

**Sweeter Than Roses**

Text: Anonymous

Sweeter than roses, or cool evening breeze  
On a warm flowery shore, was the dear kiss,  
First trembling made me freeze,  
Then shot like fire all o'er.  
What magic has victorious love!  
For all I touch or see since that dear kiss,  
I hourly prove, all is love to me

**Strike the Viol**

Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

Strike the Viol, touch the Lute;  
Wake the Harp, inspire the Flute:  
Sing your Patronesse's Praise,  
Sing, in cheerful and harmonious Lays.

**Music for a While**

John Dryden (1631-1700)

Music for a while  
Shall all your cares beguile:  
Wond'ring how your pains were eas'd  
And disdain'g to be pleas'd  
Till Alecto free the dead  
From their eternal bands,  
Till the snakes drop from her head,  
And the whip from out her hands.

**If Music Be the Food of Love**

Henry Heveningham (1651-1700)

If music be the food of love,  
Sing on till I am fill'd with joy;  
For then my list'ning soul you move  
To pleasures that can never cloy.  
Your eyes, your mien, your tongue declare  
That you are music ev'rywhere.

Pleasures invade both eye and ear,  
So fierce the transports are, they wound,  
And all my senses feasted are,  
Tho' yet the treat is only sound,  
Sure I must perish by your charms,  
Unless you save me in your arms.

### **Auf dem Wasser zu Singen**

Friedrich Leopold, Graf zu Stolberg-Stolberg (1750-1819)

Translation: Laura Strickling

Mitten im Schimmer der spiegelnden Wellen  
Gleitet, wie Schwäne, der wankende Kahn;  
Ach, auf der Freude sanftschimmernden Wellen  
Gleitet die Seele dahin wie der Kahn;  
Denn von dem Himmel herab auf die Wellen  
Tanzet das Abendroth rund um den Kahn.

Ueber den Wipfeln des westlichen Haines  
Winket uns freundlich der röthliche Schein;  
Unter den Zweigen des östlichen Haines  
Säuselt der Kalmus im röthlichen Schein;  
Freude des Himmels und Ruhe des Haines  
Athmet die Seel' im erröthenden Schein.

Ach, es entschwindet mit thauigem Flügel  
Mir auf den wiegenden Wellen die Zeit.  
Morgen entschwinde mit schimmerndem Flügel  
Wieder wie gestern und heute die Zeit,  
Bis ich auf höherem strahlenden Flügel  
Selber entschwinde der wechselnden Zeit.

In the middle of the shimmer of the reflecting waves  
Glides, like swans, the swaying boat;  
Oh, on the gently shimmering waves of joy  
Glides the soul like the boat;  
Then from heavens down onto the waves  
Dances the evening red around the boat.

Above the treetops of the western grove  
The reddish glow beckons us kindly;  
Under the branches of the eastern grove  
The reeds rustle in the reddish glow;  
Joy of heaven and rest of the grove  
Breathes the soul in the blushing glow.

Oh, time disappears on a thawing wing  
For me on the swaying waves.  
Tomorrow it will vanish with shimmering wings  
Again, like yesterday and today,  
Until I am on higher shining wings  
Vanishing to escape the changing time.

### **Du bist die Ruh**

You Are Peace

Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866)

Translation: Laura Strickling

Du bist die Ruh,  
Der Friede mild,  
Die Sehnsucht du,  
Und was sie stillt.

Ich weihe dir  
Voll und Schmerz  
Zur Wohnung hier  
Mein Aug' und Herz.

Kehr' ein bei mir,  
Und schließe du  
Still hinter dir  
Die Pforten zu.

Treib andern Schmerz  
Aus dieser Brust.  
Voll sey dies Herz  
Von deiner Lust.

Dies Augenzelt  
Von deinem Glanz  
Allein erhellt,  
O füll' es ganz.

You are peace,  
The peace mild,  
You are longing  
And what succors it.

I dedicate to you  
Full of pleasure and pain  
A dwelling here  
My eyes and heart.

Come to me  
And close  
Quietly behind you  
Close the gates.

Drive other pain  
From my breast.  
Fill this heart  
With your joy.

This eye  
From your shine  
Alone is illuminated  
O fill it all.

## Nacht und Träume

Night and Dreams

Matthäus Kasimir von Collin (1779-1824)

Translation: Laura Strickling

Heil'ge Nacht, du sinkest nieder;  
Nieder wallen auch die Träume,  
Wie dein Licht durch diese Bäume,  
Lieblich durch der Menschen Brust;  
Die belauschen sie mit Lust,  
Rufen, wenn der Tag erwacht:  
Kehre wieder heil'ge Nacht,  
Holde Träume kehret wieder.

