

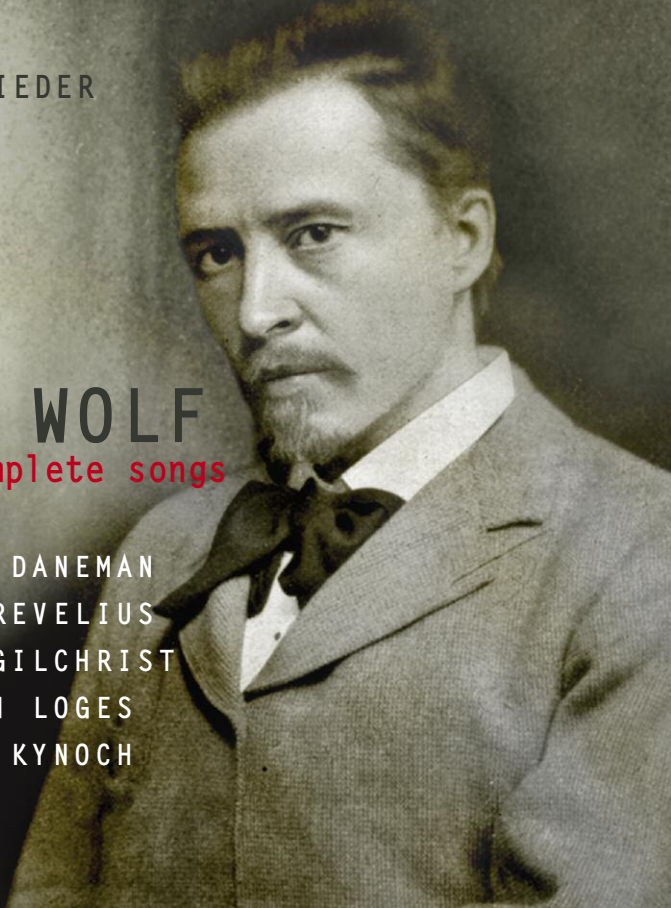
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MÖRIKE LIEDER
part 2

HUGO WOLF

the complete songs

SOPHIE DANEMAN
ANNA GREVELIUS
JAMES GILCHRIST
STEPHAN LOGES
SHOLTO KYNOCH





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Recorded live at the Holywell Music Room

HUGO WOLF (1860-1903)

the complete songs

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2 MÖRIKE LIEDER
part 2

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2	Gebet ^c	2'31
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76'30

Sophie Daneman *soprano* ^a
 Anna Grevelius *mezzo-soprano* ^b
 James Gilchrist *tenor* ^c
 Stephan Loges *baritone* ^d
 Sholto Kynoch *piano*

HUGO WOLF

Hugo Filipp Jakob Wolf was born on 13 March 1860, the fourth of six surviving children, in Windischgraz, Styria, then part of the Austrian Empire. He was taught the piano and violin by his father at an early age and continued to study piano at the local primary school. His secondary education was unsuccessful, leaving his school in Graz after one term and then the Benedictine abbey school in St Paul after two years for failing Latin. When, in 1875, his disinterest in all subjects other than music led to him leaving his next school in Marburg after another two years, it was decided that he should live with his aunt in Vienna and study at the conservatoire.

In Vienna he attended the opera with his new circle of friends, which included the young Gustav Mahler, and became a devotee of Wagner. However, after only two years he was unfairly dismissed from the conservatoire for a breach of discipline, after a fellow student sent the director a threatening letter, signing it Hugo Wolf.

He continued to compose and returned to Vienna in 1877 to earn a living as a music teacher, but he did not have the necessary temperament for this vocation and would, throughout his life, rely on the generosity of friends and patrons to support him. The composer Goldschmidt took him under his wing and introduced him to influential acquaintances, as well as lending him books, music and money. It was, however, under Goldschmidt's guidance that he paid a visit to a brothel in 1878, resulting in him contracting syphilis, which later led to his insanity and early death. This sexual initiation coincided with his first major burst of songwriting.

His mood swings and sporadic creativity were now quite pronounced, and he stayed with friends who could offer him the tranquility and independence he needed to work. In 1881, Goldschmidt found him a post as second conductor in Salzburg, where his musical talents were greatly appreciated, but his violent quarrelling with the director led to his return to Vienna early the following year. For a while his mood brightened, but by 1883, the year of Wagner's death, he had stopped writing music.

At this point, his future seemed uncertain. His work had been declined by publishers Schott and Breitkopf, he had writer's block, and he quarrelled with friends. He had been teaching Melanie Köchert since 1881, and with the influence of her husband he was appointed music critic of the Sunday journal *Wiener Salonblatt*, for which he spent three years writing pro-Wagnerian, anti-Brahmsian pieces. Although this was useful, it did get in the way of his

composition, and attempts to have his own works played were thwarted by musicians who had fallen foul of his sharp criticism.

