

WIGMORE HALL

Monday 18 October 2021 1.00pm

Anna Lucia Richter mezzo-soprano

Ammiel Bushakevitz piano



This concert is being broadcast on BBC Radio 3

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)	Ständchen Op. 106 No. 1 (1885) Sapphische Ode Op. 94 No. 4 (1884) Auf dem Kirchhofe Op. 105 No. 4 (1886)
Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)	Morgentau (1877) Wie des Mondes Abbild zittert (1880) Sonne der Schlummerlosen (1896)
Johannes Brahms	Feldeinsamkeit Op. 86 No. 2 (1879) Mädchenlied Op. 107 No. 5 (1886) Wiegenlied Op. 49 No. 4 (1868)
Hugo Wolf	Wiegenlied im Sommer (1882) Elfenlied from <i>Mörrike Lieder</i> (1888) Die Zigeunerin from <i>Eichendorff-Lieder</i> (1887)
Johannes Brahms	Liebestreu Op. 3 No. 1 (1853) Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht Op. 96 No. 1 (1884)
Hugo Wolf	Verborgenheit from <i>Mörrike Lieder</i> (1888) Nachruf (1880) Als ich auf dem Euphrat schiffte from <i>Goethe Lieder</i> (1889) Begegnung from <i>Mörrike Lieder</i> (1888)
Johannes Brahms	Vergebliches Ständchen Op. 84 No. 4 (1881)

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Almost all the songs in today's programme were composed during a 12-year period between 1877 and 1889: the only exceptions are Brahms's 'Liebestreu' (1853) and 'Wiegenlied' (1868), and Wolf's 'Sonne der Schlummerlosen' (1896). The 1880s were a turbulent decade in musical history, bookended by Wagner's *Parsifal* (1882) and Richard Strauss's *Don Juan* (1889): this concert offers an opportunity to compare how two very different song composers negotiated the genre during this period of rapid stylistic development. For Brahms, song formed an important but relatively small part of a long career that saw him achieve mastery of almost every musical genre except opera; Wolf, by contrast, completed one opera (*Der Corregidor*) and began a second, but his reputation now rests almost entirely on the startling originality and psychological depth of his 300 songs. Such was the polarised nature of Viennese musical life that Wolf's allegiance to Wagner – highly controversial at the time – led almost inevitably to an antipathy to Brahms. Wolf took the older composer some of his songs in 1879, but the encounter was not a success: Brahms recommended that Wolf take lessons in counterpoint before proceeding any further, and the younger man railed against Brahms's 'North German pedantry'. A few years later, as music critic of the *Wiener Salonblatt*, Wolf berated Brahms in absurdly overblown terms, finding in the Fourth Symphony, for example, only 'nullity, emptiness and hypocrisy'; Brahms seems to have been amused rather than offended, and was willing to be seen applauding Wolf's orchestral works at their Vienna première.

Perhaps the key to understanding the difference between the two men as song composers lies in their choice of texts. Brahms generally preferred to set less well-known authors: of his songs heard today, for example, only one (the Heine setting, 'Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht') uses the work of a first-rate poet. The Wolf songs we hear, by contrast, are mostly settings of well-known German Romantic poets – and one English one: Byron. This is representative of his output as a whole: Wolf published extensive collections of settings of Mörike (1888), Eichendorff (1889) and Goethe (1890), before turning in the 1890s to translations of Spanish and Italian texts.

