately prancing horse. The intensity of the gardener’s devotion is subtly pointed by Wolf in two crucial *ritenutos*, at ‘Blüte’ and ‘alle’, that must be observed for the song to make its full emotional impact.

‘Auf eine Christblume I’ was the last of the Mörike songs to be completed (26th November 1888), and Frank Walker in his biography of the composer aptly calls it ‘an elegy, a nature picture, a religious meditation, a vision of elfland and a hymn to beauty all in one’. This variety of theme is almost too great to be contained in a single song, and Wolf’s setting, though it contains passages of great beauty, does not quite coalesce. ‘Auf eine Christblume II’, however, is bound together by a figure in the accompaniment that represents the hovering butterfly of the poem and is repeated some twenty times in the course of the song.

‘Der Feuerreiter’ appears in Mörike’s novel *Maler Nolten*, where one of the characters describes a strange figure, known as the ‘mad Captain’: ‘His destiny had made a solitary of him: he associated with no one, and never appeared in the streets from one year to another, except when a fire broke out in the town or the neighbourhood. He could scent a fire at once, and when he did, he would be seen at his little window, deadly pale, wearing a red cap [Mörike is said to have been inspired by the sight of the mad Hölderlin pacing up and down in his room in a white cap] and restlessly striding up and down. At the first alarm of the fire – often, indeed, before it, and before anyone else knew exactly where it was – he would get a lean nag out of the stable and ride with an infallible instinct, at full gallop, to the scene of the disaster’. The actor, who tells this story, is then requested by the company to sing the ballad of the ‘Feuerreiter’. Wolf was fascinated by it and later arranged the poem for chorus and orchestra, a version which fails, however, to match the dramatic power of the piano-accompanied song, especially at the ‘Da fällt in Asche ab’, where the piano plays clumps of diminished seventh chords, marked *pppp*, that depict in wonderfully realistic fashion the ashes floating to the ground.

Much of Mörike’s love poetry was written in the wake of his failed relationship with Maria Meyer. We know little about her and even less about the details of her relationship with Mörike. She was a Swiss girl of obscure origin, wildly beautiful,



extremely well read, a member of the wandering sect of Julia von Krüdener, and affected at times by a sort of religious fervour. The first Mörike heard of her was when Herr Mergenthaler, the owner of a Ludwigsburg brewery, found her unconscious on the Stuttgart-Ludwigsburg road – it later turned out that she was prone to epileptic fits and bouts of sleepwalking. Overnight, Maria Meyer became something of a celebrity in the little town, and Mörike, living in Tübingen, exchanged passionate letters with her, despite the warnings of his sister Luise. Rumours soon reached him, however, that led him to call her moral integrity into question. Mörike was thrown into utter confusion – all the more so, when he heard that she had suddenly left Ludwigsburg. Soon afterwards, she was found in Heidelberg in exactly the same circumstances as she had first appeared on the Ludwigsburg road. This time she was arrested; influential friends and admirers, however, secured her release, and she was left to go on her way. In the early summer of 1824 she turned up in Tübingen and wrote Mörike a letter, requesting him to meet her and write her a short dedicatory poem. He refused both requests and fled in turmoil to his mother in Stuttgart. He tried to exorcise this traumatic experience in the five Peregrina poems which appear in the autobiographical novel *Maler Nolten* – but in vain: her spectre continued to haunt Mörike, who wrote a great number of love poems that are characterised by an overwhelming feeling of repressed sensuality.

Wolf set two of Mörike's five Peregrina poems (the first and fourth), which appear in *Maler Nolten*. 'Peregrina I' begins solemnly to a dotted crotchet and quaver rhythm, but grows more impassioned and chromatic as the poet reflects on her erotic charms and disloyalty. The melody of the postlude, which seems to express the pathological nature of sexual desire, becomes the main theme of the 'Peregrina II', which must number among the most disturbed and overwrought love-songs in the entire repertoire. Marked *sehr innig* (opposed to merely *innig* in 'Peregrina I'), the music veers towards the minor, the melodic line falters and falls apart, chromaticism increases as he recalls their relationship, until at 'zuletzt brach ich ...' the tempo quickens and the voice breaks out in loud sobbing, before the song limps to a close, as he remembers how, hand in hand, they left the house.

'Um Mitternacht' has a simpler structure and recalls Schubert's 'Nacht und Träume' in the way the voice floats over a low-lying accompaniment. 'Jägerlied' is the only song Wolf ever wrote in $\frac{5}{4}$ time, and he was delighted with it, as we see in



the exultant letter he wrote to his friend Edmund Lang: ‘No sooner had I sent you my letter [containing ‘Der Knabe und das Immelein’] than I found myself, Mörike in hand, composing a second song, in $\frac{5}{4}$ time, and I think I can safely say that seldom can $\frac{5}{4}$ time have been so aptly used as in this composition’. The little piano prelude, marked *Rather lively*, conveys perfectly the movement of the bird across the snow, and the two stanzas which compare the girl’s dainty handwriting with the imprint of a bird’s footprint, and a soaring heron with the thoughts of true love, express a whole world of emotion in the most lapidary of ways. Mörike actually wrote a third, inferior, verse at the request of a contemporary composer, but wisely refrained from including it in the Collected Poems.

