

# WIGMORE HALL

Monday 6 December 2021 7.30pm

24 pages in the life of Tchaikovsky

Ekaterina Semenchuk mezzo-soprano

Semyon Skigin piano

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

A tear trembles Op. 6 No. 4 (1869)

Why? Op. 6 No. 5 (1869)

None but the lonely heart Op. 6 No. 6 (1869)

To forget so soon (1870)

At Bedtime Op. 27 No. 1 (1875)

The fearful moment Op. 28 No. 6 (1875)

It was in the early spring Op. 38 No. 2 (1878)

At the ball Op. 38 No. 3 (1878)

If only I had known Op. 47 No. 1 (1880)

Death Op. 57 No. 5 (1884)

Frenzied nights Op. 60 No. 6 (1886)

Does the day reign? Op. 47 No. 6 (1880)

*Interval*

The first meeting Op. 63 No. 4 (1887)

The fires in the room were already out Op. 63 No. 5 (1887)

6 mélodies Op. 65 (1888)

*Sérénade (Où vas-tu, souffle d'aurore) • Déception • Sérénade (J'aime dans le rayon de la limpide aurore) • Qu'importe que l'hiver • Les larmes • Rondel*

We sat together Op. 73 No. 1 (1893)

Night Op. 73 No. 2 (1893)

The Sun has set Op. 73 No. 4 (1893)

Again, as before, alone Op. 73 No. 6 (1893)

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Dear listeners!

Tchaikovsky's romances span his entire creative life. He attempted his first songs at the age of 17, and his last were written in the final months of his life. This genre is perhaps the most personal and intimate in his entire output. It's rare that any composer, under the impression of a specific incident or emotion, sits down and responds with a four-movement symphony. But a song can be written quickly, under the immediate influence of emotion, and with Tchaikovsky this was often the case.

Tchaikovsky wrote 104 romances, and we see them as 104 personal letters - addressed to you, the listener, and to those of us who are who are entrusted to perform them. From these 104 songs we have chosen 24, focusing on the widest possible range of emotion, from joyful exultation to the depths of pain and melancholy - in short, all the feelings that their creator experienced to the full in his life. With you, we will leaf through 24 selected pages from the book of this great composer's life, and we dare to hope that they will not leave you, our dear listeners, wholly indifferent - that they find a response in your hearts.

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**Tchaikovsky's** songs belong to a specifically Russian genre: the romance. The romance had its origins in the Italianate salon-songs that flourished in the reign (1825-1855) of Tsar Nicholas I, and which had been given a distinctly Russian colouring by Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (1804-1857). Romances are subtly different from German *Lieder* (although the songs of Schubert and later Schumann were known in Russia). They're at ease in society; whether the elegant salons of St Petersburg and Moscow, or a house party on a country estate. They're northern flowers on southern rootstock, with the emphasis on expressive melody and graceful (and playable) accompaniment rather than detailed word-setting.

Nonetheless, words and music sometimes became indissolubly one. As early as his first published set of songs, Op. 6 (December 1869), the 29-year-old Tchaikovsky hit upon the perfection of 'None but the lonely heart' - a Russian translation of verses from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* that would become his single most famous song, performed by Boris Christoff and Frank Sinatra alike. 'A tear trembles', to words by Alexei Tolstoy, probes even deeper, and Op. 6 was an immediate and enduring success. Tchaikovsky, who'd confessed in a letter to his brother Modest that 'I've started to write some songs to earn a little money', was delighted, and Op. 6 established a lifelong habit of publishing songs in multiples of six (Tchaikovsky, a devoted dog-owner, compared them to litters of puppies).

He occasionally deviated from his own convention. 'To forget so soon', to words by his friend, the bohemian and poet Alexei Apukhtin, was written as a stand-alone song in late 1870, with a

view to performance at an all-Tchaikovsky concert the following March. This was the occasion, attended (to lively public interest) by Ivan Turgenev, that also saw the première of Tchaikovsky's First String Quartet. Two 'litters' followed in close succession in March and April 1875; the romances Opp. 27 and 28 seem to have been conceived in the same rush of imagination. 'The fearful moment' proved another enduring favourite, as did 'It was in early spring' from Op. 38 - which he'd written during the spring of 1878, partly in Italy and partly in Russia, as (he confided to his patron Nadezhda von Meck) 'something between relaxation and work'.

'Does the day reign?', the first of the Op. 47 set (March 1880), had a more serious purpose. Dedicated to the Paris-trained soprano Alexandra Panayeva-Kartsova, its operatic tone is wholly intentional. Tchaikovsky completed his Op. 57 set while revising the opera *Vakula the Smith* in December 1884, and in September 1886, having learned that the Tsarina wished to receive the dedication of a Tchaikovsky song, he responded in truly imperial style with a set of 12: Op. 60. Royal favour had its consequences. Shortly after completing the Tsarina's songs, he received a volume of poems by the Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich. 'Perhaps you feel something from them might be suitable for setting to music?' hinted the Grand Duke, unambiguously. The six romances Op. 63 were duly completed in December 1887.