One of Brahms's most revealing statements about his aims as a song composer is found in a letter from 1860 to Clara Schumann: 'Songs today have gone so far astray that one cannot cling too closely to one's ideal, and that ideal is the folksong.' This assertion is relevant not just to Brahms's published collections of folksong arrangements, but to his Lieder more generally: although the sophistication of the songs in today's programme means that they would rarely be mistaken for actual folksongs, their allegiance to the 'folksong ideal' – simple, memorable melody conveying universally recognisable emotions – is nonetheless clear. The first and last songs in the concert are serenades, easily imaginable as the songs of ardent lovers: 'Ständchen' (whose melody

encodes the name of Brahms's former fiancée, Agathe von Siebold) suggests a guitar with strumming effects in the piano's left hand, while 'Vergebliches Ständchen' (a song that Brahms apparently said he would trade for all his others) deftly conveys the contrasting characters and ambitions of the male and female characters! But the more serious songs, too, draw on music that would have been sung by ordinary people: 'Auf dem Kirchhofe', for example, begins with a romantic depiction of the rainy graveyard, but this gives way in the final couplet to a melody derived from a well-known chorale, underlining the text's emphasis on healing and confirming Brahms's debt to the musical heritage of German Protestantism. Brahms's views on song's roots in a folk idiom, and also his use of Lieder to explore and encode episodes from his own entangled romantic life, help to explain his preference for less well-known poets, but his settings of canonical texts, such as the exquisite lament, 'Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht', by no means suffer by comparison. Perhaps the apotheosis of Brahms's *volkisch* ideal, however, is 'Wiegenlied': a melody of his own invention, but crafted with such beguiling simplicity that it is treated across the world as though it actually were a folk song.

By contrast with Brahms, **Wolf** was perceived by contemporaries as a dangerous avant-gardist: an editor at Breitkopf & Härtel, to whom he submitted his Eichendorff songs, described them as 'amongst the most absurd things so far produced by the extreme left wing of the New German school', with 'nothing in common with what I understand by music except for the basic elements of sound and rhythm'. No such radicalism is apparent in the charming 'Morgentau', Wolf's first published song, which he composed at the age of 17; here, and in 'Nachruf', composed three years later, the young composer could have been paying homage to Schumann. 'Wie des Mondes Abbild zittert', on the other hand, though composed the same year as 'Nachruf', seems to come from an entirely different composer: the eight lines of Heine's text unfold on an almost epic scale as Wolf evokes the serene progress of the moon across the sky and its flickering reflections in the water. The piano part of this song is strikingly restrained, beginning on bare open fifths, anticipating Wolf's tendency to refine his music to its most essential features as he progressed through his short career; this trait is heard most strikingly in the etiolated sound-world of 'Sonne der Schlummerlosen', the latest of the songs heard today. But despite such occasional austerity, it would be wrong to regard Wolf's later songs as lacking in charm: two products of 1888, the serenely beautiful 'Verborgenheit' and the delicate, playful 'Elfenlied', amply serve to disprove this notion.

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Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Ständchen Op. 106 No. 1 Serenade

(1885)

Franz Kugler

Der Mond steht über dem
Berge,
So recht für verliebte Leut;
Im Garten rieselt ein Brunnen,
Sonst Stille weit und breit.

The moon shines over the
mountain,
just right for people in love;
a fountain purls in the garden –
otherwise silence far and wide.

Neben der Mauer, im Schatten,
Da stehn der Studenten drei
Mit Flöt' und Geig' und Zither,
Und singen und spielen dabei.

By the wall in the shadows,
three students stand
with flute and fiddle and zither,
and sing and play.

Die Klänge schleichen der
Schönsten
Sacht in den Traum hinein,
Sie schaut den blonden Geliebten
Und lispelt: „Vergiss nicht mein.“

The sounds steal softly into the
dreams
of the loveliest of girls,
she sees her fair-headed lover
and whispers: 'Remember me.'

Sapphische Ode Op. 94 Sapphische Ode

No. 4 (1884)

Hans Schmidt

Rosen brach ich nachts mir am
dunklen Hage,
Süßter hauchten Duft sie, als je
am Tage;
Doch verstreuten reich die
bewegten Äste
Tau, der mich nässte.

I gathered roses from the dark
hedge by night,
The fragrance they breathed
was sweeter than by day;
But when I moved the branches,
they showered
Me with dew.

Auch der Küsse Duft mich wie
nie berückte,
Die ich nachts vom Strauch
deiner Lippen pflückte;
Doch auch dir, bewegt im
Gemüt gleich jenen,
Tauten die Tränen.