‘Schlafendes Jesuskind’, based on a painting by the Renaissance artist Francesco Albani, is one of Mörike’s most tender religious poems, and it inspired Wolf to compose a rapt and serene song which he instructs singer and pianist to perform *sehr getragen und weihevoll* – in a very sustained and solemn manner. ‘Frage und Antwort’ discusses the nature of love in a poem which compares the mysterious working of the heart with unfathomable natural phenomena. Love causes distress, and Wolf’s ecstatic setting of the last verse, which describes the futility of attempting to halt a raging wind, is memorably masochistic. ‘Fußreise’ sings the glories of creation, and quickly became one of his most popular songs. Wolf was clearly delighted with it: having finished the composition, he dashed off a letter to Edmund Lang: ‘I take back my claim that ‘Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens’ is my finest song, for what I wrote this morning, ‘Fußreise’ is a million times better. When you have heard this song, you will have but one more wish: to die.’

The theme of ‘In der Frühe’ is insomnia – the affliction from which both Wolf and Mörike suffered throughout their lives. The poem expresses the mental anguish experienced during a sleepless night, without revealing the cause of such malaise; Wolf conveys the passage from darkness to light by using ever brighter major tonalities, until day finally dawns. ‘Im Frühling’, a song in Wolf’s most symphonic vein, is dominated by a yearning figure that ideally reflects the ache of Mörike’s poem, which was written in the early morning of 13th May 1828 at a single sitting. Mörike sent a copy to his friend Johannes Mährlen with a letter, which opens: ‘Here I sit and write in the sunny garden of the local Catholic priest. The arbour, with my desk and writing things, allows the sun to filter through the young honeysuckle and



play upon my paper. The garden is situated rather high; over a low wall, on which one can sit like on a ledge, you have an unimpeded view onto the meadow.’ The idyllic mood of the letter belies the emotional turmoil of the poem, whose final line (‘Alte unnennbare Tage!’) refers obliquely to the traumatic Maria Meyer episode. ‘Lied eines Verliebten’ tells of a man’s obsession with an unattainable girl, which Wolf expresses by the restless quavers of the piano’s left hand, and the throbbing off-beat chords of the right. Wolf’s elegant melody is one of his most memorable.

Mörike’s passion for Luise Rau, though it yielded a great number of happy love poems, also inspired one of his most tortured: ‘Lebe wohl’, which the poet included in a letter to his fiancée, dated 8th August 1833. She was the daughter of the pastor at Plattenhardt, Würemberg, whose death caused the vacancy which Mörike was appointed to fill in May 1829. She was three years younger than Mörike, and when they had been engaged four years, he must have had a premonition that the relationship would not last. Wolf captures the grief in the falling semitones of the opening bar, and every phrase thereafter ends in a drooping cadence, none greater in range and effect than in the closing climax, when the voice plummets from top A to D below the staff. Luise Rau also inspired many of his most beautiful love poems, including ‘An die Geliebte’, whose gestation was described by the poet in a celebrated letter. Having received her letter, Mörike hurried to a wood to read it in romantic seclusion:

The path on which I walked with your letter led me to a most delightful little place that was unknown to me: a sloping corner of a meadow, thick with bushes and trees, on the banks of the fast-moving Lauter, into which another stream flowed from the hills. I sat down there, read, thought and began to compose the poems which you will receive with this letter. I then climbed to the top of the wood and continued my poems. They came from the depths of my heart. This has since become my favourite walk. I set out on it again today and carved the letters L and E in the bark of a young alder tree by the stream – and as I did so, it occurred to me that one could meaningfully insert the letters OV between them.

With the letter he enclosed five poems, including ‘An die Geliebte’ (Mörike’s original title was ‘Sonett an Luise’), which Wolf sets to a sort of rhythmically and harmonically heightened declamation. In the final two lines and the postlude, Wolf – like Schubert before him in ‘Freiwilliges Versinken’ – depicts the stars in a series of softly repeated chords high above the staff; marked sehr ausdrucksvoll, they



shine out ever more brightly, then fade in the decrescendo, before vanishing from view.

‘Nimmersatte Liebe’ is a song about the insatiability of young passion and the delight in giving, and receiving, love-bites. The lubricious theme is handled with exquisite delicacy and humour, and Wolf was delighted with his song, as he explained to Edmund Lang, in a letter dated 24th February 1888: ‘It is now precisely 7 in the evening, and I am as happy as a king. Yet another new song has been successfully completed. My dear fellow, when you hear it, the Devil will take you with pleasure. The end breaks out in a regular student’s song – nothing could be jollier. It just occurs to me that you may as well save yourself the purchase of Mörike’s poems, as I, in the grip of my strange creative urge, might sooner or later be in the happy position of acquainting you with the entire poetical works of my favourite.’

‘Elfenlied’, a delightful piece of escapism, was introduced by Mörike into the novel *Maler Nolten*. The poem, written in 1831, tells how a sleepy elf misinterprets the night-watchman’s cry of ‘Elfe’: instead of thinking that the watchman was calling out the time (11 o’clock), the elf believes he has been summoned (‘Elfe’ = elf); and drunk with sleep he totters away, mistakes glow-worms for lamp-lit windows, and bumps his head on the window, as he tries to look in. The octave drop on ‘Elfe’ at the beginning of the song becomes the smaller interval of the cuckoo’s call in the final line. ‘Gebet’ is a fervent plea to avoid the sort of violent emotional upheavals that Mörike had experienced with Maria Meyer, and Wolf sets the poem to a sort of four-square hymn tune, until at ‘doch in der Mitten/Liegt holdes Bescheiden’, the piano soars ecstatically before descending gently into the final heart-easing cadence. ‘An den Schlaf’, with its *Tristanesque* harmonies, must have appealed to the insomniac in Wolf, whose piano prelude creates the gentle, dreamy state to which he would succumb. Its drooping motif in A flat major is repeated throughout the song, which eventually reaches the key of E major, as though sleep had finally closed his eyes. ‘Er ists’, one of the most exultant nature poems in the entire repertoire, was written by Mörike on 9th March 1829 during a walk at Pflummern, an example of the somnambulistic manner of composition that he shared with Wolf. He included the poem in *Maler Nolten*, where Nolten, recovering from an illness, hears it sung by the watchman’s daughter. The poet’s



rapture at the approach of spring is expressed through sight ('blaues Band'), smell and touch ('Düfte streifen'), and hearing ('Harfenton'), and Wolf responds with a tremulous song that charges along, repeating phrases from the poem seemingly at random.

