

WIGMORE HALL

Monday 2 January 2023
7.30pm

Sir Stephen Hough piano
Ailish Tynan soprano
Ema Nikolovska mezzo-soprano
Nicky Spence tenor
James Newby baritone
Alisdair Hogarth piano

Sir Stephen Hough (b.1961)	Herbstlieder (2007)	Ema Nikolovska
	<i>Herbsttag • Klage • Tränenkrüglein • Bestürz mich, Musik • Herbst</i>	
	Lady Antonia's Songs (2021)	Ailish Tynan
	<i>Self-Isolation: To Myself • Magnolias • Song of the Author on Book Tour • On the Balcony</i>	
	Dappled Things (2014)	James Newby
	<i>I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day • Requiescat • Easter Day • Pied Beauty • The Harlot's House • No worst, there is none</i>	
	Interval	
	Songs of Love and Loss (2021) world première	Nicky Spence
	<i>O Do Not Love Too Long • Triptych • Barcarolle • Radical Hope • One Night • Beltway Blues • When You Are Old</i>	
	Other Love Songs (2010)	All singers & Alisdair Hogarth
	<i>When I have passed away/December 1919 • All shall be well • The city's love • Madam and her Madam • Kashmiri song • Because I liked you better • The colour of his hair • Simon, son of John</i>	

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Herbstlieder

A minor triad shrinking to a major third is the musical cell connecting everything in these five Rilke settings. The final song is composed entirely of these falling chords – like leaves to the ground in the pianist's right hand. Autumn ('Herbst'), in the titles of two of the poems and the bones of the other three, is a closing down, a falling which seems inexorable: 'Ich möchte aus meinem Herzen hinaus' – the poet wants to leave himself behind. Only in the last line of the last song comes any answer to these autumnal questions, as the thirds now rise in longer piano notes with the mention of One who does not remove but holds such falling, infinitely, gently in His hands.

Lady Antonia's Songs

Wigmore Hall's John Gilhooly handed me a slim volume: 'I wonder if any of these verses might interest you?' I took the book home and was instantly struck by how 'musical' they were – their rhythms and rhymes, but also their purity and emotional honesty. I chose four for this cycle: the first two written during the 2020 COVID lockdown reflecting that sense of isolation we all felt at that time; the third a raucous romp depicting the author's many American book tours; the last tenderly remembers her late husband Harold Pinter and the quiet, domestic drinks they would share on their balcony at the end of a social night out.

Dappled Things

This cycle brings together three poems each by Gerard Manley Hopkins and Oscar Wilde, the bookends two of the former's greatest works from his so-called 'terrible sonnets ... written in blood'. The cycle begins with the words 'I wake' and ends with the phrase 'each day dies with sleep'. This final desolation is not the end, though, because the piano, in a Schumannesque coda, weaves a ruminating passage of consolation based on the first song's opening melody. Death turns out to be a waking after all. The other Hopkins poem gives the cycle its title, 'Glory be to God for dappled things'. Here the music flits from the naive to the whimsical to the droll.

'Requiescat' is a tender poem written in memory of Wilde's sister who died aged ten. 'Easter Day' is a sonnet contrasting the pomp of a Papal ceremony with Christ's own humble life. The music is based on the traditional Easter Alleluia chant. 'The Harlot's House' is a bizarre story of a man and his innocent sweetheart who come across a brothel on an evening walk. After describing the decadent scenes as seen and heard from outside there is a final moment of horror as the woman leaves her companion and enters into the 'house of lust'. The dawn arrives 'like a frightened girl' and the music here is the same as in 'Requiescat': innocence now corrupted rather than deceased.