He began to write music again in 1886, finally confident in his talents. In May 1887, his father died, and although Wolf wrote little for the rest of the year, a publisher did produce two volumes of his songs, one dedicated to his mother, the other to the memory of his father.

Again taking refuge with friends, Wolf now began a sudden, spontaneous burst of songwriting, emerging from years as a music critic and coinciding with the start of his love affair with Melanie Köchert. By March, after 43 Mörike settings, he took a break with friends and then began another spate of songwriting in September resulting in thirteen Eichendorff and more Mörike songs. He returned to Vienna and in February 1889 had finished all but one of the 51 songs of his Goethe songbook. After another summer break, he returned to writing and April 1890 saw him complete his 44 Spanish songs. By June 1890, this creative period of two and a half years had produced a total of 174 songs.

Wolf's fame had now spread beyond Austria, with articles being written in German publications. His exhaustion and bouts of depression and insomnia meant that he wrote very little for most of 1891, but at the end of December wrote another 15 Italian songs. For the next three years, he barely wrote a note.

In April 1895, spurred on by Humperdinck's operatic success of *Hänsel und Gretel*, he again began composing from dawn till dusk. By early July the piano score of his four-act opera *Der Corregidor* was complete, with the orchestration taking the rest of the year. It was turned down by Vienna, Berlin and Prague but finally staged in Mannheim to great success. He completed his Italian songbook with 24 songs written in the period from 25 March to 30 April 1896.

In March 1897, he wrote his last songs: settings of German translations of Michelangelo sonnets. He was, by now, clearly a sick man, but nevertheless in September he embarked on a new opera, feverishly completing sixty pages in three weeks. It was at this point that he succumbed to madness, claiming to have been appointed the director of the Vienna Opera. Under restraint, he was taken back to an asylum, and although he returned home to Vienna briefly in 1898, he was returned to an institution later that year after trying to drown himself. His devoted Melanie visited him regularly until his death on 22 February 1903. He is buried in the Vienna Central Cemetery beside Schubert and Beethoven.

Zum neuen Jahr is subtitled *Kirchengesang*, and Wolf responds to this seasonal poem in diatonic mode, using a succession of parallel thirds in contrary motion between the two hands to express the harmony of the text. Note how he handles the climax in verse two, by giving such important words as ‘Lenke’, ‘Herr’, ‘Anfang’, ‘Ende’ and, above all, ‘alles’, ever longer note values, until the music, significantly marked ‘überströmend’, overflows with joy and praise.

Gebet represents a fervent plea to avoid the sort of emotional upheavals that Mörike had experienced with Maria Meyer. Wolf sets the poem to a sort of four-square hymn tune, until at ‘Doch in der Mitten/Liegt holdes Bescheiden’, the piano soars ecstatically before descending gently into the final heart-easing cadence. **An den Schlaf**, with its Tristanesque harmonies, must have appealed to the insomniac in Wolf, whose piano prelude creates the gentle, dreamy state to which he would succumb. Its drooping motif in A flat major is repeated throughout the song, which eventually reaches the key of E major, as though sleep had finally closed his eyes.

Neue Liebe contrasts the imperfection of human love with God’s perfect love. Mörike’s poem is all devotion and spiritual excitement; Wolf’s version, with its crescendoing tremolandi and thundering chords at ‘Aus Finsternissen hell in mir aufzückt ein Freudenchein’ is altogether more secular, but ends with a solemn and measured postlude. In **Wo find ich Trost?** the poet asks hysterically (the vocal range is from a high A flat to D below the staff) if he will be saved from death and sin – Mörike’s conscience was never clear when he failed to suppress his erotic desires. Wolf was an ardent admirer of Wagner, and this is one of his most Wagnerian songs; perhaps Wolf had the *Parsifal* theme in mind, which also deals with the struggle between lust and spiritual grace.

Luise Rau was the daughter of the pastor at Plattenhardt, Württemberg, whose death caused the vacancy which Mörike was appointed to fill in May 1829. She was three years younger than Mörike, and his letters to her are widely regarded as one of the gems of German prose. She also inspired many of his most beautiful love poems, including **An die Geliebte**, whose gestation was described by the poet in a celebrated reply to Luise’s letter which Mörike read in romantic seclusion:

‘The path on which I walked with your letter led me to a most delightful little place that was unknown to me: a sloping corner of a meadow, thick with bushes and trees, on the banks of the fast-moving Lauter, into which another stream flowed from the hills. I sat down there, read, thought and began to compose the poems which you will receive with this letter. I then climbed to the top of the wood and continued my poems. They came from the depths of my heart. This has since become my favourite walk. I set out on it again today and carved the letters L and E in the bark of a young alder tree by the stream – and as I did so, it occurred to me that one could meaningfully insert the letters OV between them.’

With the letter he enclosed five poems, including *An die Geliebte* (Mörike’s original title was *Sonett an Luise*), which Wolf sets to a sort of rhythmically and harmonically heightened declamation. In the final two lines and the postlude, Wolf – like Schubert before him in *Freiwilliges Versinken* – depicts the stars in a series of softly repeated chords high above the stave; marked *sehr ausdrucksvoll*, they shine out ever more brightly, then fade in the decrescendo, before vanishing from view.