'Zur Warnung' shows Wolf in lighter mood. Mörike's poem ridicules those poets who seek inspiration when hung-over: the poet asks his muse for a song, and Wolf comes up with a beautifully banal tune over a strummed accompaniment – until, at the thought of more wine, the piano begins to trill in both hands. More wine, we are told, puts an end to such nonsense, and the moral of the piece (that you should never summon the gods with a hangover) concludes the song in mock recitative. 'Bei einer Trauung' parodies a loveless marriage, which Wolf sets to a mock funeral march, while 'Begegnung' describes the meeting of two young lovers after a night of passion – Wolf rises to the occasion with a syncopated accompaniment that seems to sigh and gasp in every bar. It was composed on 22nd March, and on the next day he wrote a letter to his brother-in-law Josef Strasser that speaks volumes about his opinion of these wonderful songs, which he hoped posterity would share:

I'm working with a thousand horsepower, from early morning into the night without interruption. What I now write, dear friend, I write for posterity also. They are masterpieces. For the moment they are admittedly only songs, but when I tell you that in spite of many interruptions due to the necessity of my being in Vienna twice weekly because of Countess Harrach, I have nonetheless since 22nd February composed twenty-five songs, of which each one surpasses the others, and about which there is only one opinion among those of musical discernment – namely that there has been nothing like them since Schubert and Schumann, etc. etc. etc. etc. You may imagine what sort of songs they are.

Richard Stokes © 2009

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HUGO WOLF (1860–1903)

Lieder to texts by Eduard Mörike (1888)

Auf einer Wanderung

In ein freundliches Städtchen tret ich ein,
In den Straßen liegt roter Abendschein.
Aus einem offenen Fenster eben,
Über den reichsten Blumenflor
Hinweg, hört man Goldglockentöne schweben,
Und eine Stimme scheint ein Nachtigallenchor,
Daß die Blüten beben,
Daß die Lüfte leben,
Daß in höherem Rot die Rosen leuchten vor.

Lang hielt ich staunend, lustbeklommen.
Wie ich hinaus vors Tor gekommen,
Ich weiß es wahrlich selber nicht.
Ach hier, wie liegt die Welt so licht!
Der Himmel wogt in purpurnem Gewühle,
Rückwärts die Stadt in goldnem Rauch;
Wie rauscht der Erlenbach, wie rauscht im
Grund die Mühle!
Ich bin wie trunken, irreführt -
O Muse, du hast mein Herz berührt
Mit einem Liebeshauch!

Der Tambour

Wenn meine Mutter hexen könnt,
Da müßt sie mit dem Regiment
Nach Frankreich, überall mit hin,
Und wär die Marketenderin.
Im Lager, wohl um Mitternacht
Wenn niemand auf ist als die Wacht,
Und alles schnarchet, Roß und Mann,
Vor meiner Trommel säß ich dann:
Die Trommel müßt eine Schüssel sein,
Ein warmes Sauerkraut darein,
Die Schlegel Messer und Gabel,
Eine lange Wurst mein Sabel;
Mein Tschako wär ein Humpen gut,
Den füll ich mit Burgunderblut.
Und weil es mir an Lichte fehlt,
Da scheint der Mond in mein Gezelt;

On a walk

I arrive in a friendly little town,
The streets glow in red evening light.
From an open window,
Across the richest array of flowers,
And beyond, golden bell-chimes come floating,
And one voice seems a choir of nightingales,
Causing blossoms to quiver,
Bringing breezes to life,
Making roses glow a brighter red.

Long I halted marvelling, oppressed by joy.
How I came out through the gate,
I cannot in truth remember.
Ah, how bright the world here!
The sky billows in a crimson whirl,
The town lies behind in a golden haze;
How the alder brook chatters, and the mill
below!
I am as if drunk, led astray –
O Muse, you have touched my heart
With a breath of love!

The drummer-boy

If my mother could work magic,
She'd have to go with the regiment
To France and everywhere,
And be the vivandière.
In camp, at midnight,
When no one's up save the guard,
And everyone – man and horse – is snoring,
Then I'd sit by my drum:
My drum would be a bowl,
With warm sauerkraut in it,
The sticks would be a knife and fork,
My sabre – a long sausage;
My shako would be a tankard
Filled with red Burgundy.
And because I lack light,
The moon shines into my tent;



Scheint er auch auf franzö'sch herein,
Mir fällt doch meine Liebste ein:
Ach weh! Jetzt hat der Spaß ein End!
– Wenn nur meine Mutter hexen könnt!

Denk es, o Seele!

Ein Tännlein grünet wo,
Wer weiß, im Walde,
Ein Rosenstrauch, wer sagt,
In welchem Garten?
Sie sind erlesen schon,
Denk' es, o Seele!
Auf deinem Grab zu wurzeln
Und zu wachsen.

Zwei schwarze Rößlein weiden
Auf der Wiese,
Sie kehren heim zur Stadt
In muntern Sprüngen.
Sie werden schrittweis gehn
Mit deiner Leiche;
Vielleicht, vielleicht noch eh
An ihren Hufen
Das Eisen los wird,
Das ich blitzen sehe.

