

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

Songs of Travel

The Vagabond

Give to me the life I love,
Let the lave go by me,
Give the jolly heaven above
And the byway nigh me.
Bed in the bush with stars to see,
Bread I dip in the river -
There's the life for a man like me,
There's the life for ever.

Let the blow fall soon or late,
Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around
And the road before me.
Wealth I seek not, hope nor love,
Nor a friend to know me;
All I seek, the heaven above
And the road below me.

Or let autumn fall on me
Where afield I linger,
Silencing the bird on tree,
Biting the blue finger.
White as meal the frosty field -
Warm the fireside haven -
Not to autumn will I yield,
Not to winter even!

Let the blow fall soon or late,
Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around,
And the road before me.
Wealth I ask not, hope nor love,
Nor a friend to know me;
All I ask, the heaven above
And the road below me.

Let Beauty awake

Let Beauty awake in the morn from beautiful dreams,
Beauty awake from rest!
Let Beauty awake
For Beauty's sake
In the hour when the birds awake in the brake
And the stars are bright in the west!

Let Beauty awake in the eve from the slumber of day,
Awake in the crimson eve!
In the day's dusk end
When the shades ascend,
Let her wake to the kiss of a tender friend,
To render again and receive!

The roadside fire

I will make you brooches and toys for your delight
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night,
I will make a palace fit for you and me
Of green days in forests, and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom;
And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near,
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear!
That only I remember, that only you admire,
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

Whither must I wander?

Home no more home to me, whither must I wander?
Hunger my driver, I go where I must.
Cold blows the winter wind over hill and heather:
Thick drives the rain and my roof is in the dust.

Loved of wise men was the shade of my roof-tree,
The true word of welcome was spoken in the door -
Dear days of old with the faces in the firelight,
Kind folks of old, you come again no more.

Home was home then, my dear, full of kindly faces,
Home was home then, my dear, happy for the child.
Fire and the windows bright glittered on the moorland;
Song, tuneful song, built a palace in the wild.

Now when day dawns on the brow of the moorland,
Lone stands the house, and the chimney-stone is cold.
Lone let it stand, now the friends are all departed,
The kind hearts, the true hearts, that loved the place of old.

Spring shall come, come again, calling up the moorfowl,
Spring shall bring the sun and rain, bring the bees and flowers;
Red shall the heather bloom over hill and valley,
Soft flow the stream through the even-flowing hours.

Fair the day shine as it shone on my childhood -
Fair shine the day on the house with open door;
Birds come and cry there and twitter in the chimney -
But I go for ever and come again no more.

Bright is the Ring of Words

Bright is the ring of words
When the right man rings them,
Fair the fall of songs
When the singer sings them,
Still they are carolled and said -
On wings they are carried -
After the singer is dead
And the maker buried.

Low as the singer lies
In the field of heather,
Songs of his fashion bring
The swains together.
And when the west is red
With the sunset embers,
The lover lingers and sings
And the maid remembers.

Maude Valérie White (1855-1937)
W.E. Henley (1849-1903)

Two Songs (1900)

Last Year

The spring, my dear,
Is no longer spring.
Does the blackbird sing
What he sang last year?
Are the skies the old
Immemorial blue?
Or am I, or are you,
Grown cold?
Though life be change,
It is hard to bear
When the old sweet air
Sounds forced and strange.
To be out of tune,
Plain You and I . . .
It were better to die,
And soon!

The Fifes of June

The ways are green with the gladdening sheen
Of the young year's fairest daughter.
O, the shadows that fleet o'er the springing wheat!
O, the magic of running water!
The spirit of spring is in every thing,
The banners of spring are streaming,
We march to a tune from the fifes of June,
And life's a dream worth dreaming.

It's all very well to sit and spell
At the lesson there's no gainsaying;
But what the deuce are wont and use
When the whole mad world's a-maying?
When the meadow glows, and the orchard snows,
And the air's with love-motes teeming,
When fancies break, and the senses wake,
O, life's a dream worth dreaming!

Charles Gounod (1818-1893)

Three Songs

If Thou art sleeping, maiden

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

If thou art sleeping, maiden,
Awake, and open thy door;
'Tis the break of day
And we must away
O'er meadow and mount and moor.
Wait not to find thy slippers,
But, come with thy naked feet;
We shall have to pass
Through the dewy grass
And waters wide and fleet.

Beware! (1872)

- Longfellow

I know a maiden fair to see,
Take care!
She can both false and friendly be,
Beware!
Trust her not,
She is fooling thee!
She has two eyes, so soft and brown,
Take care!
She gives a side-glance and looks down,
Beware!
Trust her not,
She is fooling thee!
And she has hair of a golden hue,
Take care!
And what she says, it is not true,
Beware!
Trust her not,
She is fooling thee!

Maid of Athens (1872)

- Lord Byron (1788-1824)

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh give me back my heart.
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest.
Hear my vow before I go,
Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

(Zoi mou, zas agapo: Zoë, my life, I love you.)

By those tresses unconfined,
Woo'd by each Aegean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

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By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By Love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens, I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istamboul,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Cécil Chaminade (1857-1944)
Paul-Armand Silvestre (1837-1901)

Two Songs

Fleur jetée

Emporte ma folie
Au gré du vent,
Fleur en chantant cueillie
Et jetée en rêvant,
- Emporte ma folie
Au gré du vent:

Comme la fleur fauchée
Périt l'amour:
La main qui t'a touchée
Fuit ma main sans retour.
- Comme la fleur fauchée
Périt l'amour.