The impetus for Op. 65 came from a rather more intimate acquaintance: the Belgian soprano Désirée Artôt, to whom Tchaikovsky had been briefly engaged in 1868. Meeting Tchaikovsky in early 1888 after two decades of estrangement, she requested a song from her former fiancé: 'allowing for my voice, I shall put all my soul into it', she promised. Tchaikovsky obliged in kind, with not one song but six. He completed the Op. 65 set in October, and these six romances form a very personal homage from a composer to a singer he knew and still, in his own way, loved. They're small, but perfectly designed to charm a Gallic audience as well as to suit Artôt's particular vocal gifts. Naturally they're in French, a language that was widely spoken by educated Russians before 1917.

The six romances Op. 73, however, emerged from a collection of poems that Tchaikovsky received - wholly unsolicited - from Daniil Rathaus, a 24-year old student at Kiev University. Tchaikovsky recognised talent when he saw it, and completed the six songs in a few days in May 1893. 'I don't know what the fate of our romances will be', he wrote to Rathaus, 'but I know that I wrote them with great pleasure'. Fate, unhappily, had plans of its own. These six songs would be the last completed opus to be published in Tchaikovsky's lifetime, and further poems from Rathaus arrived too late. 'We sat together' and 'Again, as before, alone' were performed for the first time in December 1893, at Tchaikovsky's memorial concerts in St Petersburg and Kiev.

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## Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

### A tear trembles Op. 6 No. 4 (1869)

*Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy*

Sleza drozhit v tvoyom  
revnivom vzore –  
O, ne grusti, ty vsyo mne  
doroga!  
No ya lyubit mogu lish na  
prostora –  
Moyu lyubov, shirokuyu kak more,  
Vmestit ne mogut, net! vmestit  
ne mogut  
Zhizni berega.

A tear trembles in your jealous  
gaze –  
oh, don't be sad, you're dear to  
me as ever!  
But I can only love in boundless  
freedom –  
my love is wide as the sea,  
life's shores cannot,  
no!  
Cannot contain it all.

O, ne grusti, moi drug, zemnoe  
minet gore,  
Pozhdi eshchyo – nevolya  
nedolga –  
V odnu lyubov, my vse  
solyomsya vskore,  
V odnu lyubov, shirokuyu kak more,  
Chto ne vmestyat, net! chto ne  
vmestyat  
Zemnye berega.

Oh, don't be sad, my love,  
earthly grief will pass,  
wait a little longer – this  
bondage is brief –  
soon we all will merge into love  
alone,  
into a love as wide as the sea,  
that earthly shores never,  
no!  
Never could contain.

### Why? Op. 6 No. 5 (1869)

*Lev Aleksandrovich Mey, after Heine*

Otchego poblednela vesnoi  
Pyshnotsvetnaya roza sama?  
Otchego pod zelyonoi travoi  
Golubaya fialka nema?  
Otchego tak pechalno zvuchit  
Pesnya ptichki, nesyas v nebesa?  
Otchego nad lugami visit  
Pogrebalnym pokrovom rosa?  
Otchego v nebe solntse s  
utra  
Kholodno i temno, kak zimoi?  
Otchego i zemlya vsya syra  
I ugryumey moglii samoy?  
Otchego ya i sam vsyo grustnei  
I boleznennei den oto dnya?  
Otchego, o skazhi mne skorei,  
Ty, pokinuv, zabyla menya?

Why has the radiant rose  
grown pale in the springtime?  
Why does the blue violet lie  
mute under the green grass?  
Why is the bird's song so sad  
as it rises up to heaven?  
Why does the dew on the meadows  
hang like a mourning veil?  
Why is the sun in the sky this  
morning  
cold and dark as in winter?  
Why is the earth all damp  
and gloomier than the grave?  
Why do I feel sadder and sadder  
and sicker from day to day?  
Why, oh tell me right now,  
did you leave me and forget me?

## None but the lonely heart Op. 6 No. 6 (1869)

*Lev Aleksandrovich Mey, after Goethe*

Net, tolko tot, kto znal  
Svidanya zhazhdu,  
Poimyyot, kak ya stradal  
I kak ya strazhdu.

No, only one who's known  
longing to be together,  
can know what I've suffered  
and how I'm suffering.

Glyazhu ya vdal... net sil,  
Tuskneyet oko...  
Akh, kto menya lyubil  
I znal – dalyoko!

I gaze at the distance... faint,  
my eye grows dim...  
ah, how far away's the one  
who loved me, knew me!

Akh, tolko tot, kto znal  
Svidanya zhazhdu,  
Poimyyot, kak ya stradal  
I kak ya strazhdu.  
Poimyyot, kak ya stradal  
I kak ya strazhdu.

Ah, only one who's known  
longing to be together,  
can know what I've suffered  
and how I'm suffering.  
Can know what I've suffered  
and how I'm suffering.

Vsya grud gorit... Kto  
znal  
Svidanya zhazhdu,  
Poimyyot, kak ya stradal  
I kak ya strazhdu.

My heart's on fire... whoever's  
known  
longing to be together,  
knows what I've suffered  
and how I'm suffering.