Der Gärtner

Auf ihrem Leibrößlein,
So weiß wie der Schnee,
Die schönste Prinzessin
Reit't durch die Allee.

Der Weg, den das Rößlein
Hintanzet so hold,
Der Sand, den ich streute,
Er blinket wie Gold.

Du rosenfarbs Hütlein,
Wohl auf und wohl ab,
O wirf eine Feder
Verstohlen herab!

Und willst du dagegen
Eine Blüte von mir,
Nimm tausend für eine,
Nimm alle dafür!

And though it shines in French,
It still reminds me of my beloved:
Oh dear! There's an end to my fun!
– If only my mother could work magic!

O soul, remember!

A young fir is growing, where,
Who knows, in the wood?
A rosebush, who can say
In what garden?
Already they are pre-ordained,
O soul, remember,
To root and grow
On your grave.

Two black colts are grazing
On the field,
Homewards at a merry pace
They return to the town.
At a walking pace they'll go
With your corpse;
Perhaps, perhaps even before
Their hooves
Will lose the shoes
That I see flashing.

The gardener

On her favourite mount
As white as snow,
The loveliest princess
Rides down the avenue.

On the path her horse
Prances so sweetly along,
The sand I scattered
Glitters like gold.

You rose-coloured bonnet
Bobbing up, and down,
Oh, throw me a feather
Discreetly down!

And if you in exchange
Want a flower from me,
Take a thousand for one,
Take all in return!



Auf eine Christblume II

Im Winterboden schläft, ein Blumenkeim,
Der Schmetterling, der einst um Busch und
Hügel
In Frühlingsnächten wiegt den samtne Flügel;
Nie soll er kosten deinen Honigseim.

Wer aber weiß, ob nicht sein zarter Geist,
Wenn jede Zier des Sommers hingesunken,
Dereinst, von deinem leisen Dufte trunken,
Mir unsichtbar, dich blühende umkreist?

Der Feuerreiter

Sehet ihr am Fensterlein
Dort die rote Mütze wieder?
Nicht geheuer muß es sein,
Denn er geht schon auf und nieder.
Und auf einmal welch Gewühle
Bei der Brücke, nach dem Feld!
Horch! das Feuerglöcklein gellt:

Hinterm Berg,
Hinterm Berg

Brennt es in der Mühle!

Schaut! da sprengt er wütend schier
Durch das Tor, der Feuerreiter,
Auf dem rippendürren Tier,
Als auf einer Feuerleiter!
Querfeldein! Durch Qualm und Schwüle
Rennt er schon und ist am Ort!
Drüben schallt es fort und fort:

Hinterm Berg,
Hinterm Berg

Brennt es in der Mühle!

Der so oft den roten Hahn
Meilenweit von fern gerochen,
Mit des heiligen Kreuzes Span
Frentlich die Glut besprochen –
Weh! dir grinst vom Dachgestühle
Dort der Feind im Höllenschein.
Gnade Gott der Seele dein!

Hinterm Berg,
Hinterm Berg

Rast er in der Mühle!

On a Christmas rose II

There sleeps within the wintry ground, itself a
flower-seed,
The butterfly that one day over hill and dale
Will flutter its velvet wings in spring nights.
Never shall it taste your liquid honey.

But who knows if perhaps its gentle ghost,
When summer's loveliness has faded,
Might some day, dizzy with your faint fragrance,
Unseen by me, circle you as you flower?

Fire-rider

See, at the window
There, his red cap again?
Something must be wrong,
For he's pacing to and fro.
And all of a sudden, what a throng
At the bridge, heading for the fields!
Listen to the fire-bell shrilling:

Behind the hill,
Behind the hill,

The mill's on fire!

Look, there he gallops frenziedly
Through the gate, the fire-rider,
Straddling his skinny mount
Like a fireman's ladder!
Across the fields! Through thick smoke and heat
He rides and has reached his goal!
The distant bell peals on and on:

Behind the hill,
Behind the hill,

The mill's on fire!

You who have often smelt a fire
From many miles away,
And blasphemously conjured the blaze
With a fragment of the True Cross –
Look out! there, grinning at you from the rafters,
Is the Devil amid the flames of hell.
God have mercy on your soul!

Behind the hill,
Behind the hill,

He's raging in the mill!



Keine Stunde hielt es an,
Bis die Mühle borst in Trümmer;
Doch den kecken Reitersmann
Sah man von der Stunde nimmer.
Volk und Wagen im Gewühle
Kehren heim von all dem Graus;
Auch das Glöcklein klinget aus:
 Hinterm Berg,
 Hinterm Berg

Brennts! –

Nach der Zeit ein Müller fand
Ein Gerippe samt der Mützen
Aufrecht an der Kellerwand
Auf der beinern Mähre sitzen:
Feurreiter, wie so kühle
Reitest du in deinem Grab!
Husch! da fällt's in Asche ab.
 Ruhe wohl,
 Ruhe wohl
Drunten in der Mühle!

Peregrina I

Der Spiegel dieser treuen, braunen Augen
Ist wie von innerm Gold ein Widerschein;
Tief aus dem Busen scheint ers anzusaugen,
Dort mag solch Gold in heiligem Gram gedeihn.
In diese Nacht des Blickes mich zu tauchen,
Unwissend Kind, du selber lädst mich ein –
Willst, ich soll kecklich mich und dich
 entzünden,
Reichst lächelnd mir den Tod im Kelch der
 Sünden!

Peregrina II

Warum, Geliebte, denk ich dein
Auf einmal nun mit tausend Tränen,
Und kann gar nicht zufrieden sein,
Und will die Brust in alle Weite dehnen?

