

Selver, P., comp.

MODERN RUSSIAN POETRY

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

SELECTED AND TRANSLATED WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

P. SELVER

LONDON

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TO
MY FATHER

PREFACE

THIS book forms the Russian section of a more extensive Slavonic anthology which has been in progress for some years, and, as far as it has been completed, includes representative selections from the modern poetry of the Poles, Czechs, and Serbs.

The disadvantages associated with all anthologies are increased in the case of an anthology of translated verse, where the choice of the contents is affected not only by the translator's personal leanings, but also by the suitability of any particular poem for translation into another language. As regards the present volume, it is admittedly the merest outline, to be filled in later, as circumstances may permit. But it is hoped that this collection, in spite of such obvious shortcomings as have been indicated, will convey a fairly adequate idea of the chief features in modern Russian poetry, a branch of Russian literature which has so far received very little serious attention in this country.

On the subject of verse-translation there is a great divergency of opinion, and it is not proposed to discuss the matter at length in this preface. In the main, the translator has considered it his duty to produce renderings which, in themselves, are reasonably good English verse. At the same time, an endeavour has been made to give the meaning of the originals as closely as the restrictions of rhyme and rhythm will permit. The character of the original metre has been retained in

almost every case. In the Russian text the natural tonic accent has been indicated.

Some of these renderings first appeared in *The New Age*, and are reprinted in this collection by kind permission of the Editor, whom the translator takes this opportunity of thanking. It is also a duty and a pleasure to express gratitude to Mr. Alexander Bakshy, who read the proofs of the book, and offered valuable suggestions and criticisms while it was passing through the press.

P. S.

LONDON.

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INTRODUCTION

THE more recent developments in the history of Russian poetry may be regarded as a revival following upon a period of depression and stagnation. In the following sketch an attempt will be made to trace briefly the varying stages in its progress during the nineteenth century, before the achievements of contemporary writers are discussed in any detail.

The first important epoch in the history of Russian poetry during the nineteenth century is associated with the names of Pushkin and Lermontov. Pushkin, in particular, founded a poetical school, among the members of which were such men as Vyazemsky, Delvig, Yazykov, and Baratynsky. This was the golden age of Russian poetry, the popularity of which was enhanced by Pushkin's relations with the Court.

Pushkin died in 1837, Lermontov in 1841. These dates mark the beginning of a decline in the vogue which poetical literature had been enjoying. It rapidly sank from one extreme of favour to the other, and before long lyric verse was regarded as an inferior branch of literature, and was neglected by readers and critics alike. Yet, in spite of these adverse conditions, there was not a complete lack of lyric poets. About the middle of the century, at the very time when this reaction was most marked, the tradition of the earlier years was being worthily upheld by such men as Tyutchev, Maikov, Fet, and Polonsky. The neglect of poetry was, in fact, due to the political situation. It was a period when Russian society was beginning to show symptoms of internal ferment. All men of intellectual ability were expected to employ their talents for the advancement of the political cause. This practical materialism, which rejected all

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splendour of his own creative powers. In one of his best-known poems he begins:

"I am choiceness of Russian so stately of mien,
The poets before me my heralds have been. . . ."

This is the unaffected egotism of youth, and it also happens to be true, for it is highly probable that the literary historian of the future will date the second great epoch of Russian poetry from Balmont, just as the first is associated with the name of Pushkin. Of the great European lyric poets of modern times, Balmont is akin to Swinburne, Drachmann, d'Annunzio, and Vrchlický. His influence has altered the whole aspect of Russian poetry in the last generation.

If Bryusov's poetry lacks some of the exuberance and external brilliance which is so characteristic of Balmont, if it is often more sober and deliberate than that of the elder poet, it gains by a greater depth and unity of thought, by a more obvious scheme of ideas, by a closer contact with the realities of life. Balmont's poems are full of such words as *sky, stars, ocean, sun, shoreless spaces, clouds, peaks, silence, chaos, eternity*, the select vocabulary of the unreal; while Bryusov—probably influenced by Verhaeren—finds inspiration in the bustle of cities and the feverish life of the streets. Yet, although his subjects are frequently artificial, he does not treat them in an artificial manner. Bryusov has been specially attracted towards the French symbolists, many of whom he has translated. His versions from Maeterlinck, Verlaine, Verhaeren, d'Annunzio, and Wilde, together with a critical study of the late Latin poet Ausonius, also show in what direction his literary sympathies lie. They have exposed him to the accusation of being a scholar rather than a poet, but successive volumes of fervid and delicate verse have triumphantly vindicated him, and have shown that inspiration and industry do not mutually exclude each other. There is no denying a certain exotic tendency in some of Bryusov's poetry; but from this he has gradually freed himself more and more, so that in his most recent volumes he has attained an admirable clarity of style. Finally, let it be mentioned that Bryusov

ranks high as a Russian prose writer. Two of his novels in particular—"The Fiery Angel," dealing with the Renaissance period, and "The Altar of Victory," a product of Bryusov's late Latin studies—would represent modern Russian fiction far more worthily than the majority of the recent numerous importations.

The poetical movement inaugurated by Balmont and Bryusov had its centre at Moscow, with the review *Vyessy* (The Balance) as its official organ. The epithet "decadent" has been applied to these writers, but in Russian this implies nothing further than modernity of thought and cultivation of advanced artistic principles.

A few years before the establishment of this literary centre, another group of writers had begun to develop similar activities in the Russian capital, and to publish their works in the *Severny Vvestnik* (Northern Herald). The chief members of this group—Merezhkovsky, his wife, known as an author under her maiden name of Zinaida Hippus, Minsky, and Sologub—followed, in the main, religious tendencies, which can be traced back to the influence of Vladimir Solovyóv (1853-1900), philosopher and poet. Solovyóv, whose name is associated with various religious controversies—he was a champion of Catholicism—is sometimes regarded as the source of Russian symbolism. And it is significant that although Merezhkovsky (b. 1866) is more prominent as a novelist and critic than as a poet, his first published work was a volume of poems entitled "Symbols." It cannot be said, however, that Merezhkovsky as a poet has passed through any clearly marked stages of development. His poetry reflects rather those ideas which have found more ample expression in his other writings, to which they furnish an eloquent commentary.

Zinaida Hippus (b. 1870), who, like her husband, is also a prominent novelist, has shown from her earliest works a leaning towards the abstruse and metaphysical. In her verses this is even more strongly pronounced than in her other writings. The language of her poems is often beautiful, but often, too, they contain hazily mystical thoughts expressed with an abundance of rather highly coloured imagery. The same kind of hysterical affecta-

tion is characteristic of other Russian poetesses. All that is morbid, overwrought, and fantastic in the Russian spirit seems to become unpleasantly accentuated in the work of these feminine writers. Thus the poems of Myrrha Alexandrovna Lokhvitskaya (1869-1905), to mention only one of several, are full of noisy and unrestrained declamation, with frequent touches of feverish eroticism.

Nicolai Maximovitch Minsky (b. 1855), whose real name is Vilenkin, began his career with poems which lead back to the tradition of Nadson. Their markedly individual style and harmonious language gained for Minsky a popularity which began to diminish when he turned his attention towards more purely æsthetic ideals. Later still, he attained a fresh stage in his development, as a poet of religious mysticism. At one time he founded, together with Gorky, a socialistic daily paper, but the venture soon came to an end, partly through the action of the authorities, partly also because of the lack of agreement between Minsky and his socialistic colleagues. Minsky is essentially a poet of transition, and, as such, he has come to occupy a precarious standing among his contemporaries. The revolution of 1905 affected his work critically, leading him, as it did, into such outbursts of unbalanced rhetoric as the "Workmen's Hymn."

Fedor Sologub (pseudonym for Teternikov, b. 1863) is a poet of the decadent school in the narrower acceptance of the word. As in his novels and short stories, so also in his poems, he is almost entirely absorbed by contemplation of the abnormal, the morbid, and the perverse. But the qualification of this statement should not be overlooked, for it is possible to overstate this aspect of the case. Professor Vengerov declares, for instance, that "Sologub's lyrics and his prose form a downright hymn to death." And in another passage the same critic says, after emphasizing the fact that this attitude on Sologub's part is unaffected and sincere: "Sologub's creative spirit is dominated by eternal twilight, and not a single sunbeam illumines this subterranean world. In the work of Sologub, death, madness, and sensuality are entangled in one awful nightmare." A criticism of this kind ignores

the pure and hopeful side of Sologub's work, which, though not prominent, is nevertheless expressed emphatically enough in such charming verses as the "Northern Triplets" and, in fact, throughout the volume of poems called "Kindred Earth." Even in his fiction Sologub sometimes writes with a playful fancy of which the stories hitherto translated into English give no hint. But it must be admitted that the main body of Sologub's work represents the tragic lack of harmony between ideals and reality, and is, as a result, steeped in despair and loathing. It is the metaphysical strain often induced by this attitude which connects him with what may be called the Merezhkovsky group. But the bonds which unite him to other poets are slender; the main impression produced by his verses is one of morose isolation.

All these poets have, in varying degrees, come under foreign influences. In this respect Ivan Bunin (b. 1870) cannot be assigned to one or other of the groups hitherto dealt with, for his verses show no traces of the later developments of Russian poetical style. He is more typically Slavonic than any of the modernists, although he himself is modern in his impressionistic manner of depicting the various aspects of the typical Russian landscape. The influence of folk-song, which even in the less obviously national poets has left considerable traces, is very marked in Bunin's verses. He has also written stories of Russian country life, similar in spirit to his delicate rhymes, and, on a larger scale, a realistic novel the scenes of which are laid in rural Russia in the years immediately following the revolution. As a translator, Bunin is best known by his metrical version of Longfellow's "Hiawatha." In November, 1912, he celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his literary beginnings.