Much of Mörike’s love poetry was written in the wake of his failed relationship with Maria Meyer. We know little about her and even less about the details of her relationship with Mörike. She was a Swiss girl of obscure origin, wildly beautiful, extremely well read, a member of the wandering sect of Julia von Krüdener, and affected at times by a sort of religious fervour. The first Mörike heard of her was when Herr Mergenthaler, the owner of a Ludwigsburg brewery, found her unconscious on the Stuttgart-Ludwigsburg road – it later turned out that she was prone to epileptic fits and bouts of sleepwalking. Overnight, Maria Meyer became something of a celebrity in the little town, and Mörike, living in Tübingen, exchanged passionate letters with her, despite the warnings of his sister Luise. Rumours soon reached him, however, that led him to call her moral integrity into question. Mörike was thrown into utter confusion – all the more so, when he heard that she had suddenly left Ludwigsburg. Soon afterwards, she was found in Heidelberg in exactly the same circumstances as she had first appeared on the Ludwigsburg road. This time she was arrested; influential friends and admirers, however, secured her release, and she was left to go on her way. In the early summer

of 1824 she turned up in Tübingen and wrote Mörike a letter, requesting him to meet her and write her a short dedicatory poem. He refused both requests and fled in turmoil to his mother in Stuttgart. He tried to exorcize this traumatic experience in the five *Peregrina* poems which appear in the autobiographical novel *Maler Nolten* – but in vain: her spectre continued to haunt Mörike, who wrote a great number of love poems that are characterized by an overwhelming feeling of repressed sensuality.

Wolf set two of Mörike's five *Peregrina* poems (the first and fourth) from *Maler Nolten*. **Peregrina I** begins solemnly to a dotted crotchet and quaver rhythm, but grows more impassioned and chromatic as the poet reflects on her erotic charms and disloyalty. The melody of the postlude, which seems to express the pathological nature of sexual desire, becomes the main theme of **Peregrina II**, which must number among the most disturbed and overwrought love-songs in the entire repertoire. Marked *sehr innig* (opposed to merely *innig* in *Peregrina I*), the music veers towards the minor, the melodic line falters and falls apart, chromaticism increases as he recalls their relationship, until at 'Zuletzt brach ich...' the tempo quickens and the voice breaks out in loud sobbing, before the song limps to a close, as he remembers how, hand in hand, they had left the house.

Frage und Antwort discusses the nature of love in a poem which compares the mysterious working of the heart with unfathomable natural phenomena. Love causes distress, and Wolf's ecstatic setting of the last verse, which describes the futility of attempting to halt a raging wind, is memorably masochistic. Mörike's passion for Luise Rau, though it yielded a great number of happy love poems such as *An die Geliebte*, also inspired one of his most tortured: **Lebe wohl**, which the poet included in a letter to his fiancée, dated 8 August 1833. They had been engaged four years, and Mörike must have had a premonition that the relationship would not last. Wolf captures the grief in the falling semitones of the opening bar, and every phrase thereafter ends in a drooping cadence, none greater in range and effect than in the closing climax, when the voice plummets from top A to D below the staff. **Heimweh**, another Luise-inspired poem, is, perhaps, the most Schubertian of all Wolf's songs, and with its heartfelt melody expresses an intense nostalgia. **Lied vom Winde** returns us, albeit skittishly, to Mörike's theme of infidelity, and Wolf's setting manages to give the impression that the brilliantly breezy accompaniment was composed independently of the vocal line.

Denk es, o Seele! ends Mörike's Novelle *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*, which describes the largely apochryphal events that befell Mozart and Constanze on their journey to Prague. They are invited to share in the festivities at Count von Schinzberg's castle, celebrating the engagement of his niece Eugenie to a nobleman. All appears to end happily. But then, in the epilogue, Eugenie closes the piano, which Mozart had played, and jealously locks it, lest the keys be touched by another hand than Mozart's. She knows she has said farewell to a composer of genius. She senses that his days are numbered, that he is doomed to die a premature death. Pensively, she tidies away several volumes of songs, and in doing so dislodges an old sheet of paper which flutters to the ground. On it is written, we are told, an old Bohemian folksong. She reads it, and sensing the theme of transience and its relevance to Mozart, begins to weep. It is, of course, not a folksong at all, but a wonderfully constructed lyric that describes the approach of death. Wolf's sepulchral D minor setting (the key of *Don Giovanni*, which Mozart was to produce in Prague) is permeated with tolling bells and ends in a funeral march that dies away in the final bars.