In less than an hour
The mill collapsed in rubble;
But from that hour the bold rider
Was never seen again.
Thronging crowds and carriages
Turn back home from all the horror;
And the bell stops ringing too:
 Behind the hill,
 Behind the hill,

A fire! –

Some time after a miller found
A skeleton, complete with cap,
Upright against the cellar wall,
Mounted on the fleshless mare:
Fire-rider, how coldly
You ride in your grave!
Hush – now it flakes into ash.
 Rest in peace,
 Rest in peace,
Down there in the mill!

Peregrina I

The surface of these faithful brown eyes
Seems to mirror the gleam of inner gold;
Seems to draw it from deep within your breast –
There, in hallowed grief, such gold may thrive.
To plunge into this dark night of your gaze,
Innocent child, you yourself invite me –
Wish me boldly to consume us both in
 fire,
Smile as you offer me death in the chalice of
 sin!

Peregrina II

Why, beloved, do I now think of you
Suddenly and with a thousand tears,
And cannot be satisfied at all,
And long to extend my heart into infinity?



Ach, gestern in den hellen Kindersaal,
Beim Flimmer zierlich aufgesteckter Kerzen,
Wo ich mein selbst vergaß in Lärm und
Scherzen,
Tratst du, o Bildnis mitleid-schöner Qual;
Es war dein Geist, er setzte sich ans Mahl,
Fremd saßen wir mit stumm verhaltenen
Schmerzen;
Zuletzt brach ich in lautes Schluchzen aus,
Und Hand in Hand verließen wir das Haus.

Um Mitternacht

Gelassen stieg die Nacht ans Land,
Lehnt träumend an der Berge Wand,
Ihr Auge sieht die goldne Waage nun
Der Zeit in gleichen Schalen stille ruhn;
Und kecker rauschen die Quellen hervor,
Sie singen der Mutter, der Nacht, ins Ohr
Vom Tage,
Vom heute gewesenem Tage.

Das uralt alte Schlummerlied,
Sie achtets nicht, sie ist es müd;
Ihr klingt des Himmels Bläue süßer noch,
Der flüchtigen Stunden gleichgeschwungnes
Joch.

Doch immer behalten die Quellen das Wort,
Es singen die Wasser im Schlafe noch fort
Vom Tage,
Vom heute gewesenem Tage.

Jägerlied

Zierlich ist des Vogels Tritt im Schnee
Wenn er wandelt auf des Berges Höh:
Zierlicher schreibt Liebchens liebe Hand,
Schreibt ein Brieflein mir in ferne Land'

In die Lüfte hoch ein Reiher steigt,
Dahin weder Pfeil noch Kugel fliegt:
Tausendmal so hoch und so geschwind
Die Gedanken treuer Liebe sind.

Ah, you came yesterday to the bright nursery,
In the gleam of decorative candles,
As I forgot myself in noise and
mirth,
You came, agony's image, lovely in compassion;
It was your ghost, it joined us at the feast,
Strangers we sat, our sorrows mutely
hidden;
At last I broke out into loud sobs,
And hand in hand we left the house.

At midnight

Night has serenely stepped ashore,
Leans dreaming against the mountain wall,
Watches now the golden scales of time
Quietly at rest in equipoise;
And the springs babble more boldly,
They sing in the ear of their mother, the night,
Of the day,
Of the day that has been today.

That old, that age-old lullaby,
She disregards, she is tired of it;
The blue of the sky sounds sweeter to her,
The evenly curved yoke of the fleeting
hours.

But still the streams murmur on,
They babble in sleep as their waters run
Of the day,
Of the day that has been today.

Huntsman's song

A bird steps daintily in the snow
On the mountain heights:
Daintier still is my sweetheart's hand,
When she writes to me in far-off lands

A heron soars high into the air,
Beyond the reach of shot or shaft:
The thoughts of fanciful love
Are a thousand times as swift and high.



Schlafendes Jesuskind

Sohn der Jungfrau, Himmelskind! am Boden
Auf dem Holz der Schmerzen eingeschlafen,
Das der fromme Meister, sinnvoll spielend,
Deinen leichten Träumen unterlegte;
Blume du, noch in der Knospe dämmernd
Eingehüllt die Herrlichkeit des Vaters!
O wer sehen könnte, welche Bilder
Hinter dieser Stirne, diesen schwarzen
Wimpern sich in sanftem Wechsel malen!

Frage und Antwort

Fragst du mich, woher die bange
Liebe mir zum Herzen kam,
Und warum ich ihr nicht lange
Schon den bitteren Stachel nahm?

Sprich, warum mit Geisterschnelle
Wohl der Wind die Flügel rührt,
Und woher die süße Quelle
Die verborgnen Wasser führt?

Banne du auf seiner Fährte
Mir den Wind in vollem Lauf!
Halte mit der Zaubergerte
Du die süßen Quellen auf!

Fußreise

Am frischgeschnittenen Wanderstab,
Wenn ich in der Frühe
So durch die Wälder ziehe,
Hügel auf und ab:
Dann, wie's Vöglein im Laube
Singet und sich rührt,
Oder wie die goldne Traube
Wonnegeister spürt
In der ersten Morgensonne;
So fühlt auch mein alter, lieber
Adam Herbst- und Frühlingsfieber,
Gottbeherzte,
Nie verscherzte
Erstlings-Paradieseswonne.

The sleeping Christ-child

Son of the Virgin, Heavenly Child!
Asleep on the ground, on the wood of suffering,
Which the pious painter, in meaningful play,
Has laid beneath Thy gentle dreams;
O flower, still the glory of God the Father,
Though still hidden in the dark bud!
Ah, if one could see what pictures,
Behind this brow and these dark
Lashes, are reflected in gentle succession!