And the fragrant kisses thrilled
me as never before,
When I gathered them from
your rose-bush lips by night;
But you too, moved in your
heart like those roses,
Shed the dew of tears.

Auf dem Kirchhofe Op. 105 No. 4 (1886)

Baron Detlev von Liliencron

Der Tag ging regenschwer und
sturmbewegt,
Ich war an manch vergessnem
Grab gewesen.
Verwittert Stein und Kreuz, die
Kränze alt,

The day was heavy with rain
and storms,
I had stood by many a forgotten
grave.
Weathered stones and crosses,
faded wreaths,

Die Namen überwachsen, kaum
zu lesen.

The names overgrown, scarcely
to be read.

Der Tag ging sturmbewegt und
regenschwer,
Auf allen Gräbern froh das Wort:
Gewesen.
Wie sturместot die Särge
schlummerten –
Auf allen Gräbern taute still:
Genesen.

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.

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Morgentau (1877)

Anonymous

Der Frühhauch hat gefächelt
Hinweg die schwüle Nacht,
Die Flur holdselig lächelt
In ihrer Lenzespracht;
Mild singt vom dunklen Baume
Ein Vöglein in der Früh,
Es singt noch halb im Traume
Gar süsse Melodie.

Morning Dew

The breath of dawn has fanned
Away the sultry night,
The meadow smiles blissfully
In its springtime splendour;
From the dark tree gently sings
A little bird at dawn,
Half-dreaming, it still sings
Some sweet melody.

Die Rosenknospe hebet
Empor ihr Köpfchen bang,
Denn wundersam durchbebet
Hat sie der süsse Sang;

The rose-bud lifts
Its head timorously aloft,
For the sweet song
Has magically thrilled her
through;

Und mehr und mehr enthüllet
Sich ihrer Blätter Füll',
Und eine Träne quillet
Hervor so heimlich still.

Her abundant petals
Unfold more and more,
And a tear wells up
So secretly and silent

Wie des Mondes Abbild zittert (1880)

Heinrich Heine

Wie des Mondes Abbild
zittert
In den wilden Meereswogen,
Und er selber still und
sicher
Wandelt an dem
Himmelsbogen:

How the moon's reflection trembles

How the moon's reflection
trembles
in the sea's wild heaving waves,
while the moon itself, calmly
and surely,
moves through the vault of
heaven:

Also wandelst du, Geliebte,
Still und sicher, und es zittert
Nur dein Abbild mir im
Herzen,
Weil mein eignes Herz
erschüttert.

Thus you move, beloved,
calmly and surely, and only
your reflection trembles in my
heart,
for my heart itself is
devastated.

Sonne der

Schlummerlosen (1896)

Lord Byron trans. Otto

Gildemeister

Sonne der Schlummerlosen,
bleicher Stern!
Wie Tränen zittern, schimmerst
du von fern;
Du zeigst die Nacht, doch
scheust sie nicht zurück,
Wie ähnlich bist du dem
entschwundenen Glück,
Dem Licht vergang'ner Tage,
das fortan
Nur leuchten, aber nimmer
wärmen kann!
Die Trauer wacht, wie es
durchs Dunkel wallt,
Deutlich, doch fern, hell, aber o,
wie kalt!

Sun of the sleepless

Sun of the sleepless, pallid star!
Like trembling tears you
shimmer afar;
you point to night but do not
banish it,
how alike you are to vanished
joy,
to the light of days past which,
henceforth,
can only shine but never
warm!
Grief watches as the light
wanders the dark,
distinct but distant; clear, but
oh, how cold!

Johannes Brahms

(1833-1897)

Feldeinsamkeit Op. 86 No. 2 (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.

Alone in fields

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.

Mädchenlied Op. 107

No. 5 (1886)

Paul Heyse

Auf die Nacht in der Spinnstub'n,
Da singen die Mädchen,
Da lachen die Dorfbub'n,
Wie flink gehn die Rädchen!

