

WIGMORE HALL

Monday 12 September 2022
1.00pm

Christoph Prégardien tenor
Michael Gees piano

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Nachtstück D672 (1819)
An mein Herz D860 (1825)
Der Einsame D800 (1825)
Die Mutter Erde D788 (1823)
An den Mond D259 (1815)
Rastlose Liebe D138 (1815)

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Dein blaues Auge hält so still Op. 59 No. 8 (1873)
Von ewiger Liebe Op. 43 No. 1 (1864)
Feldeinsamkeit Op. 86 No. 2 (c.1879)
Wie rafft ich mich auf Op. 32 No. 1 (1864)
Auf dem Kirchhofe Op. 105 No. 4 (c.1888)

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (1883-5)
Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht •
Ging heut' morgen über's Feld •
Ich hab' ein glühend Messer •
Die zwei blauen Augen



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Night is the setting of many of the songs in this afternoon's recital: it is explored not just as a physical phenomenon, but also as a symbol of the ending of love affairs – whether happy or tortured – and as a metaphor for death. 'Nachtstück', composed in 1819, is one of the greatest of **Schubert's** settings of Mayrhofer, who committed suicide by jumping from his office window. The flexibility with which Schubert treats the song's form – from spacious, polyphonic introduction to tender conclusion – allows him to trace every nuance of his friend's text. Whereas the protagonist of 'Nachtstück' anticipates the end of his life, that of 'An mein Herz' recalls the agonies and upheavals of youth, suggested in Schubert's song by the piano's unremitting semiquavers. Like the song that follows, it was composed in 1825; 'Der Einsame', however, conveys a more positive image of both night and solitude, as the piano's repeated ornaments conjure up the cheerful cricket who is the protagonist's only companion. 'Die Mutter Erde' was composed in April 1823, just as Schubert became aware of the seriousness of the medical condition – probably syphilis – that would claim his life three years later: Stolberg's reflections on night and the approach of death draw a particularly personal response in this sombre but beautiful setting. Today's Schubert sequence concludes with two of the 27 Goethe settings that the teenaged composer made in 1815. 'An den Mond' is Schubert's first setting of one of Goethe's most famous poems; if this strophic version does not seek out the text's deeper meanings as overtly as its through-composed successor, it nonetheless hauntingly evokes Goethe's vision of moonlight. 'Rastlose Liebe', meanwhile, brilliantly renders the mixture of ecstasy and pain found in Goethe's text, itself inspired by a burgeoning love affair with a married woman, Charlotte von Stein. This was one of the Goethe songs Schubert wrote out for his friend Josef von Spaun to send to the illustrious poet – sadly Goethe returned the package to Spaun without acknowledgement, and he and Schubert never met.

Although Lieder constitute a relatively small proportion of **Brahms's** output, he returned to the form throughout his long career, and song was the vehicle for some of his most private expressions of emotion. Many of his songs set texts written by friends, such as Klaus Groth, whose description of the torment caused by a woman's beauty in 'Dein blaues Auge hält so still' is poignantly rendered by Brahms. 'Von ewiger Liebe' describes feelings of love stirred during a night-time walk: Brahms's setting clearly distinguishes the discourses of the two lovers, with the man's minor-key warnings about the dangers of disgrace confidently answered by the woman's major-key expression of faith in eternal love. 'Feldeinsamkeit' has an almost hypnotic stillness, thanks to the beautiful, folk-inflected melody, the slow pace of harmonic change and the pianist's repeated left-hand octaves. By contrast, Brahms's depiction of the nocturnal exploration of

Platen's troubled protagonist in 'Wie rafft ich mich auf' is tense and unpredictable. Like 'Von ewiger Liebe', it was composed in 1864, the year in which Agathe von Siebold became a governess in Ireland to escape the painful memories of her separation from the composer, provoking anguish in Brahms that may help account for the impassioned nature of both these songs. 'Auf dem Kirchhofe', composed almost a quarter of a century later in 1888, is no less heartfelt, but here minor-key gloom, appropriate to the depiction of the rainy graveyard, ultimately gives way to fragile hope, as a melody derived from a well-known Protestant chorale anticipates the telling final word: 'Genesen' ('healed').