Songs of Love and Loss

This cycle celebrates the fragility of love. It is bookended with two celebrated Yeats poems about love growing old and, if stale and shopworn, still tender and deep. The remainder of the cycle comprises settings of

poems by friends – from Andrew Ball's darkly humorous kitchen tongs and hopeless infatuations, to Tom Vaughan's hope for a better future from the stuck-in-the-mud present, to Jonathan Galassi's anxious holding together of a relationship which is falling apart. Peter Halstead's loss and love is a wider net: the planet in which we try to live our shabby, heroic, changeable lives, fragile as the ozone layer, tumultuous as the ocean.

At the centre of the cycle is my retelling of WH Auden's famous *Lullaby*. I took its exact syllable structure to explore its subject matter – a contemplation of the intimacy that might be possible in even the most casual, temporary encounter.

The musical styles range from the Romantic intensity of 'One Night' to the crooning first section of Andrew Ball's 'Triptych' where we are hunched over a radio crooning a 1950s pop tune. In the Galassi setting, Coward is the inspiration; a patter song which here goes wrong. Vaughan's 'Beltway Blues' clicks its fingers down the highway not taken. Halstead tells us the musical inspiration behind his poem: Chopin's *Barcarolle* and Debussy's *La cathédrale engloutie*. I have taken the exact melody of the former for the vocal line and a mixture of harmonies and motives of both for the piano part.

Other Love Songs

This cycle was written as a companion for the Brahms *Liebeslieder Walzer*, but, for contrast, avoiding waltzes or poems about romantic love between a man and a woman. The first song combines two poems by Claude McKay, the Jamaican-American poet who was part of New York's Harlem Renaissance. Julian of Norwich was a mystic whose *Revelations of Divine Love*, the first written by a woman in the English language, was astonishingly universalist for its time, suggesting that all humanity is chosen and already saved by God. The third song, again by McKay, describes a city loving its alien guest, despite the colour of his skin. 'Madam and her Madam' by Langston Hughes, another Harlem Renaissance poet, is a comic vignette about a maid's exploitation by her mistress. 'Kashmiri Song', words made popular in a setting by Amy Woodforde-Finden, appears to be a passionate love song between two women. Here I have used the traditional Indian Bhairav scale. 'Because I liked you better' is one of AE Housman's autobiographical and most heartbreaking poems – Victorian society's demand for two men to part rather than admit their love. 'The colour of his hair', again by Housman, is the other side of the coin – someone being taken to prison because of a 'love that dare not speak its name', set as if a crude sea-shanty. 'Simon, son of John' is from St John's Gospel, where Christ asks Simon Peter three times, 'Do you love me?' Before Peter's third affirmation, three fanfare-like flourishes occur in the piano (the cockcrow alerting Peter of his denial) using the same notes as the second song's words, 'All shall be well'. The cycle ends with Jesus's 'Feed my lambs' combined with an *Agnus Dei*. Love, in its many forms, conquers all.

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Emma Nikolovska

Sir Stephen Hough (b.1961)

Herbstlieder (2007)

Rainer Maria Rilke

Herbsttag

Herr: es ist Zeit. Der Sommer
war sehr gross.

Leg deinen Schatten auf die
Sonnenuhren,

Und auf den Fluren lass die
Winde los.

Befiehl den letzten Früchten
voll zu sein;

Gieb ihnen noch zwei
südlichere Tage,

Dränge sie zur Vollendung
hin und jage

Die letzte Süsse in den
schweren Wein.

Wer jetzt kein Haus hat, baut
sich keines mehr.

Wer jetzt allein ist, wird es
lange bleiben,

Wird wachen, lesen, lange
Briefe schreiben

Und wird in den Alleen hin
und her

Unruhig wandern, wenn die
Blätter treiben.

Autumn Day

Lord: it is time. The
summer was immense.

Now fold your shadows
over the sundials,

and on the meadows let
the wind blow free.

Command the final fruits
to swell in full,

grant them yet two
further, balmy days,

Urge them on to
fulfillment and press to
extract

the final sweetness into
heavy wine.

He who has no home
now, will build no more.

He who is alone now will
remain alone,

will watch, read, write
lengthy letters

and in the avenues will
wander here and there

restlessly, as the leaves
are blowing.