Holy night, you sink down;  
Dreams also drift down  
Like your moonlight through these trees,  
Lovely through the hearts of men;  
They listen eagerly  
Call when day awakens:  
Return, holy night!  
Sweet dreams, return!

## Du liebst mich nicht

You Do Not Love Me

August von Platen-Hallermünde (1796-1835)

Translation: Laura Strickling

Mein Herz ist zerrissen, du liebst mich nicht!  
Du liebest mich's wissen, du liebst mich nicht!  
Wiewol ich dir flehend und werbend erschien,  
Und liebebeflissen, du liebst mich nicht!  
Du hast es gesprochen, mit Worten gesagt,  
Mit allzugewissen, du liebst mich nicht!  
So soll ich die Sterne, so soll ich den Mond,  
Die Sonne vermissen? du liebst mich nicht!  
Was blüht mir die Rose? was blüht der Jasmin?  
Was blühn die Narzissen? du liebst mich nicht!

My heart is torn asunder, you don't love me!  
You let me know you don't love me!  
Though I appeared to you pleading and begging,  
And devoted, you don't love me!  
You spoke it, with words you said it,  
To be certain, you don't love me!  
So should I miss the stars, so should I miss the moon  
Miss the sun? You do not love me!  
What does the blooming rose mean to me? The jasmine?  
What the blooms of the narcissus? You do not love me!

## Viola

Pansy

Based on a text by Franz Adolf Friedrich von Schober (1796 - 1882)

from Gedichte, in *Frühlingslieder*, no. 5

Translation: Laura Strickling

Schneeglöcklein, o Schneeglöcklein!  
In den Auen läutest du,  
Läutest in dem stillen Hain,  
Läute immer, läute zu!

Denn du kündest frohe Zeit,  
Frühling naht, der Bräutigam,  
Kommt mit Sieg vom Winterstreit,  
Dem er seine Eiswehr nahm.

Darum schwingt der goldne Stift,  
Daß dein Silberhelm erschallt,  
Und dein liebliches Gedüft  
Leis', wie Schmeichelruf entwallt:

Daß die Blumen in der Erd  
Steigen aus dem düstern Nest  
Und des Bräutigams sich werth  
Schmücken zu dem Hochzeitsfest.

Snowdrop, o snowdrop!  
You ring your bell in the meadows,  
Ring in the silent grove,  
Ring always, ring out!

You proclaim happy times,  
Spring is coming, the bridegroom,  
Comes victoriously from the winter battle,  
From which he took icy weapons.

Thus the golden wand waves  
So that your silver helmet resounds,  
And your lovely fragrance  
Softly, like a flattering call:

That the flowers in the earth  
Bloom out of their gloomy nest  
And to be worthy of the bridegroom  
Decorate themselves for the wedding.

Schneeglöcklein, o Schneeglöcklein!  
In den Auen läutest du,  
Läutest in dem stillen Hain,  
Läut' die Blumen aus der Ruh!

Du Viola, zartes Kind,  
Hörst zuerst den Wönnelaut,  
Und sie stehet auf geschwind,  
Schmücket sorglich sich als Braut.

Hüllet sich ins grüne Kleid,  
Nimmt den Mantel sammetblau,  
Nimmt das güldene Geschmeid,  
Und den Diamantenthau.

Eilt dann fort mit mächt'gem Schritt,  
Nur den Freund im treuen Sinn,  
Ganz von Liebesglück durchglüht,  
Sieht nicht her und sieht nicht hin.

Doch ein ängstliches Gefühl  
Ihre kleine Brust durchwallt,  
Denn es ist noch rings so still  
Und die Lüfte wehn noch kalt.

Und sie hemmt den schnellen Lauf,  
Schon bestrahlt von Sonnenschein,  
Doch mit Schrecken blickt sie auf -  
Denn sie stehet ganz allein.

Schwestern nicht - nicht Bräutigam -  
Zugedrungen! und verschmäht!  
Da durchschauert sie die Schaam,  
Fliehet wie vom Sturm geweht,

Fliehet an den fernsten Ort,  
Wo sie Gras und Schatten deckt  
Späht und lauschet immerfort,  
Ob was rauschet und sich regt.

Und gekränkt und getäuscht  
Sitzet sie und schluchzt und weint,  
Von der tiefsten Angst zerfleischt,  
Ob kein Nahender erscheint.

Schneeglöcklein, o Schneeglöcklein!  
In den Auen läutest du,  
Läutest in dem stillen Hain,  
Läut die Schwestern ihr herzu!

Rose nahet, Lilie schwankt,  
Tulp und Hyacinthe schwellt,  
Windling kommt daher gerankt,  
Und Narciß hat sich gesellt.

Als der Frühling nun erscheint  
Und das frohe Fest beginnt,  
Sieht er alle die vereint,  
Und vermißt sein liebstes Kind.

Snowdrop, o snowdrop!  
In the meadows you ring,  
Ring in the silent grove,  
Ring the flowers out of their slumber!

You pansy flower, tender child,  
Hear first the joyous sound,  
And she gets up quickly,  
Adorns herself carefully as a bride.

Wraps herself in a green dress  
Takes a coat of blue velvet,  
Takes her golden jewels,  
And the diamond dew.

Then hurries away with mighty step,  
Only her friend in her faithful thoughts,  
Glowing throughout with love's happiness,  
Does not look here and neither there.

But an anxious feeling  
Fills her little chest,  
Because it's still so quiet all around  
And the air is still cold.

And she slows her quick running,  
In the beautiful rays of sunshine  
But she looks up in fear -  
Because she is standing all alone.

No sisters - no bridegroom -  
Intruded! And spurned!  
Shame shudders through her,  
She flees as if blown by the storm,

Flees to the farthest place,  
Where she is covered by grass and shade  
Always looking and listening,  
If things are rustling and stirring.

And offended and deceived  
She sits and sobs and weeps,  
Torn by the deepest fear,  
Whether anyone is approaching.

Snowdrop, o snowdrop!  
In the meadows you ring,  
Ring in the silent grove,  
Ring to bring her sisters to her!

Rose approaches, lily sways,  
Tulip and hyacinth swell,  
Field grasses come forth in ranks,  
And narcissus joins them.

As Spring now arrives  
And the happy festival begins,  
He sees all of them united,  
And misses his dearest child.

Alle schickt er suchend fort  
Um die Eine, die ihm werth.  
Und sie kommen an den Ort,  
Wo sie einsam sich verzehrt.

Doch es sitzt das liebe Herz  
Stumm und bleich, das Haupt gebückt  
Ach! der Lieb und Sehnsucht Schmerz  
Hat die Zärtliche erdrückt.

Schneeglöcklein, o Schneeglöcklein!  
In den Auen läutest du,  
Läutest in dem stillen Hain,  
Läut, Viola, sanfte Ruh!

### **Olas gigantes**

Giant Waves

from *Rimas*, no. 52

Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer (1836-1870)

Translation: Laura Strickling

Olas gigantes que os rompéis bramando  
En las playas desiertas y remotas,  
Envuelto entre las sábanas de espuma,  
¡Llevadme con vosotras!

Ráfagas de huracán, que arrebatáis  
Del alto bosque las marchitas hojas,  
Arrastrando en el ciego torbellino,  
¡Llevadme con vosotras!

Nubes de tempestad que rompe el rayo  
Y en fuego ornáis las desprendidas orlas,  
Arrebatado entre la niebla oscura,  
¡Llevadme con vosotras!

Llevadme, por piedad, adonde el vértigo  
Con la razón me arranque la memoria.  
¡Por piedad!  
¡Tengo miedo de quedarme  
Con mi dolor a solas!

### **Tu pupila es azul**

Your Eye Is Blue

from *Rimas*, no. 13

Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer (1836-1870)

Translation: Laura Strickling

Tu pupila es azul y cuando ríes,  
Su claridad suave me recuerda  
El trémulo fulgor de la mañana  
Que en el mar se refleja.

Te pupila es azul, y cuando lloras,  
Las transparentes lágrimas en ella  
Se me figuran gotas de rocío  
Sobre una violeta.

He sends everyone away to look  
For the one who is worthy of him.  
And they come to the place,  
Where she pines in loneliness.

But sits the dear heart  
Mute and pale, head bowed  
Oh! The pain of love and longing  
Has the tender one crushed.

Snowdrop, o snowdrop!  
In the meadow you ring,  
Ring in the silent grove,  
Ring, pansy, gentle rest!

Giant waves that break roaring  
on deserted and remote beaches,  
wrapped between the blankets of foam,  
take me with you!

Gusts of hurricane, which snatch  
the withered leaves from the high forest,  
dragging them away in the blind whirlwind,  
take me with you!

Storm clouds broken with rays of light  
and the diffuse edges in fire adorned,  
snatched in the dark fog,  
take me with you!

Take me, for pity's sake, to where the vertigo  
with reason I begin the memory.  
For pity's sake!  
I'm afraid of staying  
with my pain alone!

Your eye is blue and when you laugh  
It's soft clarity reminds me  
Of the trembling glow of the morning  
That is reflected in the sea.

Your eye is blue, and when you cry,  
the transparent tears in it  
seem to me drops of dew  
upon a violet.

Tu pupila es azul, y si en su fondo  
Como un punto de luz radia una idea,  
Me parece en el cielo de la tarde  
¡Una perdida estrella!

Your eye is blue, and in its depths  
a point of light radiates an idea,  
it looks to me like in the sky of the afternoon  
a lost star!

### **Besa el aura**

Kiss of Breeze  
from *Rimas*, no. 9  
Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer (1836-1870)  
Translation: Laura Strickling

Besa el aura que gime blandamente  
las leves ondas que jugando riza;  
el sol besa a la nube en occidente  
y de púrpura y oro la matiza;  
la llama en derredor del tronco ardiente  
por besar a otra llama se desliza;  
y hasta el sauce, inclinándose a su peso,  
al río que le besa vuelve un beso.

Kiss of the breeze that moans softly  
the light waves that play rippling;  
the sun kisses the cloud in the west  
and shades it purple and gold;  
The flame around the burning trunk  
to kiss another flame slides;  
And even the willow, leans its weight  
to the river that kisses it, returning the kiss.

NOTE: Translations for Huang Tzu's Spring Nostalgia are included in the performance video.

### **Prayer**

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

I ask you this:  
Which way to go?  
I ask you this:  
Which sin to bear?  
Which crown to put Upon my hair?  
I do not know,  
Lord God,  
I do not know.

### **Fantasy in Purple**

[Song title: Beat the Drums of Tragedy]  
Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Beat the drums of tragedy for me.  
Beat the drums of tragedy and death.  
And let the choir sing a stormy song  
To drown the rattle of my dying breath.

Beat the drums of tragedy for me,  
And let the white violins whirl thin and slow, But blow one blaring trumpet note of sun  
To go with me  
to the darkness  
Where I go.

### **The Heart of a Woman**

Georgia Douglas Johnson (1880-1966)

The heart of a woman goes forth with the dawn,  
As a lone bird, soft winging, so restlessly on,  
Afar o'er life's turrets and vales does it roam  
In the wake of those echoes the heart calls home.

The heart of a woman falls back with the night,  
And enters some alien cage in its plight,  
And tries to forget it has dreamed of the stars  
While it breaks, breaks, breaks on the sheltering bars.

### **Interim**

Clarissa Scott Delany (1901-1927)

The night was made for rest and sleep,  
For winds that softly sigh;  
It was not made for grief and tears;  
So then why do I cry?  
The wind that blows through leafy trees  
Is soft and warm and sweet;  
For me the night is a gracious cloak  
To hide my soul's defeat.  
Just one dark hour of shaken depths,  
Of bitter black despair-  
Another day will find me brave,  
And not afraid to dare.

### **Sence You Went Away**

James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)

Seems lak to me de stars don't shine so bright,  
Seems lak to me de sun done loss his light,  
Seems lak to me der's nothin' goin' right,  
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me de sky ain't half so blue,  
Seems lak to me dat ev'ything wants you,  
Seems lak to me I don't know what to do,  
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me dat ev'ything is wrong,  
Seems lak to me de day's jes twice as long,  
Seems lak to me de bird's forgot his song,  
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me Ijes can't he'p but sigh,  
Seems lak to me ma th'roat keeps gittin' dry,  
Seems lak to me a tear stays in my eye,  
Sence you went away.

### **Creole Girl**

Leslie Morgan Collins (1914-2014)

When you dance, do you think of Spain,  
Purple skirts and clipping castanets, Creole Girl?

When you laugh, do you think of France,  
Golden wine and mincing minuets, Creole Girl?

When you sing, do you think of young America,  
Grey guns and battling bayonets?

When you cry, do you think of Africa,  
Blue nights and casual canzonets?

When you dance, do you think of Spain,  
Purple skirts and clipping castanets, Creole Girl?

Tom Cipullo - *Of a Certain Age*

### **Magnolia**

Lisel Mueller (1924-2020)

### **There Are Mornings**

Lisel Mueller (1924-2020)

### **Fugitive**

Lisel Mueller (1924-2020)

### **Two Men Loved Me Once**

Judith Baumel (b. 1956)

### **Mary**

Lisel Mueller (1924-2020)

### **The Garden**

Lisel Mueller (1924-2020)

Tonia Ko - *Smoke and Distance*

### **from "Pyrotechnics" by Amy Lowell (1874-1925), 1919**

Our meeting was like the upward swish of a rocket  
In the blue night.  
I do not know when it burst;  
But now I stand gaping,  
In a glory of falling stars.

### **from "Images" by Richard Aldington (1892-1962), 1920**

The blue smoke leaps  
Like swirling clouds of birds vanishing.  
So my love leaps forth toward you,  
Vanishes and is renewed.