The texts that **Mahler** himself produced for his first song-cycle, *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, were inspired by his unhappy love affair with Johanna Richter, a singer in the opera house in Kassel where he was musical director between 1883 and 1885. As in Schubert's *Die schöne Mullerin* and *Winterreise*, the arrangement of the songs is designed to chart an emotional journey undertaken by a single protagonist: in Mahler's words, 'the songs are conceived as though a wayfarer, who has undergone a certain experience, is now going out into the world and aimlessly wandering along.' The songs were first composed during Mahler's Kassel years with the piano accompaniment heard today, though there is no record of a public performance until 1896, when the baritone Anton Stermans performed the orchestrated version with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Mahler. By this time, however, two of the melodies had already been heard in orchestral guise, as Mahler used them in his First Symphony, première in Budapest in 1889. The most substantial of these self-borrowings is of 'Ging heut' morgen', which was adapted to form the main theme of the symphony's first movement. The other self-quotation is equally telling, however: the adaptation of 'Die zwei blaue Augen' in the 'funeral march' movement of the symphony as a countermelody to the famous 'Frère Jacques' theme reinforces the (Wagnerian) connection between love and death implicit in both symphony and song-cycle. Two unusual musical features that unite the four songs are worthy of note. Firstly, each finishes in a different key to that in which it began, as if to provide a musical analogy to the 'journeying' described in the text; and secondly, the vocal lines of each song end inconclusively, leaving it to the piano to take over and express what Mahler cannot say – or would find too painful to say – in words. The mood of the cycle is overwhelmingly melancholy, with fleeting glimpses of apparent jollity always undercut by sadness; only in the closing moments of 'Die zwei blaue Augen', as Mahler's protagonist rests under a linden tree during his night-time journey, does he find some tentative consolation.

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Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Nachtstück D672 (1819)

Johann Baptist Mayrhofer

Wenn über Berge sich der
Nebel breitet,
Und Luna mit Gewölken
kämpft,
So nimmt der Alte seine Harfe,
und schreitet,
Und singt waldeinwärts
gedämpft:

„Du heil'ge Nacht!
Bald ist's vollbracht.
Bald schlaf' ich ihn
Den langen Schlummer,
Der mich erlöst
Von allem Kummer.“

Die grünen Bäume rauschen
dann,
Schlaf süß, du guter alter Mann;
Die Gräser lispeln wankend fort,
Wir decken seinen Ruheort;
Und mancher liebe Vogel ruft,
O lass ihn ruh'n in
Rasengruft!“ –

Der Alte horcht, der Alte
schweigt –
Der Tod hat sich zu ihm
geneigt.

An mein Herz D860

(1825)

Ernst Schulze

O Herz, sei endlich stille!
Was schlägst du so unruhvoll?
Es ist ja des Himmels Wille,
Das ich sie lassen soll.

Und gab auch dein junges Leben
Dir nichts als Wahn und
Pein,
Hat's ihr nur Freude gegeben,
So mag's verloren sein.

Und wenn sie auch nie dein
Lieben
Und nie dein' Liebe verstand,
So bist du doch treu
geblieben,
Und Gott hat's droben erkannt.

Wir wollen es mutig ertragen,
So lang nur die Träne noch rinnt,
Und träumen von schöneren
Tagen,
Die lange vorüber sind.

Nocturne

When mist spreads over the
mountains,
and Luna battles with the
clouds,
the old man takes up his harp,
and steps
into the forest, singing
softly:

'O holy night!
Soon it shall be done.
Soon I shall sleep
the long sleep,
that shall free me
from all affliction.'

Then the green trees will
rustle:
sleep well, good old man;
the swaying grass will whisper:
we will cover his resting-place;
and many a sweet bird will call:
O let him rest in his grassy
grave! –

The old man listens, the old
man is silent –
death has inclined towards
him.

To my heart

O heart! Be silent at last!
Why do you beat so restlessly?
For it is Heaven's will
that I should leave her.