Klage

O wie ist alles
fern

Und lange vergangen.

Ich glaube, der Stern,
Von welchem ich Glanz
empfange,

Ist seit Jahrtausenden
tot.

Ich glaube, im Boot,
Das vorüberfuhr,
Hörte ich etwas Banges
sagen.

Im Hause hat eine Uhr
Geschlagen...

In welchem Haus?...

Ich möchte aus meinem
Herzen hinaus

Unter den grossen Himmel
treten.

Ich möchte beten.

Und einer von allen Sternen
Müsste wirklich noch sein.

Ich glaube, ich wüsste,

Lament

O how far away
everything is
and long since gone.

I think that the star
from which I receive
radiance

has been dead for
thousands of years.

I think, from the boat
drifting past,
I heard some frightening
words.

Inside the house a clock
has struck...

In which house?...

I would like to step out of
my heart

to walk under the
immense sky.

I would like to pray.

And one of all these stars
must surely still exist.

I think I might know

Welcher allein

Gedauert hat,

Welcher wie eine weisse Stadt

Am Ende des Strahls in den
Himmeln steht...

which alone of them,
endures –

like a white city,

standing in the heavens
at the end of the ray...

Tränenkrüglein

Andere fassen den Wein,
andere fassen die Öle

In dem gehöhlten Gewölb, das
ihre Wandung umschrieb.

Ich, als ein kleineres Mass und
als schlankestes, höhle

Mich einem andern Bedarf,
stürzenden Tränen zulieb.

Wein wird reicher, und Öl
klärt sich noch weiter im
Kruge.

Was mit den Tränen geschieht?
– Sie machten mich schwer,

Machten mich blinder und
machten mich schillern am
Buge,

Machten mich brüchig
zuletzt und machten mich
leer.

The Little Jar of Tears

Some hold wine, some
hold oils

in the hollowed out vault
enclosed by their sides.

I, of smaller size and the
slimmest, am hollowed

out for a different purpose –
for gushing tears.

Wine becomes mature
and oil becomes clearer
in their jars.

What happens to tears? –
They made me heavy,

made me more blind and
made my curves
shimmer,

and finally made me
crack and left me
empty.

Bestürz mich, Musik

Bestürz mich, Musik, mit
rythmischem Zürnen!

Hoher Vorwurf, dicht vor
dem Herzen erhoben,

Das nicht so wogend empfand,
das sich schonte.

Mein Herz: *da*:

Sieh deine Herrlichkeit. Hast
du fast immer Genüge,

Minder zu schwingen? Aber
die Wölbungen warten,

Die obersten, dass du sie
füllst mit orgelndem
Andrang.

Was ersehnt du der
fremden Geliebten
verhaltenes Antlitz? –

Hat deine Sehnsucht nicht
Atem, aus der Posaune des
Engels,

Der das Weltgericht
anbricht, tönende Stürme
zu stossen:

Oh, so ist sie auch nicht,
nirgends, wird nicht
geboren,

Die du verdorrend
entbehrst...

Herbst

Shock me, Music

Shock me, Music, with
rhythmic fury!

Lofty reproach, held in
front of the heart

which was almost devoid
of emotion.

My heart: *there*:

behold your magnificence.

Are you mostly content
To beat with less fervour?

But the vaults wait,
the highest ones, for you
to fill them with organ-
like thunder.

Why do you long to see the
calm countenance of the
unknown beloved?

Has your longing no
breath to blow ringing
storms

from the trumpet of the
angel announcing the
last judgement,

O, that's not at all what
she's like, she is
nowhere,

she, of whom you feel the loss
whilst withering away...