The summary manner in which the remaining poets must be treated is not always in proportion to the value of their achievement. There is, for example, Alexander Block, whose verses are distinguished by their devout and austere tone; the search for an unattained ideal is often expressed in the symbolism of mediæval chivalry. Only bare mention, too, can be made of Vyatcheslav Ivanov, whose philosophic verses are exquisitely polished

and harmonious, with deliberate and effective lapses into an archaic style. Another of the younger poets of distinction is Andrey Byely, author also of a remarkable novel, "The Silver Dove," which follows worthily in the tradition of Gogol. For the present, bare mention alone must suffice for such poets as Kuzmin, Voloshin, Annensky, Baltrushaitis, and Count Alexis Tolstoy—Tolstoy III., as he is called; he has reanimated popular legends and traditions in verses that are essentially modern in technique.

Less than twenty years ago, Balmont and Bryusov were looked upon as bold innovators, before whom none of the most cherished poetical traditions were safe. Now a younger generation of poets has arisen, who regard the symbolists and modernists generally as conventional and academic. Among these youngest poets there is a good deal of mere extravagance and eccentricity. In some cases there is undoubtedly more than this: Sergey Gorodetsky, for instance, has written powerful verses, the most effective of which are those based upon old Russian mythology. And perhaps behind Igor Severyanin's crude and violent attempts at originality there is real talent, which will develop with increasing maturity. As for the rest, they must, for the present, remain anonymous.

P. SELVER.

MODERN RUSSIAN POETRY`

Константи́нъ Дми́триевичъ Ба́льмонтъ

1. ВОДА.

Отъ капли росы, что трепещетъ, играя
Огнёмъ драгоценныхъ камней,
До блѣдныхъ просторовъ, гдѣ, вдаль убѣгая,
Вѣнчается пѣною влага морская
На глади бездонныхъ морей,
Ты всюду, всегда, неизмѣнно-живая,
И то изумрудная, то голубая,
То полная красныхъ и желтыхъ лучей,
Оранжевыхъ, бѣлыхъ, зеленыхъ и синихъ,
И тѣхъ, что рождаются только въ пустыняхъ
Въ волнѣнии и пѣни безмѣрныхъ зыбей,
Оттѣнковъ, что видны лишь избраннымъ взорамъ,
Дрожаній, сверканій, мельканій, которыми
Нельзя подыскать отражающихъ словъ,
Хоть въ словѣ бездонность оттѣнковъ блистаетъ,
Хоть въ словѣ красивомъ всегда расцвѣтаетъ
Весна многоцвѣтныхъ цвѣтовъ.

Вода безконечные лики вмѣщаетъ
Въ безмѣрность своей глубины,
Мечтанье на зыбяхъ различныхъ качаетъ,
Молчаньемъ и пѣньемъ душѣ отвѣчаетъ,
Уводитъ сознаніе въ сны.

Богатыми были, богаты и нынѣ
Просторы лазурно-зеленой Пустыни,
Рождающей міръ островной.
И Море—всё Море, но въ вольномъ просторѣ
Различно оно въ человѣческомъ взорѣ
Качается грёзой-волной.

Konstantin Dmitriyevitch Balmont

1. WATER.

FROM droplets of dew that aquiver are throwing
The lustre of jewels around,
To the pallor of spaces, where, distantly flowing,
The wave of the ocean its foam-wreath is strowing
O'er seas that no plummet can sound,
Thou art everywhere, ever, life changelessly glowing,
Now emerald-tinted, now azurely showing,
Now in ruby and amber the waters abound,
In orange, white, green, and in dusky-blue splendour,
And in such as the deserts alone can engender
In the heaving and chanting of tides without bound,—
In tints only seen by the choicest of gazes,
As they tremble and sparkle and dazzle, their mazes
No words can be culled to reflect:
Though the word has its tints with unquenchable gleaming,
Though the word that is comely with bloom ever teeming,
A spring-tide of hues has bedecked.

The water has guises of infinite seeming
In zones that are boundlessly deep;
Its multiple billows are cradled in dreaming,
The spirit with muteness and tune of its streaming,
It answers and lulls into sleep.

Rich of old have they been, and rich still are the spaces
Where deserts stretch onward in azure-green traces,
And islands have birth in their shoals.
And Ocean, still Ocean, unfettered it ranges,
But man ever sees how it changes and changes,
And billowy visions unrolls.

Въ различныхъ скитаньяхъ,
Въ иныхъ сочетаньяхъ,
Я слышала сказанія бурь,
И знаю, есть разность въ мечтаньяхъ.

Я видѣла Индійское море, лазурь,
Въ нёмъ волнъ голубые извивы,
И Красное море, гдѣ ласковъ коралъ,
Гдѣ розовой краскою зыбится валъ,
И Жёлтое, водныя нѣвы,
Зелёное море, Персидскій заливъ,
И Чёрное море, гдѣ бунтъ приливъ,
И Бѣлое, призракъ красивый.
И всюду я думалъ, что всюду, всегда,
Различно-прекрасна Вода.

2. МОИ ПѢСНОПѢНЬЯ.

Въ моихъ пѣснопѣньяхъ журчанье ключей,
Что звучатъ всё звончѣй и звончѣй.
Въ нихъ женственно-страстные шопоты струй,
И дѣвическій въ нихъ поцѣлуй.

Въ моихъ пѣснопѣньяхъ застывшіе льды,
Безпредѣльность хрустальной воды.
Въ нихъ бѣлая пышность пушистыхъ снѣговъ,
Золотые края облаковъ.

Я звучныя пѣсни не самъ создавалъ,
Мнѣ забросилъ ихъ горный обвалъ.
И вѣтеръ влюблённый, дрожа по струнѣ,
Трепетанія передалъ мнѣ.

Wherever I wander,
Or hither, or yonder,
I have harkened to lays of the storm,
And I know how diversely I ponder.

The Indian Ocean has azure-clad form
Where blue is the wave in its dancing,
And then the Red Sea with its coral display,
Where billows are tossing in pinkish array;
Yellow Sea,—fields of water advancing.
And the Persian Gulf that is verdantly dyed,
And in the Black Sea, how boistrous the tide,
And the White Sea,—what phantoms entrancing.
And ever I mused, ever here, ever there,
Upon Water so endlessly fair.

2. MY SONG-CRAFT.

My song-craft is filled with the trickle of springs,
And clearer and clearer it rings:
With the passionate whispers of love it is laden,
With the kisses bestowed by a maiden.

The chillness of ice with my song-craft is blending,
The crystalline water unending;
It holds the white glory of snow's downy shrouds,
And the golden-hued fringes of clouds.

The resonant songs I alone have not wrought,
By the avalanche they have been brought.
And amorous wind in the strings as it quivered,
Its trembling to me has delivered.

Воздушныя пѣсни съ мерцаньемъ страстей
 Я подслушалъ у звонкихъ дождей.
 Узорно-играющій тающій свѣтъ
 Подглядѣлъ въ сочетаньяхъ планетъ.

И я въ человѣческомъ нечеловѣкѣ,
 Я захваченъ разливами рѣкъ.
 И, въ морѣ стремя полногласность свою,
 Я стозвучныя пѣсни пою.

3.

Я—изысканность русской медлительной рѣчи,
 Предо мною другіе поѣты—предтечи,
 Я впервые открылъ въ этой рѣчи уклёны;
 Перепѣвные, гнѣвные, нѣжные звоны.

Я—внезапный изломъ,
 Я—играющій громъ,
 Я—прозрачный ручей,
 Я—для всѣхъ и ничей.

Переплёскъ многопѣнный, разорванно-слитный,
 Самоцвѣтные камни земли самобытной,
 Переключки лѣсныхъ зелёнаго мая,
 Всё пойму, всё возьму, у другихъ отнимая.

Вѣчно-юный, какъ сонъ,
 Сильный тѣмъ, что влюблѣнъ
 И въ себя и въ другихъ,
 Я—изысканный стихъ.

My airy-tuned songs with the looming of pain
I have heard in the chimes of the rain,
And the pattern-wise melting and dallying light
I have glimpsed as the planets unite.

And though amid mortals, no mortal am I,
The river-floods raised me on high.
And in ocean my bounty of sound I have thrown,
My hundred-fold chants to intone.

3.

I am choiceness of Russian, so stately of mien,
The poets before me my heralds have been,
I the first in this tongue subtle byways revealed,
Strains tuneful, and wrathful and wistful I wield.

I,—a rending asunder,
I,—a sporting of thunder,
I,—a stream, finely-spun,
I,—for all and for none.

Rills plashing in foam, that are rivenly merging,
The jewels unblemished, of earth's matchless purging.
The summons of woodlands in verdure of May,
All I grasp, all I take, and I bear all away.

Young, as dreams, evermore,
Strong because I adore
Both myself and the rest,
I,—the verse choicely stressed.

4. ЗАВѢТЬ БЫТІЯ.