Even though your youthful life
gave you nothing but delusion
and pain,
as long as it gave her joy
then no matter if it was lost to you.

And though she never
understood
your loving or your love,
you nevertheless remained
faithful
and God above saw it.

Let us bravely endure
as long as tears still flow,
and dream of fairer
days
long since past.

Und siehst du die Blüten
erscheinen,
Und singen die Vögel umher,
So magst du wohl heimlich
weinen,
Doch klagen sollst du nicht
mehr.

Geh'n doch die ewigen Sterne
Dort oben mit goldenem Licht
Und lächeln so freundlich von
ferne,
Und denken doch unser nicht.

Der Einsame D800 (1825)

Karl Gottlieb Lappe

Wenn meine Grillen schwirren,
Bei Nacht, am spät erwärmten
Herd,
Dann sitz' ich, mit vergnügtem
Sinn,
Vertraulich zu der Flamme hin,
So leicht, so unbeschwert.

Ein trautes stilles
Stündchen
Bleibt man noch gern am
Feuer wach.
Man schürt, wenn sich die
Lohe senkt,
Die Funken auf, und sinnt und
denkt:
Nun abermal ein Tag!

Was Liebes oder Leides
Sein Lauf für uns daher gebracht,
Es geht noch einmal durch den
Sinn;
Allein das Böse wirft man hin.
Es störe nicht die Nacht.

Zu einem frohen Traume
Bereitet man gemach sich zu.
Wenn sorgelos ein holdes Bild
Mit sanfter Lust die Seele füllt,
Ergibt man sich der Ruh.

O wie ich mir gefalle
In meiner stillen Ländlichkeit!
Was in dem Schwarm der
lauten Welt
Das irre Herz gefesselt hält,
Gibt nicht Zufriedenheit.

Zirpt immer, liebe
Heimchen,
In meiner Klausen, eng und klein.
Ich duld' euch gern: ihr stört
mich nicht.
Wann euer Lied das
Schweigen bricht,
Bin ich nicht ganz allein.

When you see the blossoms
appearing,
when the birds sing all around,
then you may weep in
secret
but you should complain no
more.

For the eternal stars above
move with a golden light,
smiling kindly from
afar
and yet with no thought for us.

The recluse

When my crickets chirrup at night
by the late-burning
hearth,
I sit contentedly in my
chair,
confiding to the flame,
so light-heartedly, so at ease.

For one more sweet and
peaceful hour
it's good to linger by the
fire,
stirring the embers when the
blaze dies down,
musing and
thinking:
Well, that's another day!

Whatever joy or sorrow
it has brought us,
runs once more through the
mind;
but the bad is cast aside,
so as not to spoil the night.

We gently prepare ourselves
for pleasant dreams.
When a lovely image fills the soul
with carefree, tender joy,
we succumb to sleep.

Oh, how I love
my quiet rustic life!
What holds the wayward heart
captive in the bustle
of the noisy world,
cannot bring contentment.

Chirp away, friendly house
crickets
in my narrow little room.
I gladly put up with you: you're
no trouble.
When your song breaks the
silence,
I'm no longer all alone.

Die Mutter Erde D788

(1823)

Friedrich Leopold, Graf zu Stolberg-Stolberg

Des Lebens Tag ist schwer
und schwül,
Des Todes Atem leicht und
kühl,
Er wehet freundlich uns hinab
Wie welches Laub ins stille
Grab.

Es scheint der Mond, es fällt
der Tau
Auf's Grab wie auf die
Blumenau;
Auch fällt der Freunde Trän hinein
Erhell't von sanfter Hoffnung
Schein.

Uns sammelt alle, klein und
gross,
Die Mutter Erd' in ihren Schoss;
O sähn wir ihr ins
Angesicht,
Wir scheuten ihren Busen nicht!

An den Mond D259

(1815)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Füllest wieder Busch und Tal
Still mit Nebelglanz,
Lösest endlich auch einmal
Meine Seele ganz;

Breitest über mein Gefild
Lindernd deinen Blick,
Wie des Freundes Auge mild
Über mein Geschick.