Autumn

Die Blätter fallen, fallen wie von weit,	The leaves are falling, falling as from far,
Als welken in den Himmeln ferne Gärten;	as if far gardens in the skies were dying;
Sie fallen mit verneinender Gebärde.	they're falling with gestures of denial.
Und in den Nächten fällt die schwere Erde	And in the nights the heavy earth is falling
Aus allen Sternen in die Einsamkeit.	from all the stars down into loneliness.
Wir alle fallen. Diese Hand da fällt.	We are all falling. This hand falls.
Und sieh dir andre an: es ist in allen.	And see the other ones; it is in them all.
Und doch ist Einer, welcher dieses Fallen	And yet there is One, who holds this falling
Unendlich sanft in seinen Händen hält.	endlessly, gently in his hands.

Ailish Tynan

Lady Antonia's Songs (2021)

Lady Antonia Fraser

Self-Isolation: To Myself

So we're stuck together
You and I
Let's make the best of it
Then I'll die.

Come to think of it
So will you.
We don't need lawyers
To say: Me too.

How would you feel
If we parted now?
Okay, okay
Just tell me how!

Magnolias

The world is shutting down
The magnolias don't care
I tell them all my woes
The flowers are just as fair
Whereupon a petal falls
Softly into my hair.
I understand at last
This is a precious tear
They cannot walk or talk
But they can hear.

Song of the Author on Book Tour

Chicago? Chicago? It's a scheduled stop
So is New York where you talk till you drop
Is it San Francisco from where I come?
Am I marching on Washington to Clinton's drum?

But I'm not here and I'm not there
At present I'm up in the air, the air
At present I'm up in the air

'Oh Julian Barnes had lines round the block...'
'Loved Germaine Greer, just loved the shock...'
'Is Ian McEwan the son of Kingsley Amis?
He's such a talent whatever his name is...'

But I'm not here and I'm not there
At present I'm up in the air, the air
At present I'm up in the air

'This is the concierge, Brad' - His meaning
'We have a problem with your dry cleaning...'
'Ms. Frazier, this is the desk, Arleen,
A problem here with your limousine.'

But I'm not here and I'm not there
At present I'm up in the air, the air
At present I'm up in the air

'My wife loves to read but not your book...'
'Exactly when was that photo? Look...'
'The British reviews were not very kind-
But I guess you popular ones don't mind...'

But I'm not here and I'm not there
At present I'm up in the air, the air
At present I'm up in the air

'Hello, hello, darling! In Seattle, I think
No, no, no worries, I'm in the pink.
What, sales? Not yet. Reviews, don't ask
The only thing is to perform the task.'

Oh, I wish you were here and I wish I were there
At present I'm up in the air, the air
There must be another world somewhere ...

On the Balcony

Ten o'clock midsummer sky
The light in the night which won't die
Two glasses, one kiss
I'm remembering this
The shadows won't care if I cry

Then I feel something pass
The ghost of a glass
And your kiss,
Like the light which won't die
Ten o'clock midsummer sky.

James Newby

Dappled Things (2014)

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day

Gerard Manley Hopkins

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.
What hours, O what black hours we have spent
This night! what sights you, heart, saw; ways you went!
And more must, in yet longer light's delay.
With witness I speak this. But where I say
Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament
Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent
To dearest him that lives alas! away.

I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.
Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.

Requiescat

Oscar Wilde

Tread lightly, she is near
Under the snow,
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust,
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust.

Lily-like, white as snow,
She hardly knew
She was a woman, so
Sweetly she grew.

Coffin-board, heavy stone,
Lie on her breast,
I vex my heart alone,
She is at rest.

Peace, peace, she cannot hear
Lyre or sonnet,
All my life's buried here,
Heap earth upon it.

Easter Day

Oscar Wilde

The silver trumpets rang across the Dome:
The people knelt upon the ground with awe:
And borne upon the necks of men I saw,
Like some great God, the Holy Lord of Rome.
Priest-like, he wore a robe more white than foam,
And, king-like, swathed himself in royal red,
Three crowns of gold rose high upon his head:
In splendour and in light the Pope passed home.
My heart stole back across wide wastes of years
To One who wandered by a lonely sea,
And sought in vain for any place of rest:
'Foxes have holes, and every bird its nest,
I, only I, must wander wearily,
And bruise my feet, and drink wine salt with tears.'