Question and answer

You ask me where it came from,
This timid love that entered my heart
And why I did not long ago
Draw its bitter sting?

Tell me, why with ghostly speed
The wind whirrs its wings,
And from where the sweet spring
Draws its hidden waters?

You might as well try to halt
The wind in full career!
Or conjure with a magic wand
The sweet springs to be still!

A journey on foot

When, with a freshly cut stick,
I set off early like this,
Through the woods
And over the hills:
Then, as the bird in the branches
Sings and stirs,
Or as the golden cluster of grapes
Feels the rapture
Of the early morning sun:
So too my dear old Adam
Feels Autumn and Spring fever,
The God-inspired,
Never forfeited
Primal bliss of paradise.



Also bist du nicht so schlimm, o alter
Adam, wie die strengen Lehrer sagen;
Liebst und lobst du immer doch,
Singst und preisest immer noch,
Wie an ewig neuen Schöpfungstagen,
Deinen lieben Schöpfer und Erhalter.

Möcht es dieser geben,
Und mein ganzes Leben
Wär im leichten Wanderschweiße
Eine solche Morgenreise!

In der Frühe

Kein Schlaf noch kühlt das Auge mir,
Dort gehet schon der Tag herfür
An meinem Kammerfenster.
Es wühlet mein verstörter Sinn
Noch zwischen Zweifeln her und hin
Und schafftet Nachtgespenster.
– Ängste, quäle
Dich nicht länger, meine Seele!
Freu' dich! Schon sind da und dorten
Morgenglocken wach geworden.

Im Frühling

Hier lieg ich auf dem Frühlingshügel:
Die Wolke wird mein Flügel,
Ein Vogel fliegt mir voraus.
Ach, sag mir, alleinige Liebe,
Wo du bleibst, daß ich bei dir bliebe!
Doch du und die Lüfte, ihr habt kein Haus.
Der Sonnenblume gleich steht mein Gemüte
 offen,
Sehnend,
Sich dehnend
In Lieben und Hoffen.
Frühling, was bist du gewillt?
Wann werd ich gestillt?

So you are not as bad, old
Adam, as strict teachers say:
You still love and extol,
Still sing and praise,
As if Creation were forever new,
Your dear Maker and preserver.

If only He would grant it,
My whole life
Would be, gently perspiring
Just such a morning journey!

Early morning

Still no sleep cools my eyes,
The day's already dawning there
At my bedroom window.
My troubled mind still races on,
Torn by doubts to and fro,
Creating night phantoms.
– Frighten, torment
Yourself no more, my soul!
Rejoice! Already here and there
Morning bells have woken.

In spring

Here I lie on the springtime hill:
The clouds becomes my wings,
A bird flies on ahead of me.
Ah, tell me, one-and-only love,
Where you are, that I might be with you!
But you and the breezes, you have no home.
Like a sunflower my soul has
 opened,
Yearning,
Expanding
In love and hope.
Spring, what is it you want?
When shall I be stilled?



<p>Die Wolke seh ich wandeln und den Fluß, Es dringt der Sonne goldner Kuß Mir tief bis ins Geblüt hinein; Die Augen, wunderbar berauschet, Tun, als schliefen sie ein, Nur noch das Ohr dem Ton der Biene lauschet. Ich denke dies und denke das, Ich sehne mich und weiß nicht recht nach was: Halb ist es Lust, halb ist es Klage; Mein Herz, o sage, Was webst du für Erinnerung In golden grüner Zweige Dämmerung? – Alte unnennbare Tage!</p>	<p>I see the clouds drift by, the river too; The sun kisses its golden glow Deep into my veins; My eyes, wondrously enchanted, Close, as if in sleep, Only my ears still harken to the humming bee. I muse on this, I muse on that, I yearn, and yet for what I cannot say: It is half joy, half lament; Tell me, O heart, What memories you weave Into the twilit green and golden leaves? – Past, unmentionable days!</p>
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Lied eines Verliebten

In aller Früh, ach, lang vor Tag,
 Weckt mich mein Herz, an dich zu denken,
 Da doch gesunde Jugend schlafen mag.

Hell ist mein Aug um Mitternacht,
 Heller als frühe Morgenglocken:
 Wann hättest du je am Tage mein gedacht?

Wär ich ein Fischer, stünd ich auf,
 Trüge mein Netz hinab zum Fluße,
 Trüg' herzlich froh die Fische zum Verkauf.

In der Mühle, bei Licht, der Müllerknecht
 Tummelt sich, alle Gänge klappern;
 So rüstig Treiben wär mir eben recht!

Weh! aber ich! o armer Tropf!
 Muß auf dem Lager mich müßig grämen,
 Ein ungebärdig Mutterkind im Kopf.

Lebe wohl

„Lebe wohl!“ – Du fühlst nicht,
 Was es heißt, dies Wort der Schmerzen;
 Mit getrostem Angesicht
 Sagtest du's und leichtem Herzen.

Lebe wohl! – Ach! tausendmal
 Hab ich mir es vorgesprochen,
 Und in nimmersatter Qual
 Mir das Herz damit gebrochen.

A lover's song

At first dawn, ah! long before day,
 My heart wakes me to think of you;
 When healthy lads would love to sleep.

My eyes are bright at midnight,
 Brighter than early morning bells:
 Did you ever think of me by day?

If I were a fisherman, I'd get up,
 Carry my net down to the river,
 Gladly carry the fish to market.

The miller's lad, at first light,
 Is hard at work, the machinery clatters;
 Such hearty work would suit me well!

But I, alas, poor wretch,
 Must lie idly grieving on my bed,
 Obsessed with that unruly girl!