A young girl's song

At night in the spinning-room,
the girls are singing,
the village lads are laughing,
how swiftly the wheels go round!

Spinnt Jedes am Brautschatz,
Dass der Liebste sich freut.
Nicht lange, so gibt es
Ein Hochzeitgeläut.

Each girl spins for her trousseau
to please her lover.
It won't be long
before wedding bells sound.

Kein Mensch, der mir gut ist,
Will nach mir fragen;
Wie bang mir zu Mut ist,
Wem soll ich's klagen?

No man who cares for me
will ask after me;
how anxious I feel,
to whom shall I tell my sorrow?

Die Tränen rinnen
Mir übers Gesicht –
Wofür soll ich spinnen?
Ich weiss es nicht!

The tears go coursing
down my cheeks –
what am I spinning for?
I don't know!

Wiegenlied Op. 49 No. 4

(1868)

From 'Des Knaben

Wunderhorn'/Georg Scherer

Guten Abend, gut' Nacht,
Mit Rosen bedacht,
Mit Näglein besteckt
Schlupf' unter die Deck.
Morgen früh, wenn Gott will,
Wirst du wieder geweckt.

Cradle song

Good evening, good night,
canopied with roses,
bedecked with carnations,
slip beneath the coverlet.
Tomorrow morning, if God wills,
you shall be woken again.

Guten Abend, gut' Nacht,
Von Englein bewacht!
Die zeigen im Traum
Dir Christkindleins Baum:
Schlaf' nun selig und süss,
Schau im Traum's Paradies.

Good evening, good night,
watched over by angels!
In your dreams they'll show you
the Christmas Tree:
sleep sweetly now and blissfully,
behold Paradise in your dreams.

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Wiegenlied im Sommer

(1882)

Robert Reinick

Vom Berg hinabgestiegen
Ist nun des Tages
Rest,
Mein Kind liegt in der
Wiegen,
Die Vögel all im
Nest;
Nur ein ganz klein Singvögelein
Ruft weit daher im
Dämmerchein:
„Gut' Nacht! gut' Nacht!
Lieb Kindlein, gute Nacht!“

A summer cradle song

The last traces of day
Have slipped from the
hillside;
My child lies in its
cradle,
All the birds are in their
nests.
Just one tiny little song-bird
Calls from afar in the
gloaming:
'Good night! good night!
Dear child, good night!' –

Die Wiege geht im Gleise,
Die Uhr tickt hin und her,

The cradle rocks gently,
The clock ticks to and fro,

Die Fliegen nur ganz leise
Sie summen noch daher.
Ihr Fliegen, lasst mein Kind in
Ruh!
Was summt ihr ihm so heimlich
zu?
„Gut' Nacht! gut' Nacht!
Lieb Kindlein, gute Nacht!“

The flies still hum,
But very softly now.
Leave my child in peace, you
flies!
What are you humming him so
secretly?
'Good night! good night!
Dear child, good night!'

Der Vogel und die Sterne
Und Alle rings umher,
Sie haben mein Kind so
gerne,
Die Engel noch viel mehr.
Sie decken's mit den Flügeln zu
Und singen leise: „Schlaf in
Ruh!
Gut' Nacht! gut' Nacht!
Lieb' Kindlein, gute Nacht!“

The birds and the stars,
And everything all around,
Are so fond of my
child,
And the angels even fonder.
They cover him with their wings
And softly sing: 'Sleep in peace!

Good night! Good night!
Dear child, good night!'

Mörrike Lieder (1888)

Eduard Mörrike

Elfenlied (1888)

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 tippety 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!“

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
His 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 hazelwood to the
valley,
Slips right up against the
wall,
Where the glow-worm sits, light
on light.
'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!'

– Pfui, stösst den Kopf an
harten Stein!
Elfe, gelt, du hast
genug?
Gukuk! Gukuk!