Pied Beauty

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Glory be to God for dappled things –
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And áll trádés, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

Texts continue overleaf

The Harlot's House

Oscar Wilde

We caught the tread of dancing feet,
We loitered down the moonlit street,
And stopped beneath the harlot's house.

Inside, above the din and fray,
We heard the loud musicians play
The 'Treues Liebes Herz' of Strauss.

Like strange mechanical grotesques,
Making fantastic arabesques,
The shadows raced across the blind.

We watched the ghostly dancers spin
To sound of horn and violin,
Like black leaves wheeling in the wind.

Like wire-pulled automatons,
Slim silhouetted skeletons
Went sidling through the slow quadrille,

Then took each other by the hand,
And danced a stately saraband;
Their laughter echoed thin and shrill.

Sometimes a clockwork puppet pressed
A phantom lover to her breast,
Sometimes they seemed to try to sing.

Sometimes a horrible marionette
Came out, and smoked its cigarette
Upon the steps like a live thing.

Then, turning to my love, I said,
'The dead are dancing with the dead,
The dust is whirling with the dust.'

But she - she heard the violin,
And left my side, and entered in:
Love passed into the house of lust.

Then suddenly the tune went false,
The dancers wearied of the waltz,
The shadows ceased to wheel and whirl.

And down the long and silent street,
The dawn, with silver-sandalled feet,
Crept like a frightened girl.

No worst, there is none

Gerard Manley Hopkins

No worst, there is none. Pitched past pitch of grief,
More pangs will, schooled at forepangs, wilder wring.
Comforter, where, where is your comforting?
Mary, mother of us, where is your relief?
My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a main, a chief

Woe, world-sorrow; on an age-old anvil wince and sing —
Then lull, then leave off. Fury had shrieked 'No ling-
ering! Let me be fell: force I must be brief.'

O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap
May who ne'er hung there. Nor does long our small
Durance deal with that steep or deep. Here! creep,
Wretch, under a comfort serves in a whirlwind: all
Life death does end and each day dies with sleep.

Interval

Nicky Spence

Songs of Love and Loss (2021)

(world première)

O Do Not Love Too Long

WB Yeats

Sweetheart, do not love too long:
I loved long and long,
And grew to be out of fashion
Like an old song.

All through the years of our youth
Neither could have known
Their own thought from the other's,
We were so much at one.

But O, in a minute she changed -
O do not love too long,
Or you will grow out of fashion
Like an old song.

Triptych

Andrew Ball

ABENDLIED

you arrived just after 7 and gave me
a pair of kitchen tongs
you had noticed mine were broken

strange present

plain
functional

yet prescient

for each time I use them and
apply

the gentle firmness they require

I feel once more that same
pressure
of your arms around my waist

much later
that evening
the sudden snow

TWO-PART INVENTION

quite honestly
If I wanted red hot sex
I would be looking at someone
my own age

you said
and I said

can we talk about this

AUBADE

I wandered in the undulating forest
exploring every path every clearing
bathing in every pool and stream

not even the deepest thicket
was impenetrable to me

I knelt and buried my head
In the piled-up leaves
resinous electric

I held pungency in my mouth
took communion on my tongue
watched the snow catch fire

Barcarolle

Peter Halstead

The ruined heavens split
The rigging one last time,
Pushed by buckling in the planet
To coat the bay in rime,

To trace the slip
Of phosphorescent lights
As monstrous ripples ship
Around a sky of ice,

Sheets that splinter in the air
Like seas failing in the deep,
Broken worlds whose dying glare
Burns like fuses in our sleep,

Fireballs whose forked extremes
Spray us shipwrecked into dreams.