Der Jäger is a blustery song about a tempestuous relationship. When it was dismissed by a critic as being a mere 'Liedchen' ('ditty'), Wolf countered that you might just as well call *Tristan und Isolde* an operetta. **Rat einer Alten**, though Wolf was later to express dissatisfaction with it, remains one of his most penetrating portraits – here an old woman pontificating about life, with a voice as metallic as those acciaccaturas that bristle in every bar. With **Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens** we are in a different world of nubile eroticism, where the girl gasps with amazement as she holds in her hands the phallic thing that slithers, coils, rears, penetrates and nestles. Wolf was thrilled with his setting, and wrote ecstatically to Edmund Lang on 20 March 1888:

'Today, immediately after my arrival, I composed my masterpiece. *Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens* is by far the best thing I've done. In comparison to this, all the earlier songs are mere child's play. The music is so strikingly characteristic, and at the same time so intense, that it would destroy the nervous system of a block of marble. The poem is wonderful, the music no less so.'

Lied eines Verliebten tells of a man's obsession with an unattainable girl, which Wolf expresses by the restless quavers of the piano's left hand, and the throbbing off-beat chords of the right. Wolf's elegant melody is one of his most memorable.

Der Feuerreiter appears in *Maler Nolten*, where one of the characters describes a strange figure, known as the ‘mad Captain’:

‘His destiny had made a solitary of him: he associated with no one, and never appeared in the streets from one year to another, except when a fire broke out in the town or the neighbourhood. He could scent a fire at once, and when he did, he would be seen at his little window, deadly pale, wearing a red cap [Mörike is said to have been inspired by the sight of the mad Hölderlin pacing up and down in his room in a white cap] and restlessly striding up and down. At the first alarm of the fire – often, indeed, before it, and before anyone else knew exactly where it was – he would get a lean nag out of the stable and ride with an infallible instinct, at full gallop, to the scene of the disaster.’

The actor, who tells this story, is then requested by the company to sing the ballad of the *Feuerreiter*. Wolf was fascinated by it and later arranged the poem for chorus and orchestra, a version which fails, however, to match the dramatic power of the piano-accompanied song, especially at ‘da fällt in Asche ab’, where the piano plays clumps of diminished seventh chords, marked *pppp*, that depict in wonderfully realistic fashion the ashes floating to the ground.

Nixe Binsefuss clearly owes a debt to Carl Loewe, especially his *Erlkönig* where, at the end of each verse, as in *Nixe Binsefuss*, the phrases die away in a long, pianissimo diminuendo over a gossamer light accompaniment. An erotic undertow is often present in many of Mörike’s poems, such as **Gesang Weylas**. Weyla and Orplid, of course, are the creations of Mörike’s own imagination; in his student days at Tübingen, the poet used to explore the deep woods with two friends, where they created their own kingdoms, peopled by elves and nixies. Orplid was an island where they could escape the pressures of the all too real world – but even here the dionysian asserts itself: primeval waters rise, rejuvenated, around the island’s hips, and Wolf responds with a crescendo in the piano part, the first change of dynamics in the song. **Die Geister am Mummelsee** was probably written, like *Der Feuerreiter*, as a tribute to Carl Loewe. Mörike’s spooky poem occurs in *Maler Nolten* and is introduced by Wolf with a succession of sepulchral open fifths, sounding over a span of three octaves in the bass. There is an over-elaboration of detail in Wolf’s setting that makes it difficult to bring off, but there are wonderful moments to admire, like the Chopinesque piano cascades, suggestive of ‘glowing water’, and the descending semitones at the end of the song that diminish from *ff* to *ppp* in the final unharmonized flourish, as the narrator flees in terror.

Storchenbotschaft so delighted the composer that he dashed off another letter, dated 27 March 1888, to Eckstein:

‘This afternoon I wrote a quite exceptionally successful song, *Storchenbotschaft* (Mörike, of course), and so I have hopes again that the mill will continue to clatter’.

It had only been two days since he had composed one of his greatest masterpieces, *Das verlassene Mägdlein*, yet here he is impatient at the creative inertia of a mere forty-eight hours! The song is a delight, and there can be few more comic moments in the entire repertoire than the final bars, when the storks fly off in octaves to an hilarious waltz that has them giggling with glee.

Mörike’s **Zur Warnung** ridicules those poets who seek inspiration when hung-over: the poet asks his muse for a song, and Wolf comes up with a beautifully banal tune over a strummed accompaniment – until, at the thought of more wine, the piano begins to trill in both hands. More wine, we are told, puts an end to such nonsense, and the moral of the piece (that you should never summon the gods with a hangover) concludes the song in mock recitative. **Auftrag**, with its Viennese lilt, smacks of the music-hall. Composed on the same day as *Zur Warnung*, it was subtitled *Couplet* and has an unmistakably French-Viennese whiff to it. **Bei einer Trauung** parodies a loveless marriage, which Wolf sets to a mock funeral march; and in **Selbstgeständnis** the poet craves the company of brothers and sisters, rather than suffer, as an only child, the stifling love of over-attentive parents.