Shame! he hits his head on hard
stone!
Elf, don't you think you've had
enough?
Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

Eichendorff-Lieder

(1880-88)

Joseph, Freiherr von Eichendorff

Die Zigeunerin (1887)

Am Kreuzweg da lausche ich,
wenn die Stern'
Und die Feuer im Walde
verglommen,
Und wo der erste Hund bellt von
fern,
Da wird mein Bräut'gam
herkommen.
La, la, la –

The gypsy girl

At the crossroads I listen, when
the stars
and fires in the wood have
faded,
and where, afar, the first dog
barks,
from there my bridegroom will
come.
La, la la –

„Und als der Tag graut', durch
das Gehölz
Sah ich eine Katze sich
schlingen.
Ich schoss ihr auf den
nussbraunen Pelz,
Wie tat die weitüber springen! –
Ha, ha, ha!“

'And at dawn, through the
copse,
I saw a cat slinking,
I fired a shot at her nut-brown
coat,
how that made her jump! –
Ha, ha, ha!“

Schad' nur ums Pelzlein, du
kriegst mich nit!
Mein Schatz muss sein wie die
andern:
Braun und ein Stutzbart auf
ung'rischen Schnitt
Und ein fröhliches Herze zum
Wandern.
La, la, la...

A shame about the coat, you
won't catch me!
My sweetheart must be like the
others:
swarthy, with a beard of
Hungarian trim,
and a happy heart for
wandering.
La, la, la...

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Liebestreu Op. 3 No. 1

(1853)

Robert Reinick

„O versenk, o versenk dein Leid,
mein Kind,
In die See, in die tiefe See!“ –
Ein Stein wohl bleibt auf des
Meeres Grund,
Mein Leid kommt stets in die
Höh'. –

True love

'Oh drown, oh drown your grief,
my child,
In the sea, the fathomless sea!' –
A stone may stay on the ocean
bed,
My grief will always
surface. –

„Und die Lieb', die du im Herzen
trägst,
Brich sie ab, brich sie ab, mein
Kind!“ –
Ob die Blum' auch stirbt, wenn
man sie bricht:
Treue Lieb' nicht so
geschwind. –

'And the love you bear in your
heart,
Pluck it out, pluck it out, my
child!' –
Though a flower will die when it
is plucked:
Faithful love will not fade so
fast. –

„Und die Treu', und die Treu', 's
war nur ein Wort,
In den Wind damit hinaus!“ –
O Mutter, und splittert der Fels
auch im Wind,
Meine Treue, die hält ihn
aus. –

'Faithful, faithful – is but a
word,
Away with it to the winds!' –
Though a rock, O mother, will
split in the wind,
My faithful love will withstand
it. –

Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht Op. 96 No. 1

(1884)

Heinrich Heine

Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht,
Das Leben ist der schwüle Tag.
Es dunkelt schon, mich schläfert,
Der Tag hat mich müd gemacht.

Death is cool night

Death is cool night,
life is sultry day.
Dusk falls now, I feel drowsy,
the day has wearied me.

Über mein Bett erhebt sich ein
Baum,
Drin singt die junge
Nachtigall;
Sie singt von lauter Liebe,
Ich hör es sogar im Traum.

Over my bed rises a
tree,
in which the young nightingale
sings;
she sings of nothing but love,
I hear it even in my dreams.

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Mörrike Lieder (1888)

Eduard Mörrike

Verborgenheit (1888)

Lass, o Welt, o lass mich sein!
Locket nicht mit Liebesgaben,
Lasst dies Herz alleine haben
Seine Wonne, seine Pein!

Withdrawal

Let, O world, O let me be!
Do not tempt with gifts of love,
Let this heart keep to itself
Its rapture, its pain!

Was ich traure, weiss ich nicht,
Es ist unbekanntes Wehe;
Immerdar durch Tränen sehe
Ich der Sonne liebes Licht.

Why I grieve, I do not know,
It is unknown grief;
Always through a veil of tears
I see the sun's dear light.