Radical Hope

Jonathan Galassi

Darling, I'm running
On radical hope:
That the clouds will dispel
And the way will come clear,
That the UPS package
Contains our relief,
That magic will bring us
An end to our grief.

But the signs at the crossroads
Are pointing both ways
And the roundabout traffic
Has no right of way.
It sneaks through the town,
Up the hill and back down,
And all of our pigeons
Are coming to ground.

Where are the objects
Of all my affections?
Will what I am doing
Result in right action?
The landslide has happened,
The bridge is unsound;
There's no backing up now,
No turning around.

So much for direction,
For learning and knowing,
For seeking and heeding,
For staying or going.
These were the ways
Of the life that we've known
And all of this time
I've been going alone

And I can't anymore.
Will it happen this way?
Do you hear what I'm telling
You, softly, today?
Can you listen to me?
Are you right? Am I wrong?
The answer is somewhere
Inside of this song.

Texts continue overleaf

One Night

Sir Stephen Hough

Lie beside me just this once;
We may never meet again.
Tender in this one-night stand,
Reckless with wild abandon.
That false illusion:
'We will be faithful for ever and ever'.
No, let us grasp this blink of bliss,
Moments draining fast away,
Heartbeat, passing, but for now
An ecstatic union.

Friends and neighbours criticise,
But we have found a vein which pulses
Quick to every touch and kiss.
Though I hardly know your name,
Near your stranger's body leans,
Its smell and touch are everything,
All I need or hope to hold.
In your eyes I've barely seen
A strange reflection of my own,
But still I trust implicitly.

Yet perhaps ... suspicion:
How could such a thing be right?
Am I playing with fire?
And voices from my past rise up,
They shout into my dream:
You are fake! You are false!
Are you stupid? Are you mad?
Am I mad?
But for this hour,
Kiss me deeply,
Hold me tight,
Gently bruise my skin, my soul.

Morning, rising, through the shade.
Let us cherish this night so close to us,
Inside our fragile hearts.
As we say farewell and leave,
Shy, as if we've never met,
On the street we will forget.
Daytime's hustle rushing by,
Through all the years of blur and scratch;
Face will fade to older face,
That encounter will not die.

Beltway Blues

Tom Vaughan

Beyond the Beltway
There must be
A better life
For you and me.

We'll slip the Net
And go to ground
Where no e-mail
Can track us down –

No telephones,
No televisions,
No talking heads,
No politicians.

Off-stage, off-screen,
Off-line – together
We'll find ourselves,
We'll find each other.

You know the life
I have in mind,
The real thing
Not the virtual kind –

I'll light the fire,
We'll watch the flames
Consume the past,
Sure what remains

Is older, deeper,
Firmer ...
 Strange
How every time
We talk this way

We heave a sigh
And here we stay.

When You Are Old

WB Yeats

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

Ailish Tynan
Ema Nikolovska
Nicky Spence
James Newby
Alisdair Hogarth

Other Love Songs (2010)

When I have passed away/December 1919

Claude McKay

When I have passed away and am forgotten,
And no one living can recall my face,
When under alien sod my bones lie rotten
With not a tree or stone to mark the place;

Perchance a pensive youth, with passion burning,
For olden verse that smacks of love and wine,
The musty pages of old volumes turning,
May light upon a little song of mine,

And he may softly hum the tune and wonder
Who wrote the verses in the long ago;
Or he may sit him down awhile to ponder
Upon the simple words that touch him so.

Last night I heard your voice, mother,
The words you sang to me
When I, a little barefoot boy,
Knelt down against your knee.

And tears gushed from my heart, mother,
And passed beyond its wall,
But though the fountain reached my throat
The drops refused to fall.

'Tis ten years since you died, mother,
Just ten dark years of pain,
And oh, I only wish that I
Could weep just once again.

All shall be well

Julian of Norwich

All shall be well!