### To forget so soon (1870)

*Aleksey Nikolayevich Apukhtin*

Zabyt tak skoro, Bozhe moi,  
Vsyo schastye zhizni prozhitoi!  
Vse nashi vstrechi,  
razgovory,  
Zabyt tak skoro, zabyt tak  
skoro!

To forget so soon, good God,  
all the happiness we lived through!  
All the times we met, the  
conversations,  
to forget so soon, forget so  
soon!

Zabyt volneniya pervykh  
dnei,  
Svidanya chas v teni  
vetvei!  
Ochei nemye razgovory,  
Zabyt tak skoro, zabyt tak  
skoro!

Forget the emotions of those  
first days,  
the hour of rendezvous under  
shady branches!  
Mute conversations of the eyes,  
to forget so soon, forget so  
soon!

Zabyt kak polnaya luna  
Na nas glyadela iz okna,  
Kak kolykhalas tikho shtora,  
Zabyt tak skoro, zabyt tak skoro,  
tak skoro!

To forget the full moon  
gazing at us through the window,  
the quiet rustle of the blinds,  
to forget so soon, forget so  
soon, so soon!

Zabyt lyubov, zabyt mechty,  
Zabyt te klyatvy, pomnish ty,  
pomnish ty, pomnish ty?

Forget love, forget dreams,  
forget the vows, do you remember  
them, do you, do you?

V nochnuyu pasmurnuyu poru, v nochnuyu pasmurnuyu poru, Zabyt tak skoro, tak skoro! Bozhe moj!	At night's bleakest hour, night's bleakest hour, To forget so soon, so soon! Good God!
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### At Bedtime Op. 27 No. 1 (1875)

*Nikolai Platonovich Ogaryov*

Nochnaya tma bezmolviye prinosit I k otdykhу zovyot menya. Pora, pora! pokoya telo prosit, Dusha ustala v vikhre dnya.	The darkness of night brings silence and beckons me to rest. Tis time, 'tis time! the body longs for peace, the soul is tired after the tumult of day.
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Molyu tebya, pred snom gryadushchim, Bozhe: Dai lyudyam mir; blagoslovi Mladentsa son, i nishchenskoye lozhe, I slyozy tikhiye lyubvi!	I pray, oh Lord, before I fall asleep: give peace to people; bless the child who sleeps and the pauper in his bed, and quiet tears of love!
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Prosti grekhu, na zhgucheye stradanye Uspokoitelno dokhni, I vse tvoi pechalnye sozdanya Khot snovidenem obmani!	Forgive our sins, send your calming breath to soothe the pain of suffering, and deceive all your sad creatures if only with a dream!
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### The fearful moment Op. 28 No. 6 (1875)

*Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky*

Ty vnimayesh, vniz skloniv golovku, Ochi opustiv i tikho vzdykhaya! Ty ne znayesh, kak mgnovenya eti Strashny dlya menya i polny znachenya, Kak menya smushchayet eto molchanye. Ya prigovor tvoi zhdu, ya zhdu reshenya – Il nozh ty mne v serdtse vonzish, Il rai mne otkroyesh. Akh, ne terzai menya, skazhi lish slovo!	You listen, your dear head inclined, your eyes lowered, quietly sighing! You don't know how these moments frighten me, how full of meaning they are, how this silence upsets me. I await your verdict, your decision – you'll either stab me in the heart or show me heaven. Oh, don't torture me, just say one word!
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Otchego zhe robkoye priznanye V serdtse tak tebe zapalo gluboko? Tu vzdykhayesh, ty drozhish i plachesh – Il slova lyubvi v ustakh tvoikh nemeyut, Ili ty menya zhaleyesh, ne lyubish?	How could my shy confession sink so deeply in your heart? You sigh, you tremble and weep – are you holding back words of love, or do you pity me, not love me?
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Ya prigovor tvoi zhdu, ya zhdu reshenya – Il nosh ty mne v serdtse vonzish, Il rai mne otkroyesh! Akh, vnemli zhe molbe moei, Otvechai, otvechai skorei! Ya prigovor tvoi zhdu, ya zhdu reshenya.	I await your verdict, your decision – you'll either stab me in the heart or show me heaven! Oh then, hear my plea, answer me, answer now! I await your verdict, your decision.
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### It was in the early spring Op. 38 No. 2 (1878)

*Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy*

To bylo ranneyu vesnoi Trava edva vskhodila, Ruchi tekli, ne paril znoi, I zelen roshch skvozila;	It was in early spring, the grass was just appearing, the streams were flowing, the air was warm, in the groves there was a thin veil of green;
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Truba pastushya poutru Yeshchyo ne pela zvonko, I v zavitkakh yeshchyo v boru Byl paporotnik tonkii;	Too early to hear the shepherd's horn ring out in the morning, and in the grove of conifers, still twisted tight, stood the first slender ferns;
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To bylo ranneyu vesnoi V teni beryoz to bylo, Kogda s ulybkoi predo mnoi Ty ochi opustila...	It was in early spring, it was in the shade of birches, when, standing before me, smiling, you lowered your eyes...
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To na lyubov' moyu v otvet Ty opustila vezhdy – O zhizn! O les! O solntsa svet! O yunost! O nadezhdy!	It was an answer to my love, your lowered glance – O life! O woods! O sunlight! O youth! O hopes!
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I plakal ya pred toboi, Na lik tvoi glyadya milyi, – To bylo ranneyu vesnoi, V teni beryoz to bylo!	And I wept before you, gazing at your dear face, – it was in early spring, in the shade of birches!
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To bylo v utro nashikh let – O schastye! O slyozy! O les! O zhizn! O solntsa svet! O svezhii dukh beryozy!	It was in the morning of our days – O happiness! O tears! O woods! O life! O sunlight! O fresh smell of the birch tree!
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### At the ball Op. 38 No. 3 (1878)

*Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy*

Sred shumnogo bala, sluchaino, V trevoге mirskoi suety, Tebya ya uvidel, no taina Tvoi pokryvala cherty.	Amid the din of the ball, by chance in all of vain society's alarms, I caught sight of you, but a mystery hid your features from me.
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Lish ochi pechalno glyadeli,  
A golos tak divno  
zvuchal,  
Kak zvon otdalyonnoi svireli,  
Kak morya igrayushchii  
val.

Your eyes were gazing sadly,  
but your voice had a wonderful  
sound,  
like notes played on a distant flute,  
like waves swelling playfully in  
the sea.

Mne stan tvoy ponravilsya tonkii,  
I ves tvoi zadumchiviy vid,  
A smekh tvoi, i grustnyi i zvonkii,  
S tekh por v moyom serdtse  
zvuchit.

I liked your slim figure  
and your pensive look;  
your laughter, sad and musical,  
rings in my heart ever  
since.

V chasy odinokiye nochi,  
Lyublyu ya, ustalyi prilech.  
Ya vizhu pechalnye ochi,  
Ya slyshu vesyoluyu rech.

At night in solitary hours,  
tired, I like to lie back.  
I see your sad eyes,  
I hear your gay speech.

I grustno ya, grustno tak zasypayu,  
I v gryozakh nevedomykh splyu;  
Lyublyu li tebya? Ya ne  
znayu  
No kazhetsya mne, chto lyublyu ...

And, melancholy, I fall asleep  
and dream mysterious dreams...  
I don't know if this means I love  
you,  
but it seems to me I'm in love!

### If only I had known Op. 47 No. 1 (1880)

*Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy*

Kaby znala ya, kaby vedala,  
Ne smoyrela by iz okoshechka  
Ya na molodtsa razudalogo,  
Kak on uekhal po nashei ulitse.  
Nabekren zalomivshi murmolku,  
Kak likhogo konya bulanogo,  
Zvonkonogogo, dolgogrivogo  
Suprotiv okon na dyby vzdymal!

If I'd known, if I'd realised,  
I'd not have looked out the window  
at the dashing young man,  
riding down our street,  
his fur cap at a jaunty angle,  
on his swift dun horse,  
hooves ringing loud, long-maned,  
rearing up outside my windows!

Kaby znala ya, kaby vedala,  
Dlya nego by ya ne ryadilasya,  
S zolotoi kaimoi lentu  
aluyu  
V kosu dlinnuyu ne v pletala by,  
Rano do svetu ne vstavala  
by,  
Za okoliysu ne speshila  
by,  
V rose nozhenki ne mochila by,  
Na prosyolok tot ne glyadela by,  
Ne proyedet li tem prosyolkom on,  
Na ruke derzha pyostru sokola.  
Kaby znala ya, kaby vedala!

If I'd known, if I'd realised,  
I wouldn't have dressed up for him,  
wouldn't have plaited in my long  
braid  
a scarlet ribbon with a gold border,  
wouldn't have risen early before  
light,  
wouldn't have hurried to the  
edge of town,  
got my feet wet in the dew,  
watching the road,  
will he come this way,  
a speckled falcon riding on his arm?  
If I'd known, if I'd realised!

Kaby znala ya, kaby vedala,  
Ne sidela by pozdnim  
vecherom,  
Prigoryu nivshis na zavaline,  
Na zavaline, bliz kolodezya,

If I'd known, if I'd realised,  
I'd not be sitting up late in the  
evening,  
grieving on the knoll by the house,  
on the knoll, near the well,

Podzhidayuchi, da  
gadayuchi,  
Ne pridyt li on, nenaglyadni moi,  
Napoit konya studenoi vodoi!  
Kaby znala ya, kaby vedala!  
Akh!

watching and waiting and  
wondering,  
will he come, my handsome one,  
to water his horse at the cold well?  
If I'd known, if I'd realised!  
Oh!

### Death Op. 57 No. 5 (1884)

*Dmitry Sergeyevich Merezhkovsky*

Esli rozy tikho osypayutsya,  
Esli zvyozdy merknut v nebesakh,  
Ob utyosy volny  
razbivayutsya,  
Gasnet luch zari na  
oblakakh,  
Eto smert, smert,

If roses shed their petals quietly,  
if stars grow dimmer in the sky,  
waves against the cliffs are  
smashed to bits,  
sunset's colours fade against  
the clouds,  
that is death, death.

Eto smert – no bez borby  
muchitelnoi;  
Eto smert, plenyaya  
krasotoi,  
Obeshchayet otdykh upoitelnyi –  
Luchshii dar prirody  
vseblagoi.