Oft bin ich mir kaum bewusst,
Und die helle Freude zücket
Durch die Schwere, so mich
drückt

Often when I'm lost in thought,
Bright joy will flash
Through the oppressive
gloom,

Wonniglich in meiner Brust.

Bringing rapture to my breast.

Lass, o Welt, o lass mich sein!
Locket nicht mit Liebesgaben,
Lasst dies Herz alleine haben
Seine Wonne, seine Pein!

Let, O world, O let me be!
Do not tempt with gifts of love,
Let this heart keep to itself
Its rapture, its pain!

Nachruf (1880)

Joseph, Freiherr von Eichendorff

Du liebe, treue Laute,
Wie manche Sommernacht,
Bis dass der Morgen graute,
Hab' ich mit dir durchwacht!

In memoriam

Dear faithful lute,
how many a summer night
till day-break
have I watched with you!

Die Täler, wieder nachten,
Schon sinkt das Abendrot,
Doch die sonst mit uns
wachten,
Die liegen lange tot.

Again the valleys darken,
the twilight's nearly spent,
but they who once watched with
us
perished long ago.

Was wollen wir nun singen
Hier in der Einsamkeit,
Wenn alle von uns gingen,
Die unser Lied erfreut?

Why should we want to sing
here in solitude,
when all have gone
who delighted in our song?

Wir wollen dennoch singen!
So still ist's auf der Welt;
Wer weiss, die Lieder dringen
Vielleicht zum Sternenzelt.

Nonetheless, we shall sing!
The world is so still;
who knows, songs may reach
as far as the stars.

Wer weiss, die da gestorben,
Sie hören droben mich,
Und öffnen leis die Pforten
Und nehmen uns zu sich.

Who knows, those who died
may hear me up there,
and quietly open the gates,
and take us to them.

Goethe Lieder (1888-90)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Als ich auf dem Euphrat schiffte (1889)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Als ich auf dem Euphrat schiffte,
Streifte sich der goldne
Ring
Fingerab in Wasserklüfte,
Den ich jüngst von dir empfang.
Also träumt ich. Morgenröte
Blitzt ins Auge durch den
Baum,
Sag, Poete, sag, Prophete!
Was bedeutet dieser
Traum?

As I sailed on the Euphrates

As I sailed on the Euphrates,
The golden ring you lately gave
me
Slipped from my finger
Down into the watery abyss.
So I dreamed. Red dawn
Flashed into my eyes through
the tree,
Tell me, poet, tell me, prophet!
What is the meaning of this
dream?

Mörrike Lieder (1888)

Eduard Mörike

Begegnung (1888)

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.

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 about her,
half-afraid;
Like roses the wind has
scattered,
Her pretty cheeks keep
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 open-windowed 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.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Vergebliches Ständchen Vain serenade

Op. 84 No. 4 (1881)

Anonymous

Er
Guten Abend, mein Schatz,
Guten Abend, mein Kind!
Ich komm aus Lieb zu dir,

He
Good evening, my sweetheart,
good evening, my child!
I come because I love you,

Ach, mach mir auf die Tür,
Mach mir auf die Tür!

Sie
Mein Tür ist verschlossen,
Ich laß dich nicht ein;
Mutter, die rät mir klug,
Wärst du herein mit Fug,
är's mit mir vorbei!

Er
So kalt ist die Nacht,
So eisig der Wind,
Daß mir das Herz erfriert,
Mein Lieb erlöschen wird;
Öffne mir, mein Kind!

Sie
Löschet dein Lieb,
Laß sie löschen nur!
Löschet sie immerzu,
Geh heim zu Bett, zur Ruh,
Gute Nacht, mein Knab!

ah! open up your door to me,
open up your door!

She
My door's locked,
I won't let you in;
Mother gave me good advice,
if you were allowed in,
all would be over with me!

He
The night's so cold,
the wind's so icy,
my heart is freezing,
my love will go out;
open up, my child!

She
If your love goes out,
then let it go out!
If it keeps going out,
then go home to bed and go to
sleep,
good night, my lad!

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