Я спросилъ у свободнаго вѣтра,
Что мнѣ сдѣлать, чтобъ быть молодымъ.
Мнѣ отвѣтилъ играющій вѣтеръ:
„Будь воздушнымъ, какъ вѣтеръ, какъ дымъ!“

Я спросилъ у могучаго Моря,
Въ чѣмъ великій завѣтъ бытія.
Мнѣ отвѣтило звѣчное Море:
„Будь всегда полнозвѣчнымъ, какъ я!“

Я спросилъ у высокаго Сѣнца,
Какъ мнѣ вспыхнуть свѣтлѣе зарі.
Ничего не отвѣтило Сѣнце,
Но душа услышала: „Горі!“

5. КАМЫШИ.

Полночной порою въ болотной глуши
Чуть слышно, безшумно шуршатъ камыши;

О чѣмъ они шепчутъ? О чѣмъ говорятъ?
Зачѣмъ огоньки между ними горятъ?

Мелькаютъ, мигаютъ,—и снова ихъ нѣтъ,
И снова забрѣжилъ блуждающій свѣтъ.

Полночной порою камыши шелестятъ;
Въ нихъ жабы гнѣздятся, въ нихъ змѣи свистятъ.

Въ болотѣ дрожитъ умирающій ликъ:
То мѣсяцъ багровый печально поникъ.

4. LIFE'S BEHEST.

I QUESTIONED with fetterless breezes,
How with youth to accomplish my days;
I was answered by dallying breezes:
" Be thou airy as breezes, as haze !"

I questioned with dominant ocean,
Where life's mighty behest to descry;
I was answered by resonant ocean:
" Be thou ever full-sounding as I !"

I questioned with measureless sunshine,
How the dawn to outdo in its light:
There was naught in response from the sunshine,
But I heard in my spirit: " Burn bright !"

5. THE REEDS.

WHEN midnight has come on the desolate slough,
Scarce heard are the reeds, so softly they sough.

Of what do they whisper and talk to and fro?
For what are the flamelets amongst them aglow?

They shimmer, they glimmer, and once more they wane,
Then the wandering light is enkindled again.

When midnight has come, then the reeds are aquake;
They harbour the toad and the hiss of the snake.

In the slough is aquiver a perishing gaze:
'Tis the purple-hued moon that forlornly decays.

И тиной запахло. И сырость ползёт . . .
Трясина заманить, сожмёт, засосёт.

„Кого? Для чего?“—камышы говорят—
„Зачём огоньки между нами горят?“

Но мѣсяцъ печальный безмолвно поникъ,
Не знаетъ. Склоняетъ всё ниже свой ликъ.

И, вздохъ повторяя погибшей души,
Тоскливо, безшумно шуршать камыши.

6.

Я въ этотъ міръ пришёлъ, чтобъ видѣть Сѣнце
И синій кругозоръ.

Я въ этотъ міръ пришёлъ, чтобъ видѣть Сѣнце
И выси горъ.

Я въ этотъ міръ пришёлъ, чтобъ видѣть Море
И пышный цвѣтъ долинъ.

Я заключилъ міры въ единомъ взорѣ,—
Я властелинъ.

Я побѣдилъ холодное забвѣнье,
Создавъ мечту мою.

Я каждый мигъ исполненъ откровенья,
Всегда пою.

Мною мечту страданья пробудили,
Но я люблю за то.

Кто равенъ мнѣ въ моей пѣвучей силѣ?
Никто, никто.

Я въ этотъ міръ пришёлъ, чтобъ видѣть Сѣнце—
А если день погасъ,

Я буду пѣть . . . Я буду пѣть о Сѣнцѣ,
Въ предсмертный часъ!

There is odour of slime. And the soddenness crawls.
The marsh will allure and engulf as it mauls.

“ But whom ? And for what— ” say the reeds to and fro,—
“ For what are the flamelets amongst us aglow ? ”

But the moon that forlornly and mutely decays
Cannot tell. But yet lower she settles her gaze.

’Tis the sigh of a perishing spirit that now
The reeds softly raise as they mournfully sough.

6.

I CAME into this world to see the sunshine,
The sky-line’s bluish lights.
I came into this world to see the sunshine,
And mountain-heights.
I came into this world to see the ocean,
The valley’s rich array.
I in a single gaze saw worlds in motion,—
Where I held sway.
I triumphed o’er oblivion’s chill concealment,
I shaped my pondering.
Filled was my every moment with revelation,
I ever sing.
My pondering was roused by tribulation,—
But thus my love it won.
Who is my like in strength of tune-creation?
Not one, not one.
I came into this world to see the sunshine,
And when day’s wane is nigh,
Then will I sing . . . then will I sing of sunshine,
Before I die.

7.

Свѣча горѣть и мѣркнеть и вновь горѣть сильнѣй,
Но мѣркнеть безвозвратно сіянье юныхъ дней.
Горѣ же, разгорѣйся, пока ещё ты юнъ,
Сильнѣй полнѣй касайся сердечныхъ звонкихъ
струнь,
Чтобъ было что припомнить на склонѣ трудныхъ
лѣтъ,
Чтобъ старости холодной свѣтиль нетлѣнный свѣтъ—
Мечтаній благородныхъ, порывовъ молодыхъ,
Безумныхъ, но прекрасныхъ, безумныхъ и святыхъ.

8.

О, волны морскія, родная стихія моя,
Всегда вы свободно бѣжите въ иные края,
Всегда одиноки въ холодномъ движеніи своёмъ,
А мы безутѣшно тоскуемъ,—одни и вдвоёмъ.
Зачѣмъ не могу я дышать и бѣжать, какъ волна?
Я въ мірѣ одинъ, и душа у меня холодная,
Я также сплыву всё въ иные, въ иные края,—
О, волны морскія, родная стихія моя!

7.

THE light will burn and darken, then burn with stronger
blaze,
But unreturning darkens the sheen of youthful days.
Glow then, and be enkindled, the while thou still art
young,
Let ever more undwindled the heart's loud chords be
strung,
That something be remembered in waning years of woe,
That chill old-age be lighted by that decayless glow,
Born of exalted fancies, and headstrong youth's ado,
Heedless, but full of splendour, heedless and hallowed,
too.

8.

O WAVES of the ocean, akin to the blood in my veins,
Ye ever unfettered are coursing to other domains,
Ye ever are lonely in chillness of ebb and of flow,
And,—alone or united,—we pine in uncomforted woe.
Why may I not breathe and course on as a wave of the
sea?
On earth I am lonely, and cold is the spirit in me,
I likewise am speeding to other, to other domains,—
O waves of the ocean, akin to the blood in my veins !

9. СВѢТЛЫЙ МІРЪ.

Тѳнкій, узкій, длинный ходъ
Въ глубь земли мечтѳ ведѳтъ.
Тѳлько спѳстишься тудѳ,
Встрѳтишь зѳмки изѳ льда.

Чуть сойдѳшь отсюда внизѳ,
Разноцвѳтности зажглись,
Смѳтритъ чѳй-то свѳтлый глазѳ,
Лѳнный кѳмень и алмѳзъ.

Тамѳ опѳль снѳжитъ, а тутѳ
Расцвѳтѳетъ изумрудѳ.
И услышишь въ зѳмкахъ тѳхъ
Флѳйты, лѳтны, нѳжный смѳхъ.

И увидишь чѳихъ то ногѳ
Тамѳ хрустѳльный башмачѳкъ.
Льды, колонны, свѳтъ, снѳгѳ,
Нѳжность, снѳжность, жемчугѳ.

Тѳнкій, узкій, длинный ходъ
Въ ѳтотъ свѳтлый мѳръ ведѳтъ.
Но, чтобѳ знѳть тудѳ путѳ,
Нѳжно бѳрежно итѳти.

9. THE MAGIC WORLD.

STRAIT the passage, slender, long,
Reaching depths where visions throng.
Sinking down, you turn your eyes
Where an ice-wrought castle lies.

When from here you sink below,
Twinkling shafts of colour glow;
Someone's peeping eyes are seen—
Adamant and moonstone sheen.

There's the snowy opal; here
Budding emeralds appear.

Hearken—in these castles be
Flutes and lutes and dainty glee.

Whose may be the feet that don
Crystal shoon you gaze upon?
Ice in pillars, lustre, snow,
Dainty, flaky, pearly glow.

Strait the passage, slender, long,
Reaching realms where splendours throng;
But to find the path you need,
You must set your foot with heed.

Алекса́ндръ Алекса́ндровичъ Блокъ

1. ДЕНЬ БЫТЬ НѢЖНО-СѢРЫЙ . . .

День быть нѣжно-сѣрый, сѣрый, какъ тоска.
Вѣчеръ сталъ ма́товый, какъ же́нская рука.

Въ ко́мнатахъ ве́чернихъ прѣтали сердца,
Уста́лыя отъ нѣжной тоски безъ конца.

Пожима́ли ру́ки, избе́гали встрѣчь,
Укрыва́ли смѣхи бѣлизною плечь.

Дли́нный вы́рѣзъ пла́тья, пла́тье, какъ зме́я,
Въ су́меркахъ бѣлѣетъ пла́тья чешу́я.

Надъ ска́тертью въ сто́ловой наклони́лись ницъ,
Каса́ясь причёсками пыла́ющихъ лицъ.

Сту́ки се́рдца ча́ще, напряже́ннѣй взгля́дъ,
Въ мы́сляхъ—о́нъ, глубо́кій, нѣжный, ду́шный садъ.

И мо́лча, какъ по зна́ку, двину́лись внизъ.
На ступе́нькахъ шоро́хъ бѣлыхъ же́нскихъ ризъ.

Мо́лча потону́ли въ саду́ безъ слѣ́да,
Не́бо тихо вспыхну́ло за́ревомъ сты́да.

Мо́жетъ быть скати́лась кра́сная звѣзда́.

Alexander Alexandrovitch Block

1. TENDER-GREY THE DAY WAS . . .

TENDER-GREY the day was, grey as sorrow, and
Pallid grew the evening, like a woman's hand.

In the house at evening they had hid their hearts,
Faint with tender sorrow,— grief that ne'er departs.

Hands were clasped together, eyes forebore to meet,
Unto glistening shoulders laughing lips retreat.

Garb that bares the shoulders, serpent-like array,
White as scaly raiment in the waning day.

O'er the table-cover brow to brow inclined;
O'er the glowing faces locks of hair were twined.

Beat of hearts grew swifter, glances sore oppressed,
In their thoughts the garden,—sultry, deep, at rest.

Mutely they together, as in covenant, stirred;
Woman's white apparel on the steps was heard.

Mutely in the garden, tracelessly they fled,
Softly in the heavens, shame its flush outspread.

Then, perchance, a star fell, with a trail of red.

NOTE.—It was found impossible to reproduce quite closely the
fluctuating rhythm of the original.

2. ВѢРБОЧКИ.

Мальчики, да дѣвочки
Свѣчечки, да вѣрбочки
Понесли домой.

Огонёчки тёплятся,
Прохожіе крестятся,
И пахнёт весной.

Вѣтерокъ удаленькій,
Дождикъ, дождикъ маленькій,
Не задуй огня !

Въ Воскресенье Вѣрбное
Завтра встану первая
Для святого дня.

2. THE WILLOW-BOUGHS.

LADS and lasses gathering,
Willow-boughs and tapers bring,
That they homeward bear.

Warmly do the flamelets glow,
Wayfarers cross them as they go;
Spring-tide scents the air.

Little breeze from far away,
Rain, O rain, with tiny spray,
Quench ye not the flame.

For Palm Sunday earliest,
I to-morrow stir from rest,
Holy-day to acclaim.

NOTE.—It is almost impossible to reproduce in English the rhyme the delicate simplicity of the original, with its diminutives and the tripping melody of its metre.

Валерій Яковлевич Брюсовъ

1. ТЕРЦІНЫ КЪ СПІСКАМЪ КНИГЪ.

И васъ я помню, перечни и списки,
Васъ вижу предъ собою за ликомъ ликъ.
Вы мнѣ, въ степи безлюдной, снова близки.

Я ваши таинства давно постигъ !
При лампѣ, наклонясь надъ каталогомъ,
Вникаю въ названья неизвестныхъ книгъ ;

Слѣдить за именами ; слогъ за слогомъ
Впивать слова чужого языка ;
Угадывать великое въ немногомъ ;

Возсоздавать поэтовъ и вѣка
По краткимъ повторительнымъ помѣтамъ :
„Безъ титула“, „въ сафьянѣ“ и „рѣдка“.

И нынѣ вы предстали мнѣ скелетомъ
Всего, что было жизнью сто вѣковъ,
Киваетъ онъ съ насмѣшливымъ привѣтомъ.

Мнѣ говорить : „Я не совсемъ готовъ,
Ещё мнѣ нужны кости и суставы,
Я жажду книгъ, чтобъ сдѣлать груду словъ.

„Мечтайте, думайте, ищите славы !
Мнѣ всё равно, безумецъ или пророкъ,
Созданье для ума и для забавы.

Valery Yakovlevitch Bryusov

1. STANZAS ON BOOK CATALOGUES.

Yѐ lists and catalogues still haunt my brain;
Before me I behold you, face on face,
Near me afresh on this unpeopled plain.

Your secrets long ago I held in chase!
By lamp-light o'er the catalogue I bent,
To probe for books that scarce had left a trace;

To track down names; by syllables I went,
Sipping at words of foreign tongues with care,
Surmising much from briefest document.

Poets and epochs I upraised in air
On scanty cue, as oft, to wit, would be:
"No author's name" or "Bound in calf" or "Rare."

And now, meseems, a skeleton are ye
Of all that lived in ages long ago,
That beckons with a scornful nod to me.

And says: "I, having somewhat yet to grow,
Of still more bones and joints must be possessed,
I crave for books, that words may overflow.

"Ponder and dream, and be renown your quest!
'Tis on e to me, or imbecile or sage,
Produce of wisdom or a merry jest.

„Я всёмъ даю опредѣлённый срокъ.
Твори и ты, а изъ твоихъ мечтаній
Я сохраню навѣкъ семь-восемь строкъ.

„Всесильнѣ моихъ упоминаній
Нѣтъ ничего. Безсмертіе во мнѣ.
Вѣнчаю я—міръ творчества и знаній“.

Такъ остовъ говоритъ мнѣ въ тишинѣ,
И я, съ покорностью цѣлюя землю,
При быстро умирающей лунѣ,

Исчезновеніе ! твой зовъ пріемлю.

2. К. Д. БАЛЬМОНТУ.

Какъ прѣжде мы вдвоёмъ, въ ночномъ кафѣ. За
входомъ

Кружить огни Парижъ, своимъ весельемъ пьянъ.
Смотрю на обликъ твой; стараюсь годъ за годомъ
Всё разгадать, найти рубцы отъ свѣжихъ ранъ.

И ты мнѣ кажешься суровымъ мореходомъ,
Тѣхъ лучшихъ дней, когда звалъ къ дѣлямъ Магелланъ,
Предавшимъ гордый духъ безвѣстностямъ и водамъ,
Узнавшимъ, что тайтъ для вѣрныхъ океанъ.

Я разгадать хочу, въ лучахъ какой лазури,
Вдали отъ нашихъ странъ, искалъ ты береговъ
Погибшихъ Атлантидъ и призрачныхъ Лемурий,

Какія тайны спятъ во тьмѣ твоихъ зрачковъ . . .
Но чтобы выразить, что въ этомъ ликѣ ново,
Ни ты, ни я, никто ещё не знаетъ слово !

"For all things their established term I gauge.
Create, and from the dreams whereon you pore,
I'll keep a few scant verses, age on age.

"Naught in omnipotence can stand before
My verdict. I allot the deathless bays
And crown a world of phantasy and lore."

Thus quoth the wraith to me on silent ways,
And as to earth with humble kiss I fall,
While the moon swiftly dies before my gaze,

O transient glory, I accept your call!

2. TO K. D. BALMONT.

At night, as was our wont, we sought the café. Near,
Paris aglow and drunken in its rapture swayed.
I gaze upon your face; I strive from year to year
To pierce the veil and seek the scars new wounds have
made.

And like a rugged sailor you to me appear,
Who in those goodly times Magellan's call obeyed,
Trusting to seas unknown his soul too proud for fear,
For he has learnt what ocean yields not to the staid.

And fain would I surmise amid what azure gleam,
What marges you have sought, far from our native skies,
Where dead Atlantides and phantom Lemurs teem.

What secrets sleep amid the darkness of your eyes . . .
But, to proclaim what tidings in your gaze abound,
Nor you, nor I, nor any yet the words have found.

3. ЯРОСТНЫЯ ПТИЦЫ.

Яростныя птицы съ огненными перьями
Пронеслись надъ бѣлыми райскими преддверьями,
Огненные отблески вспыхнули на мраморѣ
И умчались странницы, улетѣли за море.

Но на чистомъ мраморѣ, на порогѣ дѣвственномъ,
Что-то всё алѣлося блѣскомъ неестественнымъ,
И въ вратахъ подъ сводами, вѣчными, алмазными
Упивались ангелы тайными соблазнами.

4. СЪМЕРКИ.

Горять электричествомъ луны
На выгнутыхъ, длинныхъ стебляхъ;
Звенять телеграфныя струны
Въ незримыхъ и нѣжныхъ рукахъ;

Круги циферблатовъ янтарныхъ
Волшебнo зажглись надъ толпой,
И жаждущихъ плитъ тротуарныхъ
Коснулся прохладный покой.

Подъ сѣтью плѣнительно—зыбкой
Притихъ отуманенный скверъ,
И вечеръ цѣлуетъ съ улыбкой
Въ глаза—проходящихъ гетеръ.

Какъ тихіе звуки клавира—
Далекіе ропоты дня.
О сѣмерки! Милостью міра
Опять упойте меня!

3. BIRDS OF WRATH.

BIRDS of wrath with their plumage of fire all bedight
Over heaven's white portals were borne in their flight;
On the marble the fiery refulgences flared.
Then swiftly o'er ocean the wanderers fared.

But upon the pure marble, the threshold unstained,
There was something unwonted that flushed and
remained;—

'Neath the crystalline vault never-ending aloft
Most secret enticements by angels were quaffed.

NOTE.—The metre of the original has not been reproduced.

4. DUSK.

ELECTRICAL moons are twinkling
On curving and delicate bands;
The telegraph wires are tinkling
In tender, invisible hands.

The clocks with their amber faces
By magic are lit o'er the crowd;
Of stillness the cooling traces
The thirst-ridden pavement enshroud.

'Neath a net that quivers enchanted,
The square lies hushed in the haze;
The evening has smilingly planted
A kiss on the harlots' gaze.

As music that soothingly quavers
Is daytime's far-away roar.
O dusk! In your lulling favours
You steep my spirit once more.

5. КАМЕНЩИКЪ.

—Каменщикъ, каменщикъ, въ фартукъ бѣломъ.

Что ты тамъ строишь? кому?

—Эй, не мѣшай намъ, мы заняты дѣломъ,

Строимъ мы, строимъ тюрьму.

—Каменщикъ, каменщикъ, съ вѣрной лопатой,

Кто же въ ней будетъ рыдать?

—Вѣрно, не ты и не твой братъ, богатый.

Нѣзачѣмъ вамъ воровать.

—Каменщикъ, каменщикъ, долиня нѣчи,

Кто жъ проведетъ въ ней безъ сна?

—Можетъ быть, сынъ мой, такой же рабочій.

Тѣмъ наша доля полна.

—Каменщикъ, каменщикъ, вспомнить, пожалуй,

Тѣхъ онъ, кто несъ кирпичи!

—Эй! берегись! подъ лѣсами не балуй . . .

Знаемъ всё сами, молчи!

5. THE STONEHEWER.

—STONEHEWER, stonehewer, whitely arrayed,
What art thou building? For whom?

—Ho, do not baulk us intent on our trade,—
From our building a prison will loom.

—Stonehewer, stonehewer, trowel in hand,
Who then will sob in these walls?

—Not you, nor your brother, rich man, understand,
For theft to your lot never falls.

—Stonehewer, stonehewer, who without sleep
Will abide there long hours of the night?

—Maybe my son will,—he toils for his keep.
And such is the close of our plight.

—Stonehewer, stonehewer, then will he think
Of them who laid bricks here of yore!

—Ho, beware! Beneath ladders from jests you should
shrink . . .

This we ourselves know, give o'er!

NOTE.—This is a very inadequate translation of a poem, the precise style of which is extremely difficult to reproduce.

Ивѣнъ Бѣнинъ

1.

Ночь идѣтъ—и темнѣетъ
Блѣдносиній востокъ.
Отъ одеждъ ея вѣетъ
По полямъ вѣтерокъ.

День былъ дологъ и знóенъ,
Ночь идѣтъ и поѣтъ.
Колыбельную пѣсню
И къ покою зовѣтъ.

Грустенъ взоръ ея тёмный,
Одинокъ ея путь . . .
Спи-усни, моё сердце!
Отдохни . . . Позабудь.

2.

Какъ свѣтлѣ, нарядна, весна!
Погляди мнѣ въ глаза, какъ бывало,
И скажи: отчего ты грустна?
Отчего ты такъ ласкова стала?

Но молчишь ты, слабѣ, какъ цвѣтокъ . . .
О, молчи!—Мнѣ не надо признанья:
Я узналъ эту ласку прощанья,—
Я опять одинокъ!

Ivan Bunin

1.

NIGHT hastens and seizes
Clear gleams in the east.
From her raiment light breezes
Over fields are released.

Long and sultry the day was,
Night sings as she goes
A lullaby ditty
And calls to repose.

Her dark gaze is mournful,
On her way naught is met . . .
O my heart, sleep and slumber,
Take your rest . . . and forget.

2.

How a gleam, how garnished the spring!
Turn your eyes in the old way upon me:
Say, wherefore this sorrowing?
Why lavish this tenderness on me?

You are mute, as a blossom so frail,
Say naught!—No confession is needed:
The flight of your love I have heeded,—
Lone again is my trail!

Зинаида Николаевна Гиппиусъ

1. ПѢСНЯ.

Окно моё высоко надъ землею,
Высоко надъ землею.
Я вижу только небо съ вечернею зарёю,—
Съ вечернею зарёю.

И небо кажется пустымъ и блѣднымъ,
Такимъ пустымъ и блѣднымъ.
Оно не сжаляется надъ сердцемъ бѣднымъ
Надъ моимъ сердцемъ бѣднымъ.

Увы, въ печали безумной я умираю,
Я умираю.
Стремлюсь къ тому, чего я не знаю,
Не знаю.

И это желаніе не знаю откуда
Пришло откуда,
Но сердце хочетъ и просить чуда,
Чуда !

О, пусть будетъ то, чего не бывааетъ,
Никогда не бывааетъ :
Мнѣ блѣдное небо чудесъ общаетъ,
Оно общаетъ,

Zinaida Nikolayevna Hippus

1. SONG.

**My window is high o'er the earthly spaces,
O'er the earthly spaces;
I behold but the sky with evening's red traces,
With evening's red traces.**

**And the gaze of the sky is so faded and dreary,
So faded and dreary;
No pity it has for the heart that is weary,
For my heart that is weary.**

**Alas, by a frenzied dismay I am riven,
I am riven;
I know not the thing whereto I am driven,
I am driven.**

**Nor whence is the wish that I bow myself under;
I bow myself under;
But my heart is desiring and craving a wonder,
A wonder.**

**O may it be aught that life never offers,
That life never offers;
Unto me 'tis a wonder the sky wanly proffers,
That it proffers.**

Но пла́чу безъ слёзъ о невѣрномъ обѣтѣ,
О невѣрномъ обѣтѣ.
Мнѣ́ нужно то, чего́ нѣтъ на свѣтѣ,
Чего́ нѣтъ на свѣтѣ.

2. ЭЛЕКТРИЧЕСТВО.

Двѣ́ нѣти вмѣстѣ́ свѣты,
Концы́ обнажены.
То „да“ и „нѣтъ“,—не слѣты,
Не слѣты—сплетены.
Ихъ тѣмное сплетенье
И тѣсно, и мертвó.
Но ждѣтъ ихъ воскресенье,
И ждуть они́ его́.
Концовъ концы́ косну́тся—
Другіе „да“ и „нѣтъ“,
И „да“ и „нѣтъ“ просну́тся,
Сплетённые сольются,
И смерть ихъ бу́детъ—Свѣтъ.

But tearless I weep for the vow that is broken,
For the vow that is broken.
The thing that I seek is no earth-given token,
No earth-given token.

2. ELECTRICITY.

Two threads are closely hafted,
The ends are unconfined.
'Tis "yea" and "nay,"—not grafted,
Not grafted,—but entwined.
Dim is the web that mates them
Close and inanimate,
But wakening awaits them,
And they the same await.
End unto end is taken,—
Fresh "yea" and "nay" ignite,
And "yea" and "nay" awaken,
Into one moulding shaken,
And from their death comes,—light.

Мирра Александровна Лбхвицкая

И вѣтра стонъ, и шопотъ мрачныхъ думъ . . .

И жить отрады нѣтъ . . .

А гдѣ-то зной и моря тихій шумъ,

И солнца яркій свѣтъ !

Гудить мятель и множить въ сердцѣ гнѣтъ.

Невыплаканныхъ слёзъ . . .

А гдѣ-то миртъ, зелёный миртъ растётъ

И кущи бѣлыхъ розъ !

Проходить жизнь въ мечтаньяхъ объ иномъ,

Ничтожна и пуста . . .

А гдѣ-то смѣхъ, и счастье бѣтъ ключёмъ,

И блескъ, и красота !

Myrrha Alexandrovna Lokhvitskaya

AND moan of winds and whispered thoughts of gloom,
From life no joy is won . . .
Yet somewhere,—warmth, and ocean's muffled boom,
And lustre of the sun.

The blizzard wails, and in the heart it throws
A load of tears unshed.
Yet somewhere myrtle, verdant myrtle grows,
And stainless roses spread.

Life, passing by, in empty brooding delves,
Unmeaning, unbedight . . .
Yet somewhere, mirth and bliss will yield themselves,
And comeliness and light !

Дми́трій Серге́евичъ Мережко́вскій

1. НИРВА́НА.

И вно́вь, какъ въ пе́рвый день создáнья,
Лазу́рь небéсная тихá,
Какъ б́удто въ мíрѣ нѣтъ страда́нья,
Какъ б́удто въ се́рдцѣ нѣтъ грѣха́.
Не на́до мнѣ любви́ и сла́вы:
Въ молча́ньи у́треннихъ полéй
Дышú, какъ ды́шать éти тра́вы . . .
Ни про́шлыхъ, ни грядúщихъ дней
Я не хочú пы́тать и чи́слить.
Я то́лько чувствую о́пять,
Како́е сча́стie—не мы́слить,
Кака́я нѣ́га—не желáть !

2. ПРИРÓДА ГОВОРИ́ТЬ.

Прирóда говори́ть мнѣ съ ца́рственнымъ презрѣ́ньемъ :
„Уйди́, не наруша́й гармо́нии моéй !
Твой пла́чь мнѣ надоб́ьтъ ; не оскорбля́й муче́ньемъ
Спокойствíя мо́ихъ лазоре́выхъ но́чей.

„Я всё тебѣ́ дала́—жизнь, мо́лодость, свобо́ду,—
Ты всё, ты всё отвѣ́ргъ съ безсмы́сленной враждо́й,
И де́зскимъ ро́потомъ ты оскорб́илъ прирóду,
Ты мать свою́ забы́лъ—уйди́, ты мнѣ́ чужо́й !

Dmitri Sergyeyevitch Merezhkovsky

1. NIRVANA.

As in the day of first creation,
The azure skies are calm again,
As though the world knew not privation,
As though the heart knew naught of pain;
For love and fame my craving passes;
'Mid silence of the fields at morn
I breathe, as breathe these very grasses . . .
O'er days agone, and days unborn
I would not chafe, nor reckoning squander.
This only do I feel once more:
What gladness—ne'er again to ponder,
What bliss—to know all yearning o'er.

2. QUOTH NATURE . . .

QUOTH nature unto me in tones of stately scorning:
" Begone, and break not in upon my harmony!
I weary of thy tears; mar not with anguished mourning
The calm wherewith my azure nights encompass me.

" All have I given thee,—life, youth and freedom given,
But thou in senseless fedd hast flung it all away.
Nature hast thou with overweening murmurs riven,
Thou hast forgot thy mother,—go, I speak thee nay.

„Иль мало для тебя на небѣ звѣздъ блестящихъ,
Нѣмаго сѹмрака въ задѹмчивыхъ лѣсахъ,
*

И дикой красоты въ заоблачныхъ горахъ?

„Я всё тебѣ дала,—а въ этомъ чудномъ мѣрѣ
Ты не сумѣлъ хоть разъ счастливымъ быть, какъ всѣ:
Какъ счастливъ звѣрь въ лѣсу и ласточка въ эфирѣ,
И дремлющій цвѣтокъ въ серебряной росѣ.

„Ты радость бытія сомнѣньемъ разрушаешь:
Уйди! ты гадокъ мнѣ, безсильный и больной . . .
Пытливый разумомъ и гордою душой
Ты счастья безъ меня ищи себѣ, какъ знаешь!“

3.

Ласковый вечеръ съ землею прощался,
Листъ шелохнѹться не смѣлъ въ ожиданьи.
Грѣхотъ телѣги вдали раздавался . . .
Звѣзды, дрожа, выступали въ молчаньи.

Синее небо—глубоко и странно;
Но не смотри ты въ него такъ пытливо,
Но не ищи въ немъ разгадки желанной.—
Синее небо, какъ гробъ, молчаливо!

"Or dost thou rate as naught in heaven the starry lustre,
And in the brooding woods the dusk where nothing speaks,

*

And all the rugged beauty on the cloudy peaks?

"All have I given thee,—this world is wonder-gifted,
Yet couldst thou not be happy, even as all the rest,—
Happy as woodland beast, and swallow, æther-lifted,
And bud that sleeps amid its silvery dew-clad nest.

"By thy bewilderment the joy of life thou slayest,
Begone, I loathe thee, full of weak and sickly dole . . .
Thou, with thy probing mind and haughtiness of soul,
Thy happiness without me seek, as best thou mayest."

3.

THE eventide fondled the earth in farewell,
And in its suspense not a leaf dared to sway;
The creak of a cart far away rose and fell,
Stars marshalled aquiver in silent array.

Clear-blue is the sky,—deep and strange is its guise;
But look not upon it with glances that crave,
But seek not therein the revelation you prize,—
Clear-blue is the sky, but as mute as the grave.

* Owing to a defect in the printing, this line has slipped out of the volume from which the poem was taken. Although I have consulted several other editions of Merezhkovsky's poems, I have been unable to find another copy of the text.

4. ПРИРОДА.

Ни зломъ, ни враждою кровавой
Донѣмъ затмить не могли
Мы неба чертогъ величавый
И прелесть цвѣтущей земли.

Насъ прежнею лаской встрѣчаютъ
Долины, цвѣты и ручьи,
И звѣзды всё такъ же сіяютъ,
О томъ же поютъ соловьи.

Не вѣдаетъ нашей кручины
Могучій, таинственный лѣсъ,
И нѣтъ ни единой морщины
На ясной лазури небесъ.

5. СЪЯТЕЛЬ.

Надъ холмами полосою
Поблѣлъ востокъ вдали,
Дышать сыростью ночью
Глыбы вспаханной земли.

Видишь, мѣрными шагами
Ходить съятель въ поляхъ.
Тишина, какъ въ Божьемъ храмѣ,
На землѣ и въ небесахъ.

4. NATURE.

NOT bloodshed, nor ills we engender,
Could yet fling a mantle of gloom
On the heavenly palace of splendour,
Or on earth with the lure of its bloom.

As of old, we are tenderly ravished
By valleys and blossoms and rills;
Unchanging, the starlight is lavished,
And the tune that the nightingale trills.

Great forests with deep-hidden spaces
Know naught of our spirit's dismay;
And never a wrinkle defaces
The heaven's clear azure array.

5. THE SOWER.

FAR above the stretch of hills
The east has flung its lustre round;
Moistened breath of night-time fills
Clods of plough-uprooted ground.

See, how with his measured pace
O'er the fields the sower goes;
Calm, as in God's holy place
On earth and in the heaven flows.

Всё кругомъ свящённымъ страхомъ,
Какъ предъ таинствомъ, полно,
И руки покойнымъ взмахомъ
Разсѣваетъ онъ зерно.

И для труженика снова
Грудь земли родить должна
Жатву хлѣба золотого
Изъ погибшаго зерна.

Созидаѣя жизнь изъ смерти,
Предъ лицомъ святыхъ небесъ,
О, молитесь-же и вѣрьте:
Это—чудо изъ чудесъ!

A sacred awe through all the land,
As of some secret thing is borne;
And with a gently sweeping hand
Far and wide he scatters corn.

And for the toiler must again
Out of the womb of earth be born
A harvest of the golden grain
That quickens from the perished corn.

Life out of death is rendered free
Before the glance of holy skies;
O, pray then, and believing, see
A wonder from a wonder rise.

Николай Максимович Минский

1.

Какъ сонъ, пройду́тъ дѣла и помыслы людей;
Забудется герой, истлѣетъ мавзолей—

И вмѣстѣ въ общій прахъ сольются.
И мудрость, и любовь, и знанья, и права,
Какъ съ аспидной доски ненужныя слова,
Рукой невѣдомой сотру́тся.

И ужъ не тѣ слова подъ тою же рукой—
Далѣко отъ земли, застывшей и нѣмой—

Возникнуть вновь загадкой блѣдной.
И снова свѣтъ блеснѣтъ, чтобъ стать добычей тьмы,
И кто-то будетъ жить не такъ, какъ жили мы,
Но такъ, какъ мы, умрѣть безслѣдно.

И невозможно намъ предвидѣть и понять,
Въ какія формы духъ одѣнется опять.

Въ какихъ созданьяхъ воплотится.
Быть можетъ, изъ всего, что будить въ насъ любовь,
На той звѣздѣ ничто не повторится вновь . . .
Но есть одно, что повторится:

Лишь то, что мы теперь считаемъ празднымъ сномъ,
Тоска неясная о чѣмъ-то неземномъ,

Куда-то смутныя стремлѣнья.
Вражда къ тому, что есть, предчувствій робкій свѣтъ,
И жажда жгучая святѣнь, которыхъ нѣтъ,—
Одно лишь это чуждо тлѣнья.

Nikolai Maximovitch Minsky

1.

MAN's ponderings and labours, dream-like, pass away,
Heroes will be forgot, and sepulchres decay,—

And all in common dust is merged.

And righteousness and love, and sciences and lore,
As words upon a slate, whose meaning is no more,

By undiscovered hand are purged.

But words that are not these, beneath the self-same hand,
Far from the numbing muteness of this earthly land,

Again, pale riddles will supply.

Another light will shine, for gloom to prey upon,
And others there will live, not as our lives have gone,

But e'en as we, untraced shall die.

And we have not the power to fathom or to view
The guise wherein our spirit shall be garbed anew,

The shapes wherein its breath shall dwell.

Perchance, of all that love within us stirs to life,
Nothing upon this planet shall again be rife,

But there is one thing naught can quell:

Only the thing that now an empty dream we count,
The blurred and fretful wish beyond the earth to mount,

Restive essays towards some height.

Hatred of things that are, foreboding's timid glow,
And burdensome desire for shrines we cannot know,—

On this alone shall come no blight.

Въ какихъ бы образахъ и гдѣ бы средь міровъ
Ни вспыхнулъ мысли свѣтъ, какъ лучъ средь облаковъ,
Какія бь существа ни жили,—
Но будутъ рваться вдаль онѣ, подобно намъ,
Изъ страха своего къ несбыточнымъ мечтамъ,
Грустя душой, какъ мы грустили.

И потому не тотъ безсмертенъ на землѣ,
Кто превзошелъ другихъ въ добрѣ или во злѣ,
Кто славы хрупкія сжималъ
Наполнивъ повѣстью, безцѣльною, какъ сонъ,
Предъ кѣмъ толпы людей — такой же прахъ, какъ
онъ —
Благоговѣли иль дрожали,

Но всѣхъ безсмертнѣй тотъ, кому сквозь прахъ земли
Какъ-то новыи міръ мерещился вдали,
Несущейся и вѣчный.
Кто цѣли неземной такъ жаждалъ и страдалъ,
Что силой жажды самъ миражъ себя создалъ
Среди пустыни безконечной.

2.

Я вижу край обѣтованный,
Сверканье водъ, шатры деревъ.
Но преступить предѣлъ желанный
Мнѣ запретилъ Господній гнѣвъ.

Усталъ я отъ песковъ и зноя,
Еще при жизни смерть вкусилъ.
Такъ изнемогъ, что для покоя
Въ моей душѣ нѣтъ больше силъ.

In whatsoever guise, and where 'mid worlds shall gleam
The radiance of thought, like to a cloud-girt beam,
 Whatever lives are fashioned yet,—
Still shall they make ado, and rouse them e'en as we,
From very depths of dread to dreams that ne'er can be,
 Fretful of soul, as we do fret.

And therefore he is not on earth immortal who
Either in good or ill his fellows could outdo,
 Who upon glory's tablets frail
Hath graved the deeds of him, that, as a dream, are
 naught,
'Fore whom the throng, of that same clay as he is wrought,
 Or utter homages, or quail.

But above all is he immortal unto whom
Through dust of earth afar new worlds were wont to loom,
 Worlds though unreal, yet perishless.
He who so craved and pined for things beyond the earth,
That by his craving's power he gave his vision birth
 'Mid an unending wilderness.

2.

I VIEW the promised land before me. —
Gleaming of waters, tents of trees.
But anger of the Lord forbore me
To touch the dower I long to seize.

I rose from heat and sandy places,
I tasted death in living hours:
My strength so wanes, that it effaces
Within my soul all placid powers.

И ёсли раднoстнoму краю
 Поётъ привётъ мой грустный стихъ,
 Я гимнъ привётственный слагаю
 Не для себя, а для другихъ.

3.

То, что вы зовете вдохновеньемъ,
 Я зову прислушиваньемъ чуткимъ.
 Есть часы, когда съ восторгомъ жуткимъ
 Вдругъ я слышу: кто-то съ грустнымъ пѣньемъ

Надъ душой пронóсится моёю.
 Слышу, внемлю, чую, замираю . . .
 И творю, доко́лѣ повторяю
 То, къ чему́ прислушаться успѣю.

4. ГОРОДЪ ВДАЛИ.

Тамъ внизу, въ полукругломъ просвѣтѣ холмовъ,
 Виденъ городъ вдали.
 Тамъ, за блѣдными пятнами селъ и лѣсовъ,
 Гдѣ сливаются краски полей и луговъ,
 Чуть мерещится городъ вдали.

Не домá, не сады,—что-то тѣнью большой
 Залегло сквозь туманъ.
 Какъ безстрастье надъ много страдавшей душой,
 Какъ усталость надъ много дерзавшей мечтой,
 Легъ надъ городомъ мутный туманъ.

And if my mournful-tuned ovation
Is chanted to that glad domain,
I shape a hymn of salutation,
Not for my own, but others' gain.

3.

WHAT you are wont to name as inspiration,
Delicacy of hearkening I call;
Hours there are that palpably enthrall,
When I hear the plaintive incantation.

Of someone who above my spirit stirred:
I hark, I grope, I feel, my senses wane . . .
I labour on until I shape again
The thing that by my mastery I heard.

4. THE CITY AFAR.

DOWN yonder, 'mid hills in a shimmering bend
Lo, the city afar.
Pale village and woodland before it extend,
Where tintings of meadow and pasturage blend,
The city gleams faintly afar.

Nor dwelling, nor yard—but in shadows of night,
Something glides through the mist.
As if listless o'er many a soul in its plight,
As if weary o'er many a vision of might,
O'er the city lies dimly the mist.

Изъ живыхъ испарений труда и страстей
Сотканъ мглістый покрѣвъ.
Изъ пылинокъ, изъ дыма, изъ брызгъ, изъ тѣней,
Изъ дыханій и криковъ несчетныхъ грудей
Сотканъ въ вѣдухѣ мглістый покрѣвъ.

Между горѣдомъ буйнымъ и взѣромъ моимъ
Онъ повисъ навсегда,
Ибо утро и полдень безсильны надъ нимъ.
Храмы, тюрьмы, дворцы для меня, точно дымъ,
Въ отдаленіи слились навсегда.

Лишь порою закаты стрѣловиднымъ лучемъ
Мглу проніжетъ на мигъ.
И предъ тѣмъ какъ исчезнуть во мракѣ ночномъ,
Дальній горѣдъ людей угрожающимъ сномъ,
Открывается взѣру на мигъ.

Live vapours of toiling and passionate cries
 Weave a darkening pall.
Dust and smoke and the specks and the shadows that rise,
And numberless hearts with their throbbings and sighs,
 Aloft weave a darkening pall.

'Twixt the din of the city's unrest and my gaze
 It is spread evermore.
And its load nor the morn nor the noon can upraise,
Gaols, churches and courtyards, meseems, are but haze,—
 In the farness they merge evermore.

But sometimes at sunset an arrowy ray
 Stabs the mist for a flash.
And amid the night's darkness, then fading away,
The city afar with its dreams of dismay
 Is revealed to the gaze for a flash.

Федоръ Кузьмичъ Сологубъ

1.

Возста́вилъ Богъ меня изъ вла́жной глѣны,
Но отъ земли не отдѣли́лъ.
Родны́я мнѣ—верши́ны и доли́ны,
Какъ я себѣ, весь міръ мнѣ ми́лъ.

Когда́ гляжу́ на да́льныя доро́ги,
Мнѣ ка́жется, что я на нихъ
Всѣ́ чувствую́ колеса́, ка́мни, но́ги,
Какъ бу́дто на рука́хъ мои́хъ.

Гляжу́ ли я на звонкіе пото́ки,—
Мнѣ ка́жется, что это мнѣ
Земля́ несётъ живите́льные со́ки,
Свои́ дара́ мои́хъ веснѣ́.

2. ТРЮЛЕТЫ СѢВЕРУ.

(i.)

Земля́ докучна́я и зла́я,
Но всё же мнѣ́ родна́я ма́ть!
Люблю́ тебя́, о ма́ть нѣма́я,
Земля́ докучна́я и зла́я!
Какъ сла́дко зе́млю обнима́ть,
Къ ней при́ника́я въ ча́рахъ ма́я!
Земля́ докучна́я и зла́я,
Но всё же мнѣ́ родна́я ма́ть!

Fedor Kuzmitch Sologub

1.

FROM moistened clay by God was I created,
But never freed from earthly guise.
With peaks and valleys I am federated,
E'en as myself, the earth I prize.

When gazing on the distant roads I ponder,
Methinks that feeling I can grasp
How wheels thereon, and stones and feet that wander,
Are all as if within my clasp.

When torrents I behold with deep-toned courses,
Methinks that merged amid their power
Earth bears her saps with their restoring forces
Unto my spring-tide, as her dower.

2. NORTHERN TRIOLETS.

(i.)

THOU earth with guile and irksome woe,
Art yet a mother unto me !
Mute mother mine, I love thee so,
Thou earth with guile and irksome woe !
How sweet in earth's embrace to be,
Nestling to her when May's aglow !
Thou earth with guile and irksome woe,
Art yet a mother unto me !

(ii.)

Любите, люди, землю,—землю
Въ зелёной тайнѣ влажныхъ травъ.
Велѣнью тайному я внѣмлю:
—Любите, люди, землю,—землю
И сладость всѣхъ ея отравъ!—
Земной и тёмный, всё пріемлю.
Любите, люди, землю,—землю
Въ зелёной тайнѣ влажныхъ травъ.

(iii.)

Сѣрдце дрогнуло отъ радости.
Снова сѣверъ, снова дождь,
Снова нѣженъ мохъ и тощъ,—
И уныніе до радости,
И томленіе до сладости,—
И мечтанья тихихъ рощъ,
И дрожить душа отъ радости,—
Милый сѣверъ! милый дождь!

(iv.)

Куполь церкви, крестъ и небо,
И вокругъ печаль полей,—
Что спокойнѣй и свѣтлѣй
Этой ясной жизни неба?
И скажи мнѣ, другъ мой, гдѣ бы
Возносилася святѣй
Къ благодѣтнымъ тайнамъ неба
Сказка легкая полей!

(ii.)

THE earth, the earth, ye men, revere,
Green secrets of its moistened weeds,
Its secret ordinance I hear:
—The earth, the earth, ye men, revere,
E'en its delights, where venom breeds!—
Earthy, untaught, I hold it dear.
The earth, the earth, ye men, revere,
Green secrets of its moistened weeds.

(iii.)

QUIVERS the heart with joyousness,
North afresh, return of rain,
Slender, tender moss again,—
Despair is one with joyousness
And torment with a sweet caress,—
Soft visions of a wooded lane,
And trembles the soul with joyousness,—
Beloved North! Beloved rain!

(iv.)

CHURCH-SPIRE, crucifix, and sky,
And around, the sorrowing fields,—
What more peace and radiance yields
Than this sheen of living sky?
And, my friend, I would descry
Where in holier fashion yields
To the glad secrecies on high
This soft legend of the fields!

(v.)

Какáя рáдость—по дорóгамъ
Стопáми гóлыми иттí
И сýмку лёгкую нестí!
Какáя рáдость—по дорóгамъ,
Въ смирéньи блáгостномъ и стрóгомъ,
Стихи пѣвúчие плестí!
Какáя рáдость—по дорóгамъ
Стопáми гóлыми иттí!

3. ВЪ ЭТОТЪ ЧАСЪ.

Въ éтотъ часъ, когдá грохóчетъ въ тёмномъ небѣ
грóзный громъ,
Въ éтотъ часъ, когдá въ оснóвахъ сотрясáется нашъ
домъ.
Въ éтотъ часъ, когдá въ тревóгѣ вся надéжда, вся
любóвь,
И когдá сильнѣйшíй дýхомъ безпокойно хмúритъ
бровь,
Въ éтотъ часъ стремíte вы́ше, вы́ше гóрдыя сердца,—
Наслаждаётся побѣдой тóлько вѣрный до концá,
Тóлько тотъ, кто слѣпо вѣритъ, хотъ судьбѣ на пере-
кóрь,
Тóлько тотъ, кто въ мать не броситъ кáмнемъ тягост-
ный укóрь.

(v.)

WHAT delight,—from place to place
With uncovered feet to fare
And a scanty scrip to bear !
What delight,—from place to place
With austere and humble grace
To entwine a tuneful air !
What delight,—from place to place
With uncovered feet to fare !

3. IN THIS HOUR . . .

IN this hour when darkened skies are by the awful thunder
 rent,
IN this hour when shakes our dwelling to its very
 fundament,
IN this hour when every hope and every love are in
 despair,
When the mightiest in spirit purse the brow in restless
 care,
IN this hour your hearts shall rouse them higher, higher
 in their pride,
Victory is theirs alone who faithful to the end abide.
Only theirs who trust with blindness, even though in
 spite of fate,
Only theirs who on their mother fling not grievous stones
 of hate.

4.

Злой драконъ, горящій ярко тамъ, въ зенитѣ,
Протянувшій всюду пламенния нити,
Опалившій душнымъ зноёмъ всю долину,—
Злой драконъ, побѣду ты ликуешь рано!
Я изъ тёмнаго, глубокаго колчана
Для тебя стрѣлю отравленную вѣну.

Предъ тобою съ лукомъ стану безъ боязни
Я, свершитель смѣлый безпощадной казни,
Я, предсказанный и всё-жъ неожиданный мститель.
Лукъ тугой стрѣла покинетъ съ мѣднымъ звономъ.
Ты на вызовъ мой отвѣтишь тяжкимъ стономъ,
Ты померкнешь, ты погибнешь, злой губитель!

5.

Этотъ зыбкій туманъ надъ рѣкой
Въ одинокую ночь, при лунѣ,—
Ненавистенъ онъ мнѣ, и желаненъ онъ мнѣ
Тишиною своей и тоской.

Я забылъ про дневную красу,
И во мглу я тихонько вхожу,
Ёле видимый слѣдъ напряжённо слѣжусь,
И печали мой одиноко несусь.

4.

EVIL dragon, 'mid the zenith hotly burning,
Thou, who all about thee, fiery threads art turning,
With a stifling hotness parching all the valley,—
Evil dragon, lo, too speedy is thy rapture
O'er thy victory; for, compassing thy capture,
From my dark, deep quiver, poisoned barbs will sally.

With my bow before thee shall I stand, nor falter,
Dauntless to fulfil the doom that none can alter;
Vengeance unforeseen, and yet foretold I cherish.
Taut, my bow shall fling its shaft with brazen droning.
To my challenge, thou shalt answer sorely moaning,—
Foul destroyer, thou shalt wane away and perish.

5.

OVER the river the hazes that flow
'Neath the moon in the lonesome night,
They beset me with hate, and they bring me delight
For the stillness thereof and the woe.

Forgotten the beauty of day,
And thro' mist I stealthily pace,
A track scarce beheld, in my travail I trace
And I carry my lonely despair on my way.

Владиміръ Сергѣевичъ Соловьѣвъ

1.

Мѣлый другъ, иль ты не видишь,
Что всё видимое нами—
Только отблескъ, только тѣни
Отъ незримаго очами?

Мѣлый другъ, иль ты не слышишь,
Что житейскій шумъ трескучій—
Только откликъ искажённый
Торжествующихъ созвучій?

Мѣлый другъ, иль ты не чуешь,
Что одно на цѣломъ свѣтѣ—
Только то, что сердце къ сердцу
Говорить въ нѣмомъ привѣтѣ.

2.

Земля владычица! Къ тебѣ челѣ склонилъ я,
И сквозь покрѣвъ благоуханный твой
Роднѣго сердца пламень ощутилъ я,
Услышалъ трепеть жизни міровой.
Въ полуденныхъ лучахъ такою нѣгой жгучей
Сходила благодать сияющихъ небесъ,
И блеску тихому несли привѣтъ пѣвучій
И вольная рѣка, и многошумный лѣсъ.
И въ явномъ таинствѣ вновь вижу сочетанье
Земной души со свѣтомъ неземнымъ,
И отъ огня любви житейское страданье
Уносится какъ мимолётный дымъ.

Vladimir Sergyeyevitch Solovyov

1.

FRIEND beloved, dost thou see not
That whate'er our gaze embraces,
Is but a reflex, but a shadow
Of the things the eye ne'er traces?

Friend beloved, dost thou hear not
That the roar of earthly surging
Is naught but a distorted echo
Of harmonies in triumph merging?

Friend beloved, dost thou feel not
That the world but one thing holdeth—
What one heart unto another
With a mute acclaim unfoldeth?

2.

O MISTRESS earth! Before thee have I knelt,
And through the fragrances that thee begird,
The glowing of a kindred heart I felt,
The throbbing of a living world I heard.
In noon-tide beams with such enraptured blaze
The bounty of the radiant skies was sent,
With whose still lustre the responsive lays
Of rippling streams and rustling woods were blent.
To me the sacrament reveals again
Earth's soul with the unearthly sheen unite,
And from the fire of love all earthly pain
Is borne away like passing smoke in flight.

3.

Въ туманѣ́ утреннемъ невѣ́рными шага́ми.
Я шёлъ къ тайнственнымъ и чу́днымъ берега́мъ.
Боро́лася заря́ съ послѣ́дними звѣ́здами;
Ещё́ лета́ли сны—и схва́ченная сна́ми,
Душа́ моли́лася невѣ́домымъ бога́мъ.

Въ холо́дный бѣ́лый день доро́гой одино́кой,
Какъ прѣ́жде, я иду́ въ невѣ́домой стра́нѣ.
Разсѣ́ялся туманъ, и я́сно ви́дять око́,
Какъ тру́день го́рный путь, и какъ ещё́ далѣ́ко
Дале́ко всё, что гре́зилось мнѣ́.

И до полу́ночи неро́бкими шага́ми
Всё́ буду я иди́ти къ жела́ннымъ берега́мъ,
Туда́, гдѣ́ на горѣ́, подъ но́выми звѣ́здами
Весь пламенѣ́ющій побѣ́дными огня́ми
Меня́ дожде́тся мой за́вѣ́тный хра́мъ.

4.

У ца́рицы моёй есть высóкий дворе́цъ
О семй онъ столба́хъ золоты́хъ.
У ца́рицы моёй семигра́нный вѣ́нецъ,
Въ нёмъ безъ счёту ка́мней доро́гихъ.

И въ зелёномъ саду́ у ца́рицы моёй
Розы́ и ли́лій краса́ расцвѣ́ла,
И въ прозра́чной волнѣ́ серебри́стый ручей
Лóвить о́тблескъ кудре́й и чела́.

3.

AMID the morning hazes, wavering of pace,
I journeyed to a secret, wonder-laden shore;
The daybreak strove to quench the straggling starry trace;
Dreams still were on the wing, and held in their embrace,
My spirit sought unfathomed godheads to adore.

Upon a lonely journey in a chill, white day,
Amid unfathomed regions, as of old I fare.
The hazes now are rent, and clearly I survey
How hard the upward path, and still how far away,
How far away is all my dreams laid bare.

But to the midnight hour, unfaltering of pace,
I still shall journey on, to reach my yearning's shore;
Yonder on high, beneath another starry trace,
With fires of victory illumining the place,
My shrine awaits me with its hallowed store.

4.

THE court of my empress is lofty of height,
With seven golden pillars around.
The crown of my empress is sevenfold bedight,
With jewels unnumbered 'tis bound.

And in the green garden, my empress' own,
The roses and lilies bloom fair;
In the waves of a silvery streamlet is thrown
The flash of her brow and her hair.

Но не слышитъ царѣца, что шепчетъ ручей,
На цвѣты и не взглянетъ она:
Ей туманить печаль свѣтъ лазурный очей,
И мечтá ея скорби полна.

Она видить: далéко, въ полно́чномъ краю,
Средь морóзныхъ тумáновъ и вьюгъ,
Съ злою силою тьмы въ *оди́ночномъ* бою
Гибнетъ ёю *покинутый* другъ.

И бросаётъ она алма́зный вѣ́нецъ,
Оставляетъ черто́гъ золотой,
И къ невѣ́рному дру́гу, нежданнѣй пришлѣцъ,
Благодáтной стучится руко́й.

И надъ мра́чной зимой молодáя весна—
Вся сiяя, склонилась надъ нимъ
И покрыла его, тихой лáски полна,
Лучезáрнымъ покрóвомъ своимъ.

И низринуты тёмныя силы во прахъ,
Чистымъ пла́менемъ весь онъ горитъ,
И съ любовiю вѣ́чной въ лазурныхъ очахъ
Тихо дру́гу она говоритъ:

—„Знаю, воля твоя волнъ морскѣхъ не вѣ́рнѣй;
Ты мнѣ вѣ́рность клялся сохранить,—
Клятвѣ ты измѣнилъ,—но измѣной своей
Могъ ли сёрдце моё измѣнить? . . .“

But my empress ne'er harks to the whispering rill,
On the blossoms she turns not her gaze:
And the glow of her eyes in despair has grown chill,
And grief on her pondering preys.

She beholds: in a midnight domain far away,
'Mid the chillness of hazes and snow,
How the gloom's evil powers in a single affray
Her lover of old overthrow.

And her gem-studded crown from her brow she has torn,
From her golden-wrought palace she wends;
Of a sudden, approaching her comrade forsworn,
Benignant, her hand she extends.

And as o'er the dark winter young spring-tide has cast
His glow, she in tenderest love
Has bent herself o'er him, and shielded him fast
With her glittering shelter above.

As the powers of the gloom in the dust he descries,
He is kindled with purest of flames;
And with perishless love in her radiant eyes
Thus softly her friend she acclaims:

"I know thee inconstant as waves of the sea;
Thou hast sworn to me trueness alway,—
Thine oath thou betrayed,—by betrayal of me,
My heart couldst thou likewise betray?"

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