Que le vent qui te sèche
O pauvre fleur,
Tout à l'heure si fraîche
Et demain sans couleur,
- Que le vent qui te sèche,
Sèche mon coeur!

Discarded Flower

Take away my madness
At the mercy of the wind,
Flower picked while singing
And thrown away in a dream,
- Take away my madness
At the mercy of the wind:
Like the severed flower
Love perishes:
The hand that touched you
Escapes my hand, never to return.
- Like the severed flower
Love perishes.

May the wind that dries you out
O poor flower,
Just now so fresh
And tomorrow colorless,
- May the wind that dries you out,
Dry my heart!

N'est-ce pas?

N'est-ce pas que la vie est triste
Et que les destins sont méchants?
Et, qu'hormis la douceur des chants,
Hormis nos beaux rêves d'artiste,
Ici-bas rien de bon n'existe?

N'est-ce pas que tout n'est que leurre
Aux espoirs qui nous ont charmés,
Seuils d'or des paradis fermés,
Amours furtifs qu'emporte l'heure
Et qu'éternellement l'on pleure?

Si la douceur nous est donnée
De suivre le même chemin
Ensemble, la main dans la main,
Et l'âme à l'âme abandonnée,
N'accusons pas la destinée!

Isn't it true?

Isn't it true that life is sad
And that destiny is wicked?
And that, apart from the sweetness of the songs,
Apart from our beautiful dreams as artists,
Down here nothing good exists?

Isn't it true that everything is just a decoy
For the aspirations that have charmed us,
Golden thresholds of paradise closed,
Furtive love that carries time away
And we cry eternally?

If sweetness is given to us
To follow the same path
Together, hand in hand,
And souls abandoned in each other,
We must not blame destiny!

Translated by Tyler Duncan

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)
Eduard Mörike (1804-1875)

Three Lieder

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 hätt'st 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.

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.

Song of the Smitten

In the very early morning, oh, long before dawn,
My heart wakes me to think of you,
When healthy youth should be sleeping.

Bright is my eye about midnight,
Brighter than the morning bells:
When have you ever thought of me during the day?

If I were a fisherman, I would get up,
Drag my net down to the river,
Happily carry the fish to market.
In the mill, at dawn, the miller's boy
is busy at work, all the gears clatter;
That blue-collar work would suit me just fine!

I, alas, O poor fool!
Must languish needlessly on the chez,
nothing but an unruly mama's boy.

At a wedding

In front of the crème de la crème of society
A couple is joined together;
The organ has pulled out all the stops,
Heaven has not, My goodness!

Hey look, she is weeping dreadfully,
He makes a gruesome face!
For alas, indeed, alas,
Love is nowhere to be found.

Der Jäger

Drei Tage Regen fort und fort,
Kein Sonnenschein zur Stunde;
Drei Tage lang kein gutes Wort
Aus meiner Liebsten Munde!

Sie trutzt mit mir und ich mit ihr,
So hat sie's haben wollen;
Mir aber nagts am Herzen hier,
Das Schmollen und das Grollen.

Willkommen denn, des Jägers Lust,
Gewittersturm und Regen!
Fest zugeknöpft die heisse Brust,
Und jauchzend euch entgegen!

Nun sitzt sie wohl daheim und lacht
Und scherzt mit den Geschwistern;
Ich höre in des Waldes Nacht
Die alten Blätter flüstern.

Nun sitzt sie wohl und weinet laut
Im Kämmerlein, in Sorgen;
Mir ist es wie dem Wilde traut,
In Finsternis geborgen.

Kein Hirsch und Rehlein überall!
Ein Schuss zum Zeitvertreibe!
Gesunder Knall und Widerhall
Erfrischt das Mark im Leibe. –

Doch wie der Donner nun verhallt
In Tälern, durch die Runde,
Ein plötzlich Weh mich überwallt,
Mir sinkt das Herz zu Grunde.

Sie trutzt mit mir und ich mit ihr,
So hat sie's haben wollen,
Mir aber frisst am Herzen hier,
Das Schmollen und das Grollen.

Und auf! und nach der Liebsten Haus!
Und sie gefasst ums Mieder!
„Drück mir die nassen Locken aus,
Und küss und hab mich wieder!“

The Hunter

Three days of rain and more rain,
No sunshine for hours;
Three long days and not a single kind word
From my beloved's lips!

She's stubborn, and so am I
That's the way she wanted it;
But here something gnaws at my heart,
The pouting and the sulking.

A welcome then to the hunter's spirit,
Thunderstorms and rain!
My burning heart is tightly buttoned up,
To jubilantly face you!

Now she's probably sitting at home laughing
And joking with her siblings;
I, on the other hand, hear in the dark forest night
The whispering of the old leaves.

Now she meekly sits, crying out loudly
In her little room, in distress;
I walk as the beasts do,
Concealed in darkness.

Not a stag, not a deer in sight!
A gunshot to pass the time!
A healthy blast and it's echo
Revitalizes the marrow in the body.

But how the thunder dies away
through the valleys,
A sudden ache overcomes me,
My heart sinks to the depths.

She's stubborn, and so am I,
That's the way she wanted it,
But here something devours my heart,
The pouting and the sulking.

So off to the beloved's house!
Grip her tightly around the bodice!
“Wring out my wet locks,
And kiss me and take me back!”

Translated by Tyler Duncan

