

2. Farewell Song of the Birds of Passage

Oh how lovely were the woods and fields! How sad the world is now! The beautiful summertime is gone, and after joy came sorrow. We knew nothing of pain; we sat under the leafy canopy content and joyful in the sunshine, and sang out into the world. We poor birds mourn so, we no longer have a home, we must now flee from here, into the wide unknown.

3. Greeting

Wherever I go and look in field and forest and plain, down the hill to the mead, most beautiful noble lady, I greet you a thousand times. In my garden I find many flowers, pretty and nice, many garlands I bind from them and a thousand thoughts and greetings I weave into them. Her I must not give one, she is too noble and fair; they all have to fade, only unequalled love stays in the heart forever. I seem to be of good cheer and work to and fro, and, though my heart bursts, I dig on and sing, and soon I dig my grave.

4. Autumn Song

Oh, how soon the cycle ends, spring turns into wintertime! Oh, how soon all happiness turns to sad silence! The last sounds soon fade! The last songbirds are soon flown! The last green is soon gone! They all want to return home! Oh, how soon the cycle ends, merriness turns to longing sorrow. Were you a dream, you thoughts of love, sweet as spring and fast disappearing? Only one thing will never wane: the longing that never goes. Ah, how soon the cycle ends! Oh, how soon all happiness turns to sad silence!

5. Folksong

O wert thou in the cauld blast an yonder lea, my plaidie to the angry airt, I'd shelter thee: or did misfortune's bitter storms around thee blow, thy shield should be my bosom to share it a'; to share it a'. Or were I in the wildest waste, sae black and bare, the desert were a paradise if thou wert there. Or were I monarch of the globe, wi' thee to reign, the brightest jewel in my crown wad be my Queen, wad be my Queen.

6. The Maybell and the Flowers

The Maybell rings in the valley, it sings so bright and delicate; come now to the ring, you darling flowers! The little flowers, blue, gold and white, they all gather round, forget-me-nots and speedwells and violets join in. In a trice, the lily begins to play and they all dance; the moon looks on happily, enjoying it all. Jack Frost is very annoyed, he arrives in the valley; the Maybell plays no longer, the little flowers are gone. But scarcely has the frost left the valley the Maybell quickly calls the flowers back to the spring festival, ringing twice as brightly. Now I can't stay at home either; the Maybell calls me; the flowers are going to the dance and I go too!

TRANSLATIONS

Brahms: Four Duets, op. 28

1. The Nun and the Knight

As the world goes to rest, my yearning awakens with the stars; I must listen in the cool as the waves roar below! "I am brought here from far away by waves that beat so mournfully against the land, beneath the bars of your window. Lady, do you still know this Knight?" It is as if strange voices are floating through the mild air; once again the wind has taken them away, - alas, my heart is so anxious! "Over there lies your ruined castle lamenting in its desolate halls; the way the woods greeted me, I felt as though I must die." Old sounds burst forth, sunk long since in time; melancholy falls on me once again, and I feel like weeping from my heart. "Over the wood lightning flashes from afar, where they are fighting over the grave of Christ; there will I steer my ship, and there will everything end!" A ship leaves with a man upon it; false night, you bewilder the mind! Farewell, world! May God protect those who wander madly in darkness!

2. At the Door

Pull the bolt back from the door - how gladly I would come in to kiss you. "I won't let you in. Creep away home, treading ever so softly." I can creep as softly as moonlight; but stand up and let me in - this I do ask of you. O maiden, let your lad come in!

3. The Water Rushes

The water rushes and will not stay still; the stars pass merrily in the sky; the clouds advance merrily in the sky, and so love rushes and wanders there. The waters are rushing, the clouds dissolving; yet the stars remain: they wander and drift. And so it happens as well with Love, the true: it sways and stirs but changes not.

4. The Hunter and His Love

Isn't the sky so blue? Stand at the window and look! Not until night, late at night, will I come home from the hunt. "But I planned differently - I want to dance tonight. You'll stay outside the door, late, outside the door if you will not dance with me!" Maiden, the sky is blue - stay at the window and look. Until night, late at night, I will return home from the hunt. "The sky may be blue, but I will never stay and look, if at night, late at night you return home from the hunt."

Brahms: Gypsy Songs, op. 103

I. Ho there, Gypsy! Strike resoundingly each string! And the song of false and faithless maiden sings! Let the strings all moan lamenting, sorrow weeping, 'til the burning tears these cheeks so hot are steeping!

II. High and towering river Rima, thou art so drear; on thy shore I mourn aloud for thee, my dear! Waves are fleeing, waves are streaming, rolling o'er the shore afar to me; on the riverbank of Rima let me weep for her eternally!

III. Know ye, when my loved one is fairest of all this? If her sweet mouth rosy, jest and laugh and kiss. Maiden heart, mine thou art. Tenderly I kiss thee. Thee a loving heaven hath created just for me! Know ye, when my lover dearest is to me? When in his fond arms, he enfolds me lovingly. Dear sweetheart, mine thou art. Tenderly I kiss thee. Thee a loving heaven hath created just for me!

IV. Dear God, Thou know'st how oft I've rued this: That I gave my lover once a little kiss. Heart's command I kiss him, how dismiss? And long as I live I'll think of that first kiss. Dear God, Thou know'st how oft in still of night, how in joy and pain on him my thoughts delight. Love is sweet, though bitter oft to rue; my poor heart is his and ever, ever true.

V. Brown the lad, blue-eyed the lassie - led by him to dance is she. Clashing spurs he strikes together: start the Czardas melody! Kisses fondly his sweet dove, and spins her, whirls her, shouts and springs! Throws three shining silver gulden on the cymbal so it rings!

VI. Rosebuds three, all on one tree, ye bloom so red, that a lad a lassie woo, is not forbade! O dear God, if that had been denied, then the whole wide lovely world long since had died. Single life's a sin, beside! Fairest village in Alfeld is Ketschemete, There live many pretty lasses trim and neat! Friends, go find ye there a little bride, sue then for her hand and build your house with pride. Drain the glass with friendship plied!

VII. Art thou thinking often now, sweetheart, my love, what thou once with holy vow to me hast sworn? Leave me not, deceive me not, thou know'st not how dear thou art to me; love'st thou me as I thee, then God's smile shall crown thee graciously.

VIII. Rosy evening clouds hang in the firmament, longing-filled for thee, my love, my heart is rent; heaven glows with splendid light and I dream by day and night but of thee, of the sweetheart dear to me.

Mendelssohn: Op. 71

1. and 2. Translations unavailable

3. To the Distant One

I pick this rose here in the unknown distance. Dear heart, to you, ah to you I would bring it so gladly! But by the time I could travel to you many distant miles, the rose would long be wilted; for roses hurry [to die]. Never should lovers venture farther from each other than a blooming rose may be carried in a person's hand [without wilting]; or [farther] than the nightingale brings straws to its nest, or [farther] than [the nightingale's] sweet sounds are carried by the west wind.

4. On the pond, the motionless one

On the pond, the motionless one, rests the moon's lovely gleam, weaving its pale roses into a green garland of reeds. Deer wander there on the hill, gazing up through the night; often, winged things stir dreamily in the tall reeds. Weeping, I must lower my gaze; through the depths of my soul pass sweet thoughts of you, like a quiet night prayer.

5. To the wind

I wandered forth to a far-off land; just one more time I looked back with emotion, and saw how she moved her mouth and how she waved with her hand. She must have called a friendly word to send me on my gloomy way, but I did not hear one beloved sound because the wind had carried it away. That I must give up my happiness, you raw, cold blast of wind, it should be enough - yet must you also tear from me her last farewell?

6. Night song

Gone is the light day, from far comes the bell's tolling; thus passes the time the whole night, carrying so many along, without their knowing. Where now is the colourful joy, the friend's comfort and faithful bosom, the dearest one's sweet glances? Does no one want to be lively with me? Begin again, dear nightingale, you waterfall of bright sound! To praise we will God united, until the morning light appears.

Mendelssohn: Six Duets, op. 63

1. I wish that my love

I wish that my love would flow into a single word, which I'd give to the airy winds, who would carry it merrily along. They would carry it to you, my beloved, from my overflowing heart; you hear it always, you hear it everywhere. And scarcely have you closed your eyes to nighttime slumbers, my image will follow you, into your deepest dream.