And so we come to **Abschied**. Wolf clearly relished the poem, in which the critic is booted downstairs to the exuberant strains of a Viennese waltz. Mörike was too nice a man to write much satirical verse, but Wolf had an acerbic side to his character, and would defend himself fiercely against hostile criticism and also attack his detractors – especially Eduard Hanslick who had not only deigned to criticize his idol Wagner, but also revered the music of Johannes Brahms, whose songs Wolf abhorred, because of what he considered to be their insensitive prosody. The first edition of *Abschied* bore the marking ‘diskret mauschelnd’ (‘to be sung in a discrete Yiddish manner’), and though Wolf deleted this direction from subsequent editions, there can be little doubt that he had Hanslick in mind, whose mother was Jewish – a fact not lost on the Viennese society of the time.

HUGO WOLF

the complete songs

vol 2 MÖRIKE LIEDER part 2

Eduard Mörike (1804-1875)

1 **Zum neuen Jahr**

*Wie heimlicher Weise
Ein Engelein leise
Mit rosigen Füßen
Die Erde betritt,
So nahte der Morgen.
Jauchzt ihm, ihr Frommen,
Ein heilig Willkommen!
Ein heilig Willkommen,
Herz, jauchze du mit!
In ihm sei's begonnen,
Der Monde und Sonnen
An blauen Gezelten
Des Himmels bewegt.
Du, Vater, du rate!
Lenke du und wende!
Herr, dir in die Hände
Sei Anfang und Ende,
Sei alles gelegt!*

2 **Gebet**

*Herr! schicke, was du willst,
Ein Liebes oder Leides;
Ich bin vergnügt, dass beides
Aus deinen Händen quillt.
Wollest mit Freuden
Und wollest mit Leiden
Mich nicht überschütten!
Doch in der Mitten
Liegt holdes Bescheiden.*

A poem for the New Year

*Just as a cherub,
Secretly and softly
Alights on earth
With rosy feet,
So the morning dawned.
Rejoice, you gentle souls, with
A holy welcome!
A holy welcome,
O heart, rejoice as well!
May the New Year begin in Him,
Who moves
Moons and suns
In the blue firmament.
O Father, counsel us!
Lead us and guide us!
Lord, let all things,
Beginning and End,
Be entrusted into Thy keeping!*

Prayer

*Lord! send what Thou wilt,
Pleasure or pain;
I am content that both
Flow from Thy hands.
Do not, I beseech Thee,
Overwhelm me
With joy or suffering!
But midway between
Lies blessed moderation.*

3 **An den Schlaf**

*Schlaf! süsser Schlaf! obwohl dem Tod wie du
nichts gleicht,
Auf diesem Lager doch willkommen heiss ich dich!
Denn ohne Leben so, wie lieblich lebt es sich!
So weit vom Sterben, ach, wie stirbt es sich so leicht!*

4 **Neue Liebe**

*Kann auch ein Mensch des andern auf der Erde
Ganz, wie er möchte, sein?
– In langer Nacht bedacht ich mirs und musste
sagen, nein!*

*So kann ich niemands heissen auf der Erde,
Und Niemand wäre mein?
– Aus Finsternissen hell in mir aufzückt ein
Freudenschein:*

*Sollt ich mit Gott nicht können sein,
So wie ich möchte, mein und dein?
Was hielte mich, dass ichs nicht heute werde?*

*Ein süsses Schrecken geht durch mein Gebein!
Mich wundert, dass es mir ein Wunder wollte sein,
Gott selbst zu eigen haben auf der Erde!*

5 **Wo find ich Trost?**

*Eine Liebe kenn ich, die ist treu,
War getreu, solange ich sie gefunden,
Hat mit tiefem Seufzen immer neu,
Stets versöhnlich, sich mit mir verbunden.*

*Welcher einst mit himmlischem Geuldien
Bitter bitterm Todestropfen trank,
Hing am Kreuz und büsste mein Verschulden,
Bis es in ein Meer von Gnade sank.*

*Und was ists nun, dass ich traurig bin,
Dass ich angstvoll mich am Boden winde?
Frage: „Hüter, ist die Nacht bald hin?“
Und: „was rettet mich von Tod und Sünde?“*

To sleep

*Sleep! sweet sleep! though nothing so resembles
death as you,
I bid you welcome to this couch!
For thus without life, how sweet it is to live!
So far from dying, ah, how easy it is to die!*

New love

*Can one ever belong to another here on earth
Wholly, as one would wish to be?
Long I pondered this at night and had to answer,
no!*

*So can I belong to no one here on earth,
And can no one be mine?
– From dark recesses in me a bright flame of joy
flashes:*

*Could I not be with God,
Just as I would wish, mine and Thine?
What could keep me from being so today?*

*A sweet tremor pervades my very frame!
I marvel that it should have ever seemed a marvel
To have God for one's own on earth!*

Where shall I find comfort?