He shewed me a little thing, a hazel-nut in the palm of my hand. It was as round as a ball. *What may this be? It is all that is made.* I marvelled how it might last, for methought it might suddenly have fallen to naught for littleness. *It lasteth, and ever shall last. For God loveth it.* And All-thing have being through the love of God.

Love was his meaning. Who shewed it thee? Love! What shewed He thee? Love! Wherefore shewed He thee? For Love! Ere God made us He loved us, which love was never slacked nor ever shall be. See! I am God. See! I am in all things. See! I do all things. See! I lift my never hands

off my works, nor ever shall without end. How can any thing be amiss?

All shall be well
And all shall be well
And all manner of things shall be well.

The city's love

Claude McKay

For one brief golden moment rare like wine,
The gracious city swept across the line;
Oblivious of the color of my skin,
Forgetting that I was an alien guest,
She bent to me, my hostile heart to win,
Caught me in passion to her pillowy breast;
The great, proud city, seized with a strange love,
Bowed down for one flame hour my pride to prove.

Madam and her Madam

Langston Hughes

I worked for a woman,
She wasn't mean—
But she had a twelve-room
House to clean.

Had to get breakfast,
Dinner, and supper, too—
Then take care of her children
When I got through.

Wash, iron, and scrub,
Walk the dog around—
It was too much,
Nearly broke me down.

I said, Madam,
Can it be
You trying to make a
Pack-horse out of me?

She opened her mouth.
She cried, Oh, no!
You know, Alberta,
I love you so!

I said, Madam,
That may be true—
But I'll be dogged
If I love you!

Texts continue overleaf

Kashmiri song

Laurence Hope

Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar,
Where are you now? Who lies beneath your spell?
Whom do you lead on Rapture's roadway, far,
Before you agonise them in farewell?
Oh, pale dispensers of my Joys and Pains,
Holding the doors of Heaven and of Hell,
How the hot blood rushed wildly through the veins
Beneath your touch, until you waved farewell.
Pale hands, pink tipped, like Lotus buds that float
On those cool waters where we used to dwell,
I would have rather felt you round my throat,
Crushing out life, than waving me farewell!

Because I liked you better

AE Housman

Because I liked you better
Than suits a man to say,
It irked you, and I promised
To throw the thought away.

To put the world between us
We parted, stiff and dry;
'Good-bye,' said you, 'forget me.'
'I will, no fear', said I.

If here, where clover whitens
The dead man's knoll, you pass,
And no tall flower to meet you
Starts in the trefoiled grass,

Halt by the headstone naming
The heart no longer stirred,
And say the lad that loved you
Was one that kept his word.

The colour of his hair

AE Housman

Oh who is that young sinner with the handcuffs on his
wrists?
And what has he been after, that they groan and shake
their fists?
And wherefore is he wearing such a conscience-stricken
air?
Oh they're taking him to prison for the colour of his hair.

'Tis a shame to human nature, such a head of hair as his;
In the good old time 'twas hanging for the colour that it is;
Though hanging isn't bad enough and flaying would be fair
For the nameless and abominable colour of his hair.

Oh a deal of pains he's taken and a pretty price he's paid
To hide his poll or dye it of a mentionable shade;
But they've pulled the beggar's hat off for the world to see
and stare,
And they're taking him to justice for the colour of his hair.

Now 'tis oakum for his fingers and the treadmill for his feet,
And the quarry-gang on portland in the cold and in the
heat,
And between his spells of labour in the time he has to
spare
He can curse the god that made him for the colour of his
hair.

Simon, son of John

Liturgical text

'Simon, son of John, do you love me?'

'You know, Lord, I love You.'

'Feed my lambs.'

'Simon, son of John, do you love me?'

'You know, Lord, I love you!'

'Tend my lambs.'

'Simon, son of John, do you love me?'

'Lord, you know everything, you know I love you!'

'Feed my sheep.'

Agnus Dei qui tollis pecata mundi. Miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei qui tollis pecata mundi. Miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei qui tollis pecata mundi. Dona nobis pacem.

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