That is death – without the pain  
of struggle,  
that is death, with captivating  
beauty,  
promising to ravish us with rest –  
best of gifts that blessed nature  
gives.

U neyo, nastavnitsy bozhestvennoi,  
Nauchites, lyudi, umirat,  
Chtob s ulybkoi krotkoi i  
torzhestvennoi,  
Svoi konets bezropotno  
vstrechat.

Learn from her, divine mentor,  
learn, human folk, the way to die,  
and with a smile of meekness  
and of triumph,  
face your end without  
complaint.

### Frenzied nights Op. 60 No. 6 (1886)

*Aleksey Nikolayevich Apukhtin*

Nochi bezumnye, nochi  
bessonnye,  
Rechi nesvyaznye, vsory  
ustalye...  
Nochi, poslednim ognem  
ozarenyye,  
Oseni mertvoi tsvety  
zapozdalye!

Frenzied nights, sleepless  
nights,  
incoherent speeches, tired  
gazes...  
nights lit by the last  
candle,  
dead autumn's late-blooming  
flowers!

Pust dazhe vremya rukoi  
besposhchadnoy  
Mne ukazalo, chto bylo v vas  
lozhnogo,  
Vsyo zhe lechu ya k vam  
pamyatyu zhadnoy,  
V proshlom otveta ishchu  
nevozmozhnogo...

Even if the unsparing hand of  
time  
has laid bare all that is false in  
you,  
still I fly to you in hungry  
memory,  
searching the past for an  
impossible answer...

Vkradchivym shepotom vy  
zaglushayete  
Zvuki dnevnye, nesnosnye,  
shumnye...  
V tikhuyu noch vy moi son  
otgonyayete,  
Nochi bessonnye, nochi  
bezumnye!  
Nochi bessonnye, nochi  
bezumnye!

Your insinuating whispers  
muffle  
the loud, unbearable noises of  
the day...  
in the still night you drive away  
sleep,  
sleepless nights, frenzied  
nights!  
Sleepless nights, frenzied  
nights!

### Does the day reign? Op. 47 No. 6 (1880)

*Aleksey Nikolayevich Apukhtin*

Den li tsarit, tishina li  
nochnaya,  
V snakh li bessvyaznykh, v  
zHITEISKOI borbe,  
Vsyudu so mnoi, moyu zhizn  
napolnyaya,  
Duma vsyo ta zhe, odna,  
rokovaya, –  
Vsyo o tebe! vsyo o tebe!  
Vsyo, vsyo, vsyo, vsyo o  
tebe!

Whether the day reigns, or  
stillness of night,  
in dreams incoherent, or  
everyday struggle,  
wherever I am, to make my life  
whole,  
is one and the same thought,  
unchanging, predestined –  
always of you! Always of you!  
Always, always, always  
of you!

S neyu ne strashen mne prizrak  
bylogo,  
Serditse vospryanulo, snova  
lyubya...  
Vera, mechty, vdokhnovennoye  
slovo,  
Vsyo chto v dushe dorogogo,  
svyatogo, –  
Vsyo, ot tebya! vsyo, vsyo ot  
tebya,  
Vsyo ot tebya!

With it I don't fear ghosts from  
the past,  
my heart can take wing, loving  
again...  
faith, dreams, an inspired  
word,  
all in my soul that's dear,  
sacred –  
all of it comes from you! All, all  
of it  
from you, all from you!

Budut li dni moi yasny,  
unyly,  
Skoro li sginu ya, zhizn  
zagubya, –  
Znayu odno: chto do samoi  
mogily  
Pomysly, chuvstva, i pesni, i  
sily,  
Vsyo dlya tebya! vsyo dlya tebya,  
Domysly, chuvstva, i pesni, i  
sily,  
Vsyo, vsyo, vsyo, vsyo dlya tebya!

Whether my days be bright or  
bleak,  
if I burn out quickly, destroy my  
life, –  
one thing I know: to the grave  
itself  
all my hopes and feelings, all my  
songs and strength,  
all are for you! All for you,  
hopes, feelings, songs and  
strength,  
all, all, all, all – are for you!

### Interval

### The first meeting Op. 63 No. 4 (1887)

*Konstantin Konstantinovich Romanov*

Vot minovala razluka  
unylaya,  
Probil svidaniya chas,  
Svetloe, polnoye schastye, milaya,  
Vnov nastupilo dlya  
nas.

The melancholy period of  
separation is now over,  
the time for meeting is nigh.  
Pure, unclouded happiness  
has again come our way, my  
darling.

Dolgo tomilosya, polna stradaniya,  
Serditse tvoyo, no pover:  
Dni odinochestva, dni  
ispytaniya  
My naverstayem  
teper.

Long your heart has languished,  
filled with suffering,  
but have faith: we will now  
make up for  
the days of loneliness, the days  
of trial.

Neznye rechi, lyubvi  
vyrazheniya  
Vnov potekut bez kontsa,  
I vo yedinoye snova biyeniye  
Nashi solyutsya serdtsa!