Farewell

'Farewell!' – You do not feel
 What it means, this word of pain;
 With hopeful countenance
 You said it, and a light heart.

Farewell! – Ah, a thousand times
 I have uttered it aloud,
 And with never-ending anguish
 Have broken my heart in doing so.



An die Geliebte

Wenn ich, von deinem Anschauen tief gestillt,
Mich stumm an deinem heiligen Wert
vergnüge,

Dann hör ich recht die leisen Atemzüge
Des Engels, welcher sich in dir verhüllt,

Und ein erstaunt, ein fragend Lächeln quillt
Auf meinem Mund, ob mich kein Traum
betrüge,

Daß nun in dir, zu ewiger Genüge,
Mein kühnster Wunsch, mein ein'zger, sich
erfüllt?

Von Tiefe dann zu Tiefen stürzt mein Sinn,
Ich höre aus der Gottheit nächtger Ferne
Die Quellen des Geschicks melodisch
rauschen.

Betäubt kehr ich den Blick nach oben hin,
Zum Himmel auf – da lächeln alle Sterne;
Ich kniee, ihrem Lichtgesang zu lauschen.

Nimmersatte Liebe

So ist die Lieb! So ist die Lieb!
Mit Küssen nicht zu stillen:
Wer ist der Tor und will ein Sieb
Mit eitel Wasser füllen?
Und schöpfst du an die tausend Jahr,
Und küssest ewig, ewig gar,
Du tust ihr nie zu Willen.

Die Lieb, die Lieb hat alle Stund
Neu wunderbarlich Gelüsten;
Wir bissen uns die Lippen wund,
Da wir uns heute küßten.
Das Mädchen hielt in guter Ruh,
Wie's Lämmlein unterm Messer;
Ihr Auge bat: "Nur immer zu!
Je weher, desto besser!"

So ist die Lieb! und war auch so,
Wie lang es Liebe gibt,
Und anders war Herr Salomo,
Der Weise, nicht verliebt.

To the beloved

When I, deeply calmed at beholding you,
Take silent delight in your sacred
worth,

Then I truly hear the gentle breathing
Of that angel concealed within you,

And an amazed, a questioning smile
Rises to my lips: does not a dream deceive
me,

Now that in you, to my eternal joy,
My boldest, my only wish is being
fulfilled?

My soul then plunges from depth to depth,
From the dark distances of Godhead I hear
The springs of fate ripple in
melody.

Dazed, I raise my eyes
To heaven – where all the stars are smiling;
I kneel to listen to their song of light.

Insatiable love

Such is love! Such is love!
Not to be quieted with kisses:
What fool would wish to fill a sieve
With nothing else but water?
And were you to draw water for a thousand years,
And were you to kiss for ever and ever,
You'd never satisfy love.

Love, love, has every hour
New and strange desires;
We bit until our lips were sore,
When we kissed today.
The girl kept nicely quiet and still,
Like a lamb beneath the knife;
Her eyes pleaded: 'Go on, go on!
The more it hurts the better!'

Such is love, and has been so
As long as love's existed,
And wise old Solomon himself
Was no differently in love.



Elfenlied

Bei Nacht im Dorf der Wächter rief:
„Elfe!“

Ein ganz kleines Elfchen im Walde schlief –
Wohl um die Elfe –

Und meint, es rief ihm aus dem Tal
Bei seinem Namen die Nachtigall,
Oder Silpelit hätt ihm gerufen.
Reibt sich der Elf die Augen aus,
Begibt sich vor sein Schneckenhaus,
Und ist als wie ein trunken Mann,
Sein Schläflein war nicht voll getan,
Und humpelt also tippe tapp
Durchs Haselholz ins Tal hinab,
Schlupft an der Mauer hin so dicht,
Da sitzt der Glühwurm, Licht an Licht.
"Was sind das helle Fensterlein?
Da drin wird eine Hochzeit sein:
Die Kleinen sitzen beim Mahle
Und treibens in dem Saale;
Da guck ich wohl ein wenig 'nein!"
- Pfu!, stößt den Kopf an hartenStein!
Elfe, gelt, du hast genug?
Gukuk! Gukuk!

Gebet

Herr! schicke, was du willst,
Ein Liebes oder Leides;
Ich bin vergnügt, daß beides
Aus deinen Händen quillt.

Wollest mit Freuden
Und wollest mit Leiden
Mich nicht überschütten!
Doch in der Mitten
Liegt holdes Bescheiden.

An den Schlaf

Schlaf! süßer Schlaf! obwohl dem Tod wie
du nichts gleicht,
Auf diesem Lager doch willkommen heiß
ich dich!
Denn ohne Leben so, wie lieblich lebt es sich!
So weit vom Sterben, ah, wie stirbt es sich
so leicht!

Elf-song

The village watch cried out at night:
'Eleven!'

An elfin elf was asleep in the wood –
Just at eleven –

And thinks the nightingale was calling
Him by name from the valley.
Or Silpelit had sent for him.
The elf rubs his eyes,
Steps from his snail-shell home,
Looking like a drunken man,
Not having slept his fill,
And hobbles down, tippety tap,
Through the hazels to the valley,
Slips right up against the wall,
Where the glow-worm sits, shining bright.
'What bright windows are these?
There must be a wedding inside:
The little folk are sitting at the feast
And skipping round the ballroom;
I'll take a little peek inside!'
Shame! he hits his head on the hard stone!
Elf, don't you think you've had enough?
Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

Prayer

Lord, send what Thou wilt,
Pleasure or pain;
I am content that both
Flow from Thy hands.

Do not, I beseech Thee
Overwhelm me
With joy or suffering!
But midway between
Lies blessed moderation.