*I know a love that is true,
And has been since I first found it,
It has, deeply sighing, always forgivingly renewed,
Bonds between us.*

*He it was who once, with heavenly forbearance,
Drank death's bitter, bitter drops,
Hung on the cross and atoned for my sins,
Until they sank in a sea of mercy.*

*And why is it that I am now sad,
That I writhe in terror on the ground?
That I ask: "Watchman, is the night soon done?"
And "What shall save me from death and sin?"*

*Arges Herze! ja gesteh es nur,
Du hast wieder böse Lust empfangen;
Frommer Liebe, frommer Treue Spur,
Ach, das ist auf lange nun vergangen.
Ja, das ist auch, dass ich traurig bin,
Dass ich angstvoll mich am Boden winde!
Hüter, Hüter, ist die Nacht bald hin?
Und was rettet mich von Tod und Sünde?*

6 An die Geliebte

*Wenn ich, von deinem Anschau tief gestillt,
Mich stumm an deinem heiligen Wert vergnüge,
Dann hör ich recht die leisen Atemzüge
Des Engels, welcher sich in dir verhüllt,
Und ein erstaunt, ein fragend Lächeln quillt
Auf meinem Mund, ob mich kein Traum betrüge,
Dass nun in dir, zu ewiger Genüge,
Mein kühnster Wunsch, mein ein'zger, sich erfüllt?
Von Tiefe dann zu Tiefen stürzt mein Sinn,
Ich höre aus der Gottheit nächster Ferne
Die Quellen des Geschicks melodisch rauschen.
Betäubt kehr ich den Blick nach oben hin,
Zum Himmel auf – da lächeln alle Sterne;
Ich kniee, ihrem Lichtgesang zu lauschen.*

7 Peregrina I

*Der Spiegel dieser treuen, braunen Augen
Ist wie von innerm Gold ein Widerschein;
Tief aus dem Busen scheint ers anzusaugen,
Dort mag solch Gold in heiligem Gram gedeihn.
In diese Nacht des Blickes mich zu tauchen,
Unwissend Kind, du selber lädst mich ein –
Willst, ich soll kecklich mich und dich entzünden,
Reichst lächelnd mir den Tod im Kelch der Sünden!*

*Evil heart! why not confess it,
Once more you have felt wicked desires;
All trace of pious love, of pious faith,
Has vanished, alas, for a long time.
Yes, that is why I am sad,
Why I writhe in terror on the ground!
Watchman, watchman, is the night soon done?
What shall save me from death and sin?*

To the beloved

*When I, deeply calmed at beholding you,
Take silent delight in your sacred worth,
Then I truly hear the gentle breathing
Of that angel concealed within you.
And an amazed, a questioning smile
Rises to my lips: does not a dream deceive me,
Now that in you, to my eternal joy,
My boldest, my only wish is being fulfilled?
My soul then plunges from depth to depth,
From the dark distances of Godhead I hear
The springs of fate ripple in melody.
Dazed I raise my eyes
To heaven – where all the stars are smiling;
I kneel to listen to their song of light.*

Peregrina I

*The surface of these faithful brown eyes
Seems to mirror the gleam of inner gold;
Seems to draw it from deep within your breast –
There, in hallowed grief such gold may thrive.
To plunge into this dark night of your gaze,
Innocent child, you yourself invite me –
Wish me boldly to consume us both in fire,
Smile as you offer me death in the chalice of sin!*

8 **Peregrina II**

*Warum, Geliebte, denk ich dein
Auf einmal nun mit tausend Tränen,
Und kann gar nicht zufrieden sein,
Und will die Brust in alle Weite dehnen?*

*Ach, gestern in den hellen Kindersaal,
Beim Flimmer zierlich aufgesteckter Kerzen,
Wo ich mein selbst vergass in Lärm und Scherzen,
Traust du, o Bildnis mitleid-schöner*

*Qual;
Es war dein Geist, er setzte sich ans Mahl,
Fremd sassen wir mit stumm verhaltenen
Schmerzen;
Zuletzt brach ich in lautes Schluchzen aus,
Und Hand in Hand verliessen wir das Haus.*

9 **Frage und Antwort**

*Fragest du mich, woher die bange
Liebe mir zum Herzen kam,
Und warum ich ihr nicht lange
Schon den bittern Stachel nahm?*

*Sprich, warum mit Geisterschnelle
Wohl der Wind die Flügel rührt,
Und woher die süsse Quelle
Die verborgnen Wasser führt?*

*Banne du auf seiner Fährte
Mir den Wind in vollem Lauf!
Halte mit der Zaubergerte
Du die süssen Quellen auf!*

10 **Lebe wohl**

*„Lebewohl!“ – Du fühltest nicht,
Was es heisst, dies Wort der Schmerzen;
Mit getrostem Angesicht
Sagtest du's und leichtem Herzen.*

*Lebe wohl! – Ach, tausendmal
Hab ich mir es vorgesprochen,
Und in nimmersatter Qual
Mir das Herz damit gebrochen.*

Peregrina II

*Why, beloved, do I now think of you
Suddenly and with a thousand tears,
And cannot be satisfied at all,
And long to extend my heart into infinity?*