Tender words, expressions of  
love,  
again will flow without end,  
our hearts will throb again  
with a single beat!

Pust sochetayet sozvuchye  
yedinoye  
Nashi dve dushi, i vnov,  
Slovno vesenyaya pesn  
solovinaya,  
Nasha vospryanet  
lyubov!

May our two souls  
again  
be united in one harmony,  
and, like the nightingale in  
spring,  
may our love burst once more  
into song!

### The fires in the room were already out Op. 63 No. 5

(1887)

*Konstantin Konstantinovich Romanov*

Uzh gasli v komnatakh  
ogni...  
Blagoukhali rozy...  
My seli na skamyu v  
teni  
Razvesistoi beryozy.

The fires in the rooms were  
already out...  
the roses smelled so fragrant...  
we sat down on a bench in the  
shade  
of a wide-branching birch.

My byli molody s toboi!  
Tak slastlivy my byli  
Nas okruzhavsheyu vesnoi,  
Tak goryachy lyubili!

You and I were young!  
We were so happy  
in the spring that surrounded us,  
how ardently we loved!

Dvurogii mesyats navodil  
Na nas svoyo siyanye;  
Ya nichego ne govoril,  
Boyas prervat molchanye;

The crescent moon sent down  
its light on us;  
I didn't say anything,  
afraid to interrupt the silence;

Bezmolvno sinikh glaz tvoikh  
Ty opuskala vzory:

Saying nothing you lowered  
your deep blue eyes:

Krasnorechivei slov inykh  
Nemye razgovory.

more eloquent than any words  
are wordless conversations.

Chego ne smel poverit ya,  
Cho v serdtse ty taila,  
Vsyo eto pesnya solovya  
Za nas dogovorila.

What I did not dare believe,  
what you kept hidden in your heart,  
all this the song of the nightingale  
finished saying for us.

## 6 mélodies Op. 65 (1888)

### Sérénade (Où vas-tu, souffle d'aurore)

*Édouard Turquety*

Où vas-tu, souffle  
d'aurore,  
Vent de miel qui viens  
d'éclore,  
Fraîche haleine d'un beau jour?  
d'un beau jour?  
Où vas-tu, brise inconstante,  
Quand la feuille palpitante  
Semble frissonner d'amour?

### Serenade

Where are you going, breath of  
dawn,  
honeyed breeze that comes at  
daybreak,  
fresh breath of a lovely day? of  
a lovely day?  
Where are you going, fickle breeze,  
when the trembling leaf  
seems to quiver with love?

Est-ce au fond de la vallée,  
Dans la cime échevelée  
D'un saule où le ramier dort, le  
ramier dort?  
Poursuis-tu la fleur vermeille,  
Ou le papillon qu'éveille,  
Un matin de flamme et d'or?

Is it to the depths of the valley  
in the tangled summit  
of a willow where the dove  
sleeps, the dove sleeps?  
Do you follow the vermilion flower,  
or a butterfly awakened  
by a morning of flame and gold?

Va plutôt, souffle d'aurore,  
Berçer l'âme que j'adore:  
Porte à son lit embaumé  
L'odeur des bois et des  
mousses,  
Et quelques paroles douces  
Comme les roses de mai,

Go instead, breath of dawn,  
to lull to sleep the soul I adore:  
carry to her perfumed bed  
the fragrance of the woods and  
the mosses,  
and some words as sweet  
as the roses of May,

L'odeur des bois et des  
mousses,  
Et quelques paroles douces  
Comme les roses de mai.

The fragrance of the woods and  
the mosses,  
and some words as sweet  
as the roses of May.

### Déception

*Paul Collin*

Le soleil rayonnait encore.  
J'ai voulu revoir les grands  
bois  
Où nous promenions autrefois  
Notre amour à sa belle aurore.

### Disappointment

The sun was still shining.  
I wished to see again the great  
woods  
where we used to promenade  
our love at its lovely beginning.

Je me disais: 'Sur le chemin,  
Je la retrouverai, sans doute:  
Ma main se tendra vers sa main,  
Et nous nous remettrons en  
route.'

I said to myself: 'On the road  
I will doubtless find her;  
my hand will reach for her hand,  
and on the way we will find  
reconciliation.'

Je regarde partout. En vain!  
J'appelle! Et l'écho seul  
m'écoute!

I look everywhere. In vain!  
I call! And only the echo hears  
me!

O, le pauvre soleil pâli!  
O, les pauvres bois sans  
ramage!  
O, mon pauvre amour, quel  
dommage!  
Si vite perdu dans l'oubli!

Oh, poor pale sun!  
Oh, poor woods without  
birdsong!  
Oh, my poor love, what a  
pity!  
So quickly lost to oblivion!

### Sérénade (J'aime dans le rayon de la limpide aurore)

*Paul Collin*

J'aime dans le rayon de la  
limpide aurore  
Le reflet de tes jolis yeux,  
Dans le chant matinal de  
l'oiseau j'aime encore  
L'écho de ton rire joyeux.

I love in the bright rays of the  
clear dawn  
The reflection of your pretty eyes,  
In the morning song of the bird I  
love again  
The echo of your joyous laughter.

Dans le calme des lys j'aime ta  
paix sereine,  
Dans leur pureté, ta blancheur;  
J'aime dans le parfum des roses  
ton haleine  
Et dans leur fraîcheur, ta  
fraîcheur.

In the calm of lilies I love your  
serene peace,  
in their perfection, your purity;  
in the perfume of roses I love  
your breath  
and in their freshness, your  
freshness.

Dans la mer que le flux ou le  
reflux agite  
J'aime tes caprices d'enfant,  
Et j'aime les soupirs de ton sein  
qui palpite  
Dans les longues plaintes du vent.

In the sea stirred by the ebb and  
flow of tides  
I love your childish whims,  
and I love the sighs of your  
trembling heart  
in the long laments of the wind.

J'aime la fière ardeur dont ton  
cœur sent la flamme  
Dans l'éclat du soleil qui luit;  
Et j'aime les pudeurs  
charmantes de ton âme  
Dans l'ombre chaste de la nuit.

I love the proud ardour whose  
flame your heart feels  
in the burst of the gleaming sun;  
and I love the charming modesty  
of your soul  
in the chaste darkness of the night.

J'aime dans le printemps qui  
verdit, la folie  
De ta jeunesse et ses espoirs;

In the spring that turns everything  
green, I love the foolishness  
of your youth and its hopes;

Et j'aime la douceur de ta  
mélancolie  
Dans le vague déclin des soirs!

and I love the gentleness of your  
melancholy  
in the hazy approach of evenings!

## Qu'importe que l'hiver

*Paul Collin*

Qu'importe que l'hiver éteigne  
les clartés

Du soleil assombri dans les  
cieux attristés?

Je sais bien où trouver encore  
Les brillants rayons d'une aurore  
Plus belle que celle des cieux.  
Toi que j'adore, c'est dans tes  
yeux!

Qu'importe que l'hiver ait des  
printemps défunts  
Dispersé sans pitié les enivrants  
parfums?

Je sais où trouver, non flétrie,  
Malgré les bises en furie,  
Une rose encore tout en fleur.  
O ma chérie, c'est dans ton cœur!

Ce rayon que, bravant les  
ombres de la nuit,  
Toujours splendide et pur au  
fond de tes yeux luit;  
Cette fleur toujours parfumée  
Qui dans ton cœur est enfermée  
Et qui sait survivre à  
l'été,  
Ma bien aimée, c'est ta beauté!

## Les larmes

*Augustine-Malvina Blanchecotte*

Si vous donnez le calme après  
tant de secousses

Si vous couvrez d'oubli tant de  
maux dérobés,

Si vous lavez ma plaie et si vous  
êtes douces,

O mes larmes, tombez! tombez!

Mais si comme autrefois vous  
êtes meurtrières,

Si vous rongez un cœur qui déjà  
brûle en soi

N'ajoutez pas au mal, respectez  
mes paupières:

O larmes, laissez moi, laissez moi!

## What does it matter that winter

What does it matter that winter  
smothers the brilliance  
of the sun darkened in the  
saddened sky?

I know well where to find again  
the bright rays of a dawn  
lovelier than that of the heavens.  
You, whom I adore, it is in your  
eyes!

What does it matter that winter  
has dispersed without pity  
the intoxicating perfumes of the  
dead spring?

I know where to find, unfaded,  
despite the cold wind's fury,  
a rose still fully in bloom.  
O my dear, it is in your heart!

This ray, which braves the  
shadows of night,  
always shines splendid and  
pure, deep in your eyes;  
this flower, always perfumed,  
locked up in your heart,  
and which knows how to last  
until summer,  
my adored one, it is your beauty!

## Tears

If you give calm after such  
upheaval,

if you cover with forgetfulness  
so many concealed wrongs,

if you wash my wound and if  
you are gentle,

oh my tears, fall, fall!

But if, as at other times, you are  
murderers,

if you gnaw a heart which  
already burns inside,

don't make it worse, spare my  
eyes:

oh tears, leave me, leave me!

Oui, laissez moi! je sens ma  
peine plus cuisante,  
Vous avez évoqué tous mes  
rêves perdus:  
Pitié! pitié! pitié! laissez mourir  
mon âme agonisante!  
Larmes, ne tombez pas! ne tombez  
pas! non! non! ne tombez pas!

## Rondel

*Paul Collin*

Il se cache dans ta grâce  
Un doux ensorcellement.

Pour leur joie et leur tourment  
Sur les cœurs tu fais main  
basse.

Tous sont pris. Nul ne se lasse  
De ce servage charmant.  
Il se cache dans ta grâce  
Un doux ensorcellement.

C'est l'affaire d'un moment,  
Ton regard qui sur nous passe  
Est le filet qui ramasse  
Nos âmes; Dieu sait comment!  
Il se cache dans ta grâce  
Un doux ensorcellement.

## We sat together Op. 73 No. 1 (1893)

*Daniil Maksimovich Rathaus*

My sideli s toboi u zasnuvshei  
reki.

S tikhoi pesnei proplyli domoi  
rybaki.

Solntsa luch zolotoi za rekoï  
dogoral.

I tebe ya togda nichego ne  
skazal.

Zagremelo vdali, nadvigalas  
groza,

Po resnitsam tvoim pokatilas  
sleza.

I s bezumnym rydanyem k tebe  
ya pripal,

I tebe nichego, nichego ne  
skazal.

I teper, v eti dni, ya, kak  
prezhde, odin,

Uzh ne zhdu nichego ot  
gryadushchikh godin.

Yes, leave me! I feel my pain  
becoming more intense.  
You have evoked all my lost  
dreams:  
Have pity, pity, pity! Leave my  
tormented soul to die!  
Tears, do not fall! do not fall!  
no! no! do not fall!

## Rondel

In your grace is hidden  
a gentle enchantment.

To their joy and torment  
you help yourself to every  
heart.

All are caught. None can resist  
this charming bondage.  
In your grace is hidden  
a gentle enchantment.

It only takes a moment;  
your gaze glancing over us  
is the net which gathers  
our souls; God knows how!  
In your grace is hidden  
a gentle enchantment.

We sat together by the still  
river.

With a quiet song the fishermen  
rowed home.

Across the river the gold ray of  
the sun was dying out.

And all that time I said nothing  
to you.

There was distant thunder as a  
storm moved in,  
a tear rolled down your  
eyelashes.

And sobbing madly I fell at your  
feet,  
and said nothing to you, nothing  
at all.

And now once again, as before,  
I'm alone,  
no longer expecting anything  
from the coming years.



V serdtse zhiznennyi zvuk ush  
davno otzvuchal...  
Akh, zachem, akh, zachem, ya tebe  
nichego, nichego ne skazal!

In my heart all cries of life long  
ago died out...  
Oh why, oh why, did I say  
nothing to you, nothing at all!

### Night Op. 73 No. 2 (1893)

*Daniil Maksimovich Rathaus*

Merknet slabyi svet  
svechi,  
Brodit mrak unyli  
I toska szhimayet grud,  
S neponyatnoi siloi.

Dim grows the weak light of the  
candle,  
beyond roams wretched darkness,  
and my heart's gripped by longing  
strong past understanding.

Na pechalnye glaza  
Tikho son niskhodit,  
I s proshedshim v etot mig  
Rech dusha zavodit.

Eyes filled with sorrow  
yield to sleep's quiet descent,  
and at this moment, with the past,  
my soul starts a conversation.

Istomilasya ona  
Gorestyu glubokoi,  
Poyavis zhe, khot vo sne,  
O, moi drug dalyokii!

It is weary and worn out  
with sadness profound;  
appear now, if only in a dream,  
oh, my friend far away!

### The Sun has set Op. 73 No. 4 (1893)

*Daniil Maksimovich Rathaus*

Zakatilos solntse, zaigrali  
kraski  
Lyogkoi pozolotoi v sineve  
nebes.  
V obayan nochi sladostrastnoi  
laski  
Tikho chto-to shepchet  
zadremavshii les.

The sun has set, a play of colour  
has begun,  
light streaks of gold in a dark  
blue sky.  
In the magic of night's  
voluptuous caress  
the sleeping forest whispers  
something softly.

I v dushe trevozhnoi umolkayut  
muki  
I dyshat vsei grudyu v etu noch  
legko.  
Nochi divnoi teni, nochi divnoi  
zvuki,  
Nas s toboi unosyat, drug moy,  
dalyoko...

And torments in an anxious soul  
subside,  
and tonight one's whole being  
breathes easier.  
Shadows of this wondrous night,  
sounds of this wondrous night,  
carry the two of us, my friend,  
far away...

Vsya obyata negoi etoi nochi  
strastnoi,  
Ty ko mne sklonilas na plecho  
glavoi...  
Ya bezumno schastliv, o moi  
drug prekrasnyi,  
Beskonechno schastliv v etu  
noch s toboi!

Wrapped in night's passionate  
languor,  
you lean your head on my  
shoulder...  
I'm insanely happy, oh my friend  
so lovely,  
boundlessly happy on this night  
with you!

### Again, as before, alone Op. 73 No. 6 (1893)

*Daniil Maksimovich Rathaus*

Snova, kak prezhdde, odin,  
Snova obyat ya toskoi.  
Smotritsya topol v okno,  
Ves ozaryonnyi lunoi.

Again, as before, I'm alone,  
again I'm filled with longing.  
A poplar stands by the window,  
flooded with moonlight.

Smotritsya topol v okno,  
Shepchut o chyom-to  
listy.  
V zvyozdakh goryat nebesa ...  
Gde teper, milaya, ty?

A poplar stands by the window,  
the leaves are whispering about  
something.  
The sky is aflame with stars ...  
Where now, darling, are you?

Vsyo, chto tvoritsya so mnoi,  
Ya peredat ne berus...  
Drug! pomolis za menya,  
Ya za tebya uzh molyus.

I couldn't begin to tell you  
all that's happening to me ...  
Friend! Say a prayer for me,  
I am praying for you.

*Translation of 'At Bedtime' by Philip Ross Bullock. All other translations by Richard D  
Sylvester from Tchaikovsky's Complete Songs: A Companion with Texts and  
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