Jeden Nachklang fühlt mein Herz
Froh- und trüber Zeit,
Wandle zwischen Freud' und
Schmerz
In der Einsamkeit.

Fliesse, fliesse, lieber Fluss!
Nimmer werd' ich froh,
So verrauschte Scherz und
Kuss,
Und die Treue so.

Ich besass es doch einmal,
Was so köstlich ist!
Dass man doch zu seiner Qual
Nimmer es vergisst!

Rausche, Fluss, das Tal entlang,
Ohne Rast und ohne Ruh,
Rausche, flüstre meinem Sang
Melodien zu,

Mother Earth

Life's day is heavy and
sultry,
the breath of death is light and
cool;
fondly it wafts us down,
like withered leaves, into the
silent grave.

The moon shines, the dew
falls
on the grave as on the flowery
meadow;
the tears of friends also fall,
lit by the gleam of gentle
hope.

Mother Earth gathers us all,
great and small,
in her lap;
if we would only look upon her
face
we should not fear her bosom.

To the moon

Once more you fill wood and vale
silently with radiant mist,
and at last
set my soul quite free;

Soothingly you spread your gaze
over my domain,
like a gentle friend
watching over my fate.

My heart feels every echo
of happy times and sad,
I drift between joy and
pain
in my loneliness.

Flow, flow on, beloved river!
Never shall I be happy,
this was how they streamed
away,
kisses, laughter, faithfulness.

Yet I once possessed
what is so precious!
Ah, the torment
of never forgetting it!

Murmur, river, along the valley,
ever onward without cease,
murmur, whisper for my songs
your melodies,

Wenn du in der Winternacht
Wütend überschwillst,
Oder um die
Frühlingspracht
Junger Knospen quillst.

Selig, wer sich vor der Welt
Ohne Hass verschliesst,
Einen Freund am Busen hält
Und mit dem geniesst,

Was von Menschen nicht gewusst
Oder nicht bedacht,
Durch das Labyrinth der Brust
Wandelt in der Nacht.

Rastlose Liebe D138

(1815)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Dem Schnee, dem Regen,
Dem Wind entgegen,
Im Dampf der Klüfte,
Durch Nebeldüfte,
Immer zu! Immer zu!
Ohne Rast und Ruh!

Lieber durch Leiden
Wollt'ich mich schlagen,
Als so viel Freuden
Des Lebens ertragen.
Alle das Neigen
Von Herzen zu Herzen,
Ach wie so eigen
Schaffet es Schmerzen!

Wie soll ich flieh'n?
Wälderwärts zieh'n?
Alles vergebens!
Krone des Lebens,
Glück ohne Ruh,
Liebe, bist du.

As when on winter nights
you rage and break your banks,
or when you bathe the
springtime splendour
of burgeoning young buds.

Happy are they who, without hate,
withdraw from the world,
holding to their heart one friend
and with him enjoy.

What, unknown to human kind,
or not even pondered,
drifts through the heart's
labyrinth at night.

Restless love

Into snow, into rain,
into wind,
through steaming ravines,
through mist and haze,
on and on!
Without respite!

I'd rather fight
my way through affliction
than endure so many
of life's joys.
All this attraction
of heart to heart,
ah, what special
anguish it brings!

How shall I flee?
Fly to the forest?
All in vain!
Crown of life,
joy without rest –
this, Love, is you.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Dein blaues Auge hält so still Op. 59 No. 8

(1873)

Klaus Groth

Dein blaues Auge hält so still,
Ich blicke bis zum Grund.
Du fragst mich, was ich sehen
will?
Ich sehe mich gesund.

Es brannte mich ein glühend
Paar,
Noch schmerzt das Nachgefühl:
Das deine ist wie See so klar
Und wie ein See so kühl.

Your blue eyes stay so still

Your blue eyes stay so still,
I look into their depths.
You ask me what I seek to
see?
Myself restored to health.

A pair of ardent eyes have
burnt me,
the pain of it still throbs:
your eyes are limpid as a lake,
and like a lake as cool.