*Ah, you came yesterday to the bright nursery,
In the gleam of decorative candles,
As I forgot myself in noise and mirth,
You came, agony's image, lovely in
compassion;*

*It was your ghost, it joined us at the feast,
Strangers we sat, our sorrows mutely
hidden;
At last I broke out into loud sobs,
And hand in hand we left the house.*

Question and answer

*You ask me where it came from,
This timid love that entered my heart,
And why I did not long ago
Draw its bitter sting?*

*Tell me, why with ghostly speed
The wind whirrs its wings,
And from where the sweet spring
Draws its hidden waters?*

*You might as well try to halt
The wind in full career!
Or conjure with a magic wand
The sweet springs to be still!*

Farewell

*“Farewell!” – You do not feel
What it means, this word of pain;
With hopeful countenance
You said it, and a light heart.*

*Farewell! – Ah, a thousand times
I have uttered it aloud,
And with never-ending anguish
Have broken my heart in doing so.*

11 **Heimweh**

*Anders wird die Welt mit jedem Schritt,
Den ich weiter von der Liebsten mache;
Mein Herz, das will nicht weiter mit.
Hier scheint die Sonne kalt ins Land,
Hier deucht mir alles unbekannt,
Sogar die Blumen am Bache!
Hat jede Sache
So fremd eine Miene, so falsch ein Gesicht.
Das Bächlein murmelt wohl und spricht:
„Armer Knabe, komm bei mir vorüber,
Siehst auch hier Vergissmeinnicht!“
– Ja, die sind schön an jedem Ort,
Aber nicht wie dort.
Fort, nur fort!
Die Augen gehn mir über!*

12 **Lied vom Winde**

*Sausewind, Brausewind,
Dort und hier!
Deine Heimat sage mir!
„Kindlein, wir fahren
Seit viel vielen Jahren
Durch die weit weite Welt,
Und möchtestens erfragen,
Die Antwort erjagen
Bei den Bergen, den Meeren,
Bei des Himmels klingenden Heeren:
Die wissen es nie.
Bist du klüger als sie,
Magst du es sagen.
– Fort, wohlauf!
Halt uns nicht auf!
Kommen andre nach, unsre Brüder,
Da frag wieder!“*

Longing for home

*The world changes with every step
That takes me further from my love;
My heart's reluctant to follow me.
Here the sun shines coldly on the land,
Here all seems unfamiliar,
Even the flowers by the brook!
Each thing
Has so foreign a look, so false a face.
The stream, it's true, murmurs and says:
"Poor boy, come to me,
You'll see forget-me-nots here too!"
– Yes, they are lovely everywhere,
But not so lovely as those I left.
Onwards, onwards!
My eyes fill with tears!*

Song of the wind

*Storming wind, roaring wind,
Now here, now there!
Tell me where your homeland is!
"Child, we've travelled
For many many years
Through the wide wide world,
We too want to know,
Seek out the answer
From the mountains, the seas,
The resounding hosts of heaven:
They never know.
If you're smarter than they,
You can tell us.
– Off, away!
Don't delay us!
Others follow, our brothers,
Ask them!"*

*Halt an! Gemach,
Eine kleine Frist!
Sagt, wo der Liebe Heimat ist,
Ihr Anfang, ihr Ende?
„Wers nennen könnte!
Schelmisches Kind,
Lieb ist wie Wind,
Rasch und lebendig,
Ruhet nie,
Ewig ist sie,
Aber nicht immer beständig.
– Fort, wohlauf!
Halt uns nicht auf!
Fort über Stoppel und Wälder und Wiesen!
Wenn ich dein Schätzchen seh,
Will ich es grüssen.
Kindein, ade!“*

*Stop! Stay
A little while!
Say where love's home is,
Where does it begin and end?
"Who could say!
Impish child,
Love's like the wind,
Swift and brisk,
Never resting,
Everlasting,
But not always constant.
– Off, away!
Don't delay us!
Away over stubble and woods and fields!
If I see your sweetheart,
I'll blow her a kiss.
Child, farewell!"*

13 **Denk es, o Seele!**

*Ein Tännlein grünet wo,
Wer weiss, im Walde,
Ein Rosenstrauch, wer sagt,
In welchem Garten?
Sie sind erlesen schon,
Denk es, o Seele,
Auf deinem Grab zu wurzeln
Und zu wachsen.
Zwei schwarze Rösslein weiden
Auf der Wiese,
Sie kehren heim zur Stadt
In muntern Springen.
Sie werden schrittweis gehn
Mit deiner Leiche;
Vielleicht, vielleicht noch eh
An ihren Hufen
Das Eisen los wird,
Das ich blitzen sehe.*

O soul, remember!