To sleep

Sleep! sweet sleep! though nothing so resembles
death as you,
I bid you welcome to this
couch!
For thus without life, how sweet it is to live!
So far from dying, ah, how easy it is
to die!



Er ists

Frühling läßt sein blaues Band
Wieder flattern durch die Lüfte;
Süße, wohlbekannte Düfte
Streifen ahnungsvoll das Land.
Veilchen träumen schon,
Wollen balde kommen.
– Horch, von fern ein leiser Harfenton!
Frühling, ja du bist!
Dich hab ich vernommen!

Zur Warnung

Einmal nach einer lustigen Nacht
War ich am Morgen seltsam aufgewacht:
Durst, Wasserscheu, ungleich Geblüt;
Dabei gerührt und weichlich im Gemüt,
Beinah poetisch, ja, ich bat die Muse um
ein Lied.

Sie, mit verstelltem Pathos, spottet' mein,
Gab mir den schnöden Bafel ein:

*„Es schlägt eine Nachtigall
Am Wasserfall;
Und ein Vogel ebenfalls,
Der schreibt sich Wendehals,
Johann Jakob Wendehals;
Der tut tanzen
Bei den Pflanzen
Obbemeld'ten Wasserfalls.“*

So ging es fort; mir wurde immer bänger.
Jetzt sprang ich auf: zum Wein! Der war
denn auch mein Retter.
– Merkts euch, ihr tränenreichen Sänger,
Im Katzenjammer ruft man keine Götter!

Bei einer Trauung

Vor lauter hochadligen Zeugen
Kopuliert man ihrer Zwei;
Die Orgel hängt voll Geigen,
Der Himmel nicht, mein' Treu!

Seht doch, sie weint ja greulich,
Er macht ein Gesicht abscheulich!
Denn leider freilich, freilich,
Keine Lieb ist nicht dabei.

Spring is here

Spring sends its blue banner
Fluttering on the breeze again;
Sweet, well-remembered scents
Drift propitiously across the land.
Violets dream already,
Will soon begin to bloom.
– Listen, the soft sound of a distant harp!
Spring, that must be you!
It's you I've heard!

By way of warning

Once, after a convivial night,
I woke in the morning, feeling odd:
Thirst – but not for water – unsteady pulse,
Emotional and sentimental,
Almost poetic, yes, I asked my Muse for
a song.

With feigned pathos she mocked me,
served up this vile doggerel:

*'Nightingale doth call
by waterfall;
another bird does the same –
Wryneck is his name,
Johann Jakob Wryneck;
who doth dance
by the plants
of said waterfall –'*

And so it went on; I grew ever uneasier.
Now I leapt up: Wine! That was my
salvation.
– Mark well, you weepy bards,
Call not on the gods, when you're hung-over!

At a wedding

Before exclusively highborn witnesses,
Two exclusive people are being wed;
The organ pours forth joyful music,
But there'll be no joy in heaven, I vow!

Just look, she's crying her eyes out,
He's making a dreadful face!
For I'm very very sorry to say,
That love is wholly absent.



Begegnung

Was doch heut nacht ein Sturm gewesen,
Bis erst der Morgen sich geregt!
Wie hat der ungebetne Besen
Kamin und Gassen ausgefegt!

Da kommt ein Mädchen schon die Straßen,
Das halb verschüchtert um sich sieht;
Wie Rosen, die der Wind zerblasen,
So unstet ihr Gesichtchen glüht.

Ein schöner Bursch tritt ihr entgegen,
Er will ihr voll Entzücken nahn:
Wie sehn sich freudig und verlegen
Die ungewohnten Schelme an!

Er scheint zu fragen, ob das Liebchen
Die Zöpfe schon zurecht gemacht,
Die heute nacht im offenen Stübchen
Ein Sturm in Unordnung gebracht.

Der Bursche träumt noch von den Küssen,
Die ihm das süße Kind getauscht,
Er steht, von Anmut hingerissen,
Derweil sie um die Ecke rauscht.

encore

Selbstgeständnis

Ich bin meiner Mutter einzig Kind,
Und weil die andern ausblieben sind,
– Was weiß ich, wieviel, die sechs
oder sieben, –
Ist eben alles an mir hängen blieben;
Ich hab' müssen die Liebe, die Treue, die Güte
Für ein ganz halb Dutzend allein aufessen;
dozen;
Ich will's mein Lebtag nicht vergessen.
Es hätte mir aber noch wohl mögen frommen,
Hätt' ich auch nur Schläg' für sechse
bekommen!

Encounter

What a storm there was last night,
It raged until this morning dawned!
How that uninvited broom
Swept the streets and chimneys clean!

Here comes a girl along the street,
Glancing half bashfully about her;
Like roses the wind has scattered,
Her pretty face keeps changing colour.

A handsome lad steps up to meet her,
Approaches her full of bliss,
How joyfully and awkwardly
Those novice rascals exchange looks!

He seems to ask if his sweetheart
Has tidied up her plaited locks,
That last night a storm dishevelled
In her gaping wide room.

The lad's still dreaming of the kisses
The sweet child exchanged with him,
He stands enraptured by her charm,
As she whisks round the corner.

Self-confession

I am my mother's only child,
And since the others failed to appear
– Who knows how many, six
or seven –
Everything had to centre on me;
I've had to devour all by myself
The love, loyalty and kindness for a full half-
dozen;
I'll never forget it, as long as I live.
I dare say it would have done me no harm,
If I'd been whipped for all six as well!

All translations by Richard Stokes from *The Book of Lieder* published by Faber & Faber, with thanks to George Bird, co-author of the *Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder* published by Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1976.