Von ewiger Liebe Op. 43 Eternal love

No. 1 (1864)

*Traditional trans. Hoffmann
von Fallersleben*

Dunkel, wie dunkel in Wald und
in Feld!
Abend schon ist es, nun
schweiget die Welt.

Dark, how dark in forest and
field!
Evening already, and the world
is silent.

Nirgend noch Licht und
nirgend noch Rauch,
Ja, und die Lerche sie
schweiget nun auch.

Nowhere a light and nowhere
smoke,
and even the lark is silent now
too.

Kommt aus dem Dorfe der
Bursche heraus,
Gibt das Geleit der Geliebten
nach Haus,

Out of the village there comes
a lad,
escorting his sweetheart
home,

Führt sie am Weidengebüsche
vorbei,
Redet so viel und so
mancherlei:

He leads her past the willow-
copse,
talking so much and of so
many things:

„Leidest du Schmach und
betrübest du dich,
Leidest du Schmach von
andern um mich,

‘If you suffer sorrow and suffer
shame,
shame for what others think of
me,

Werde die Liebe getrennt so
geschwind,
Schnell wie wir früher
vereinigt sind.

Then let our love be severed as
swiftly,
as swiftly as once we two were
plighted.

Scheide mit Regen und
scheide mit Wind,
Schnell wie wir früher
vereinigt sind.“

Let us depart in rain and
depart in wind,
as swiftly as once we two were
plighted.’

Spricht das Mägdelein,
Mägdelein spricht:
„Unsere Liebe, sie trennet sich
nicht!

The girl speaks, the girl
says:
‘Our love cannot be
severed!

Fest ist der Stahl und das
Eisen gar sehr,
Unsere Liebe ist fester noch mehr:

Steel is strong, and so is
iron,
our love is even stronger still:

Eisen und Stahl, man
schmiedet sie um,
Unsere Liebe, wer wandelt sie
um?

Iron and steel can both be
reforged,
but our love, who shall change
it?

Eisen und Stahl, sie können
zergehn,
Unsere Liebe muss ewig
bestehn!“

Iron and steel can be melted
down,
our love must endure for
ever!’

Feldeinsamkeit Op. 86

No. 2 (c.1879)

Hermann Allmers

Ich ruhe still im hohen grünen
Gras
Und sende lange meinen Blick
nach oben,
Von Grillen rings umschwirrt
ohn’ Unterlass,
Von Himmelsbläue
wundersam umwoben.

I rest at peace in tall green
grass
and gaze steadily
aloft,
surrounded by unceasing
crickets,
wondrously interwoven with
blue sky.

Die schönen weissen Wolken
ziehn dahin
Durchs tiefe Blau, wie schöne
stille Träume; –
Mir ist, als ob ich längst
gestorben bin,
Und ziehe selig mit durch
ew’ge Räume.

The lovely white clouds go
drifting by
through the deep blue, like
lovely silent dreams;
I feel as if I have long been
dead,
drifting happily with them
through eternal space.

Wie rafft ich mich auf

Op. 32 No. 1 (1864)

August, Graf von Platen

Wie rafft ich mich auf in der
Nacht, in der Nacht,
Und fühlte mich fürder gezogen,
Die Gassen verliess ich, vom
Wächter bewacht,
Durchwandelte sacht
In der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Das Tor mit dem gotischen
Bogen.

How I leapt up in the night, in
the night,
and felt myself drawn onward,
I left the streets, patrolled by
the watch,
quietly walked on
in the night, in the night,
through the gate with the
Gothic arch.

Der Mühlbach rauschte durch
felsigen Schacht,
Ich lehnte mich über die Brücke,
Tief unter mir nahm ich der
Wogen in Acht,
Die wallten so sacht
In der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Doch wallte nicht eine
zurück.

The millstream rushed through
the rocky gorge,
I leaned over the bridge,
far below me I watched the
waves
that flowed so quietly
in the night, in the night,
but not a single wave ever
flowed back.

Es drehte sich oben, unzählig
entfacht
Melodischer Wandel der Sterne,
Mit ihnen der Mond in
beruhigter Pracht,
Sie funkelten sacht
In der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Durch täuschend entlegene
Ferne.

The countless, kindled stars
above
went on their melodious way,
with them the moon in tranquil
splendour –
they glittered quietly
in the night, in the night,
through deceptively distant
space.

Ich blickte hinauf in der Nacht,
in der Nacht,
Und blickte hinunter aufs
neue;
O wehe, wie hast du die Tage
verbracht,
Nun stille du sacht,
In der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Im pochenden Herzen die
Reue!

I gazed aloft in the night, in the
night,
and gazed down again once
more;
oh how have you spent your
days, alas,
now quietly silence,
in the night, in the night,
the remorse that pounds in
your heart!

Auf dem Kirchhofe

Op. 105 No. 4 (c.1888)

Baron Detlev von Liliencron

Der Tag ging regenschwer und
sturmbewegt,
Ich war an manch vergessnem
Grab gewesen.
Verwittert Stein und Kreuz, die
Kränze alt,
Die Namen überwachsen,
kaum zu lesen.

Der Tag ging sturmbewegt
und regenschwer,
Auf allen Gräbern for das
Wort: Gewesen.
Wie sturmestot die Särge
schlummerten -
Auf allen Gräbern taute still:
Genesen.

In the churchyard

The day was heavy with rain
and storms,
I had stood by many a
forgotten grave.
Weathered stones and
crosses, faded wreaths,
the names overgrown, scarcely
to be read.

The day was heavy with storms
and rains,
on each grave froze the word:
Deceased.
How the coffins slumbered,
dead to the storm -
silent dew on each grave
proclaimed: Released.

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (1883-5)

Gustav Mahler

Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht

Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit
macht,
Fröhliche Hochzeit macht,
Hab' ich meinen traurigen Tag!
Geh' ich in mein Kämmerlein,
Dunkles Kämmerlein!
Weine! wein! Um meinen Schatz,
Um meinen lieben Schatz!

Blümlein blau! Blümlein blau!
Verdorre nicht! Verdorre nicht!
Vöglein süß! Vöglein süß!
Du singst auf grüner Heide!
„Ach, wie ist die Welt so schön!
Ziküth! Ziküth!“

Singet nicht! Blühet nicht!
Lenz ist ja vorbei!
Alles Singen ist nun aus!
Des Abends, wenn ich schlafen
geh',
Denk' ich an mein Leid!
An mein Leide!

Ging heut' morgen über's Feld

Ging heut' morgen über's
Feld,
Tau noch auf den Gräsern hing;

When my love has her wedding-day

When my love has her
wedding-day,
her joyous wedding-day,
I have my day of mourning!
I go into my little room,
My dark little room!
I weep, weep! For my love,
my dearest love!

Blue little flower! Blue little flower!
Do not wither, do not wither!
Sweet little bird! Sweet little bird!
Singing on the green heath!
'Ah, how fair the world is!
Jug-jug! Jug-jug!'

Do not sing! Do not bloom!
For spring is over!
All singing now is done!
At night, when I go to
rest,
I think of my sorrow!
My sorrow!

I walked across the fields this morning

I walked across the fields this
morning,
dew still hung on the grass,

Sprach zu mir der lust'ge Fink:
„Ei, du! Gelt?
Guten Morgen! Ei, Gelt? Du!
Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?
Zink! Zink! Schön und flink!
Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt!“

Auch die Glockenblum' am
Feld
Hat mir lustig, guter Ding',
Mit den Glöckchen, klinge, kling,
Ihren Morgengruss geschellt:
„Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?
Kling! Kling! Schönes Ding!
Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt!“

Und da fing im Sonnenschein
Gleich die Welt zu funkeln
an;
Alles, Alles, Ton und Farbe
gewann!
Im Sonnenschein!
Blum' und Vogel, gross und
klein!
„Guten Tag! Guten Tag!
Ist's nicht eine schöne Welt?
Ei, du! Gelt? Schöne Welt!“

Nun fängt auch mein Glück
wohl an?
Nein! Nein! Das ich mein',
Mir nimmer, nimmer blühen kann!

Ich hab' ein glühend Messer

Ich hab' ein glühend Messer,
Ein Messer in meiner Brust,
O weh! O weh!
Das schneid't so tief
In jede Freud' und jede Lust,
So tief! so tief!
Es schneid't so weh und tief!

Ach, was ist das für ein böser Gast!
Nimmer hält er Ruh',
Nimmer hält er Rast!
Nicht bei Tag,
Nicht bei Nacht, wenn ich schlief!
O weh! O weh! O weh!

Wenn ich in den Himmel seh',
Seh' ich zwei blaue Augen steh'n!
O weh! O weh!
Wenn ich im gelben Felde geh',
Seh' ich von fern das blonde Haar
Im Winde weh'n! O weh! O weh!
Wenn ich aus dem Traum
auffahr'
Und höre klingen ihr silbern
Lachen,
O weh! O weh!

the merry finch said to me:
'You there, hey -
Good morning! Hey, you there!
Isn't it a lovely world?
Tweet! Tweet! Bright and sweet!
O how I love the world!'

And the harebell at the field's
edge,
merrily and in good spirits,
ding-ding with its tiny bell
rang out its morning greeting:
'Isn't it a lovely world?
Ding-ding! Beautiful thing!
O how I love the world!'

And then in the gleaming sun
the world at once began to
sparkle;
all things gained in tone and
colour!
In the sunshine!
Flower and bird, great and
small.
'Good day! Good day!
Isn't it a lovely world?
Hey, you there! A lovely world!'

Will my happiness now
begin?
No! No! The happiness I mean
can never bloom for me!

I've a gleaming knife

I've a gleaming knife,
a knife in my breast,
alas! Alas!
It cuts so deep
into every joy and every bliss,
so deep, so deep!
It cuts so sharp and deep!

Ah, what a cruel guest it is!
Never at peace,
never at rest!
Neither by day
nor by night, when I'd sleep!
Alas! Alas! Alas!

When I look into the sky,
I see two blue eyes!
Alas! Alas!
When I walk in the yellow field,
I see from afar her golden hair
blowing in the wind! Alas! Alas!
When I wake with a jolt from
my dream
and hear her silvery
laugh,
alas! Alas!

Ich wollt', ich läg' auf der
schwarzen Bahr',
Könnt' nimmer die Augen
aufmachen!

I wish I were lying on the black
bier,
and might never open my eyes
again!

Die zwei blauen Augen

The two blue eyes

Die zwei blauen Augen von
meinem Schatz,
Die haben mich in die weite
Welt geschickt.
Da musst' ich Abschied
nehmen
Vom allerliebsten Platz!
O Augen blau, warum habt ihr
mich angeblickt?
Nun hab' ich ewig Leid und
Grämen!

The two blue eyes of my
love
have sent me into the wide
world.
I had to bid
farewell
to the place I loved most!
O blue eyes, why did you look
on me?
Grief and sorrow shall now be
mine forever!

Ich bin ausgegangen in stiller
Nacht,
Wohl über die dunkle Heide.
Hat mir niemand Ade gesagt,
Ade!
Mein Gesell' war Lieb' und
Leide!

I set out in the still
night,
across the dark heath.
No one bade me farewell,
farewell!
My companions were love and
sorrow!

Auf der Strasse stand ein
Lindenbaum,
Da hab' ich zum ersten Mal im
Schlaf geruht!
Unter dem Lindenbaum,
Der hat seine Blüten über mich
geschneit,
Da wusst' ich nicht, wie das
Leben tut,
War alles, alles wieder gut!
Alles! Alles!
Lieb' und Leid, und Welt und
Traum!

A lime tree stood by the
roadside,
where I first found peace in
sleep!
Under the lime tree
which snowed its blossom on
me,
I was not aware of how life
hurts,
and all, all was well once more!
All! All!
Love and sorrow, and world
and dream!

Translations of Brahms, Mahler and all Schubert except 'An mein Herz' and 'Die Mutter Erde' 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. 'An mein Herz', 'Die Mutter Erde' by Richard Wigmore from Schubert – The Complete Song Texts published by Victor Gollancz Ltd.