*A young fir is growing, where,
Who knows, in the wood?
A rosebush, who can say,
In what garden?
Already they are pre-ordained,
O soul, remember,
To root and grow
On your grave.
Two black colts are grazing
On the field,
Homewards at a merry pace
They return to the town.
At a walking pace they'll go
With your corpse;
Perhaps, perhaps even before
Their hooves
Will lose the shoes
That I see flashing.*

Der Jäger

*Drei Tage Regen fort und fort,
Kein Sonnenschein zur Stunde;
Drei Tage lang kein gutes Wort
Aus meiner Liebsten Munde!*

*Sie trutzt mit mir und ich mit ihr,
So hat sie's haben wollen;
Mir aber nagts am Herzen hier,
Das Schmollen und das Grollen.*

*Willkommen denn, des Jägers Lust,
Gewittersturm und Regen!
Fest zugeknöpft die heisse Brust
Und jauchzend euch entgegen!*

*Nun sitzt sie wohl daheim und lacht
Und scherzt mit den Geschwistern;
Ich höre in des Waldes Nacht
Die alten Blätter flüstern.*

*Nun sitzt sie wohl und weinet laut
Im Kämmerlein, in Sorgen;
Mir ist es wie dem Wilde traut,
In Finsternis geborgen.*

*Kein Hirsch und Rehlein überall!
Ein Schuss zum Zeitvertreibe!
Gesunder Knall und Widerhall
Erfrischt das Mark im Leibe. –*

*Doch wie der Donner nun verhallt
In Tälern, durch die Runde,
Ein plötzlich Weh mich überwallt,
Mir sinkt das Herz zu Grunde.*

*Sie trutzt mit mir und ich mit ihr,
So hat sie's haben wollen;
Mir aber frisst am Herzen hier,
Das Schmollen und das Grollen.*

*Und auf! und nach der Liebsten Haus!
Und sie gefasst ums Mieder!
„Drück mir die nassen Locken aus,
Und küss und hab mich wieder!“*

The huntsman

*Three days of endless rain,
No sunshine even now;
Not one kind word for three whole days
From my beloved's tips.*

*She sulks and so do I,
That's how she wanted it;
But it gnaws at my heart,
This sulkiness and sullenness.*

*Welcome, then, to the hunter's joy,
To thunderstorm and rain!
I'll button tight the ardent breast,
And fly to you rejoicing!*

*She'll be sitting at home and laughing now,
And joking with her siblings;
I can hear the old leaves whispering
In the forest night.*

*Now she'll be sitting and weeping aloud
For sorrow in her little room;
I feel as cosy as any deer,
Hidden in the darkness.*

*No stag or roe anywhere!
A shot will pass the time!
The healthy crack and echo
Refresh the marrow in my bones. –*

*But as the thunder dies away
In the valleys all around,
I'm assailed by sudden pain,
My heart sinks like a stone.*

*She sulks with me and I with her,
That's how she wanted it;
But it gnaws at my heart,
This sulkiness and sullenness.*

*So let's away to my love's house!
And clasp her round the waist!
"Wring out these soaking locks of mine
And kiss and take me back again!"*

Rat einer Alten

*Bin jung gewesen,
Kann auch mitreden,
Und alt geworden,
Drum gilt mein Wort.*

*Schön reife Beeren
Am Bäumchen hangen:
Nachbar, da hilft kein
Zaun um den Garten;
Lustige Vögel
Wissen den Weg.*

*Aber, mein Dirnchen,
Du lass dir raten:
Halte dein Schätzchen
Wohl in der Liebe,
Wohl im Respekt!*

*Mit den zwei Fädlein
In eins gedreht,
Ziehst du am kleinen
Finger ihn nach.*

*Aufrichtig Herze,
Doch schweigen können,
Früh mit der Sonne
Mutig zur Arbeit,
Gesunde Glieder,
Saubere Linnen,
Das machet Mädchen
Und Weibchen wert.*

*Bin jung gewesen,
Kann auch mitreden,
Und alt geworden,
Drum gilt mein Wort.*

Old woman's advice

*I was young once,
So I can talk,
And now I've grown old,
My word carries weight.*

*Lovely ripe berries
Hang from the tree:
Neighbour, it's no use
Fencing the garden;
Cheerful birds
Know the way in.*

*But young lady –
A piece of advice:
Make sure your sweetheart
Loves
And respects you!*

*With those two threads
Twined into one,
You'll lead him
By the little finger.*

*Be open of heart,
Yet know how to keep quiet,
Be up with the sun
And go to work with a will,
A healthy body
And clean linen –
These things become a girl
And a wife.*

*I was young once,
So I can talk,
And now I've grown old,
My word carries weight.*

16 **Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens**

*Was im Netze? Schau einmal!
Aber ich bin bange;
Greif ich einen süssen Aal?
Greif ich eine Schlange?*

*Lieb ist blinde
Fischerin;
Sagt dem Kinde,
Wo greifts hin?*

*Schon schnellt mirs in Händen!
Ach Jammer! o Lust!
Mit Schmiegen und Wenden
Mir schlüpfts an die Brust.*

*Es beisst sich, o Wunder!
Mir keck durch die Haