

Tom Cipullo

Crickets (Text by William Heyen)

Evenings,
where lawns are not sprayed with poisons,
You can still hear the crickets,
You can still see lightning bugs signaling,
Look, a yellow green strobe under the trees, but gone,
But there again,
Sometimes in the same spot,
And sometimes not
As the tiny purveyors of phosphor drift past our houses,
Looking for one another,
And the crickets,
The ones that still have their legs,
Keep scraping them together,
Listen, maybe for the last time on earth,
Listen.

Summer into Autumn Slips

(Text by Emily Dickinson)

Summer into Autumn slips
And yet we sooner say
"The Summer" than "the Autumn," lest
We turn the sun away,

And almost count it an affront
The presence to concede
Of one however lovely, not
The one that we have loved -

Late Summer (Text by Stanley Kunitz)

Summer is late, my heart.
Words plucked out of the air some forty years ago
When I was wild with love and torn
almost in two scatter like leaves
this night of whistling wind and rain.

It is my heart that's late,
It is my song that's flown
Outdoors all afternoon
under a gunmetal sky
staking my garden down,

I kneeled to the crickets trilling underfoot
as if about to burst from their crusty shells;
and like a child again marveled to hear so clear
and brave a music poor from a small machine what
makes the engine go?
Desire, desire, desire.
The longing for the dance
stirs in a buried life.

One season only,
and it's done.

So let the battered old willow thrash against the
window panes
and the house timbers creak.
Darling, do you remember the man you married?

Touch me,
remind me who I am.

Richard Strauss

Ständchen Op. 17 No. 2 (Text by Adolf Friedrich)

Open up, open up, but quietly my child,
So as no one from slumber to wake.
Hardly murmurs the brook,
hardly trembles in the wind
A leaf on the bushes and hedges.
Therefore softly, my maiden,
that nothing itself stirs,
Just quietly the hand on the door latch laid.

With steps, like steps of the elves so gently,
To hop over the flowers,
Fly lightly out into the moonlit night,
And slip out into the garden to me.
All around slumber the flowers by the rippling brook,
Spreading their fragrance in their sleep,
only love is awake.

Ich wollt ein Sträusslein binden Op. 68 No. 2

(Text by Clemens Maria Wenzeslaus von Brentano)

I wanted a bouquet to make,
Then came the dark night
No little flower was to be found,
Or would I have brought it to you.

Then flowed down the cheeks
My tears onto the clover,
A little flower sprouted up
I now in the garden see.

I wanted to pick it for you
There in the dark clover,
But began it then to speak:

Säusle, liebe Myrte! Op. 68 No. 3

(Text by Clemens Maria Wenzeslaus von Brentano)

Rustle, dear myrtle!
How quiet it is in the world,
The moon, the shepherd of the stars
In the bright field of heaven
Is driving already the sheep clouds
To the spring of the light forth.
Sleep, my friend, oh sleep,
Until I am with you again!

Rustle, dear Myrte!
And dream in the starlight.
The turtledove has cooed also
Her brood already to sleep,
Quietly move the sheep clouds
To the spring of the light.
Sleep, my friend, oh sleep,
Until I am with you again!

Sit down, here it-grows-dark mysteriously
Under the linden trees,
The nightingale over our heads shall
Dream of our kisses.
And the rose, when it in the morning awakens,
Brightly shall glow from the joyous trembling
of this night.

“Ah, do me no harm!
Be friendly in your heart,
Consider your own grief,
And let me in agony
Not die before my time.”

And if it had not so spoken,
In the garden all alone,
So would have I for you it picked,
Now though it may not be.

My dearest has remained away,
I am so completely alone.

Do hear you, how the fountains gush?
Do hear you, how the cricket chirp?
Quiet, quiet, let us listen.
Happy he-who in dreams dies!

Happy, whom the clouds cradle
When the moon a lullaby sings.
Oh, how blissfully can he fly,
For whom in dream the wings swings,
So that on the blue roof of heaven
Stars he like flowers may pick:

Sleep, dream, fly, I will-awaken
Soon you up and I am blest!
Rustle, dear myrtle! I am blest!

Edvard Grieg

En Svane Op. 25 No. 2 (Text by Henrik Ibsen)

My white swan,
You mut, you quiet,
Neither warble nor trill
Let a singing voice be heard.

Fearfully protecting
The elf who sleeps,
Always listening,
You glided away.

But the last meeting when oaths and eyes
Were secret lies,
Yes then, then it sounded!

In music's birth
You ended your life.
You sang in death.
You were still a swan!

Zur Rosenzeit Op. 48 No. 5

(Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

You are wilting, sweet roses,
My love could not sustain you.
Bloom, ah! For the one without hope,
For him whose heart breaks from grief.

Of those days think I sadly,
When I, angel, was joined with you,
For the first little bud lying in wait
Early into my garden I went.

All-the blossoms, all the fruit
Even to your feet I carried
And standing before you,
Hope in the heartbeat.

He who for the first little bud lies in wait,
Early into his garden went.
Ah of those days I think I sadly,
When I, angel, on you hung.

Ein Traum Op. 48 No. 6

(Text by Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt)

I dreamed once a beautiful dream:
I loved a blond maiden.
It was in a green forest glen,
It was in the warm springtime.

The buds were sprouting,
the wood brook ran strong,
From. Afar out of the village rang out bells –
We were completely joy filled,
Immersed totally in bliss.

And more-beautiful still than once the dream
Was what occurred in reality
It was in a green forest glen
It was in the warm springtime,

The brook ran strong,
The buds were sprouting,
Bells rang out from the village hither –
I held you tightly, I held you for a long time,
And would never again release you!

Oh, spring green woodland glen!
You live within me though all time –
There became the reality to a dream
There the dream became reality!

Stephanie Pfundt

Salmon Hymn (Poetry and music by Stephanie Pfundt)

My sister lounges in the wheelhouse...
On her stomach, legs in the air,
reading about God.

The windows all breath out and the late sun shines in.

Up above the world, I wonder
how serene, sweeping sky and sea,
with salmon jumping in an anchored silence -
can yield a universe so small.

Ocean Airs (Poetry and music by Stephanie Pfundt)

I awaken.

Sweating in my bunk it's eleven pm.

Transfixed, I listen.

Hydraulic moans in gentle swells

Against the boat, water laps In buzzing silence.

I rise.

Outside, the sun recently gone

does not regret me or my story.

The fading horizon that encircles me does not fall silent to my cry.

I weep.

A gull shrieks back

In the distance a small island

Protecting her own children with curve and crevice... Breathes free.

Now she listens,

Gazing with the grief of the virgin into my father's face.

With her rocks and single tree root

Alerts her all seducing ocean mother

Whose currents and waves come to my aid.

Lili Boulanger

Elle était descendue au bas de la prairie

(Text by Francis Jammes)

She had gone down to the bottom of the meadow,
and because the meadow was full of flowers
that like to grow in the water,
I had gathered the drowned plants.

Soon, because she was wet, she came back to the top
of that flowery meadow.

She laughed and moved with the lanky grace
of girls who are too tall.

She looked the way lavender flowers do.

Elle est gravement gaie (Text by Francis Jammes)

She is solemnly gay. Sometimes she looked up
as if to see what I was thinking.

She was as soft as the yellow and blue velvet
of a lane of pansies late at night.

The lilacs which bloomed last year
will flower again in their sad beds.

Les lilas qui avaient fleuri (Text by Francis Jammes)

Already the frail peach tree has bedecked the blue sky
with its roses, like a child on the feast of Corpus Christi.

My heart should die amid all these things,
for it was among white and pink orchards
that I had hoped for I don't know what from you.

My soul sleeps soundly in your lap.

Don't push it away. Don't awaken it,
for fear that when it leaves

it will see how you are weak and troubled in its arms.

Sergei Rachmaninoff

At Night in My Garden

(Text by Aleksandr Alesandrovich Blok)

At night in my garden
the weeping willow weeps,
and she is inconsolable,
This dear Willow, mournful willow tree.
Early morning flashes;
The gentle maiden Dawn
From dear Willow, weeping bitterly,
Wipes away the tears with her curls.

Daisies

(Text by Igor Vasil'yevich Lotaryov)

Oh, see how many daisies,
Here and there,
They blossom; they are plentiful; they are abundant.
They blossom.
Their petals are three-edged, like wings,
Like white silk;
You are the summer's might! You are abundant joy,
You are radiant multitude!
Earth prepares to flower with the dew's draught,
Giving sap to the stalks.
Oh maidens, Oh daisy stars,
I love you

A Dream (Text by Fyodo Kuzmych Teternikov)

There is nothing more desirable
In the world than the dream.
It has magic stillness.
It has on its lips
No sadness, no laughter

And bottomless eyes,
and many hidden pleasures.
It has two immense wings,
as light as the shadow of midnight.

It's unfathomable how it carries them,
and where and on what;
It will not beat its wings,
And it will not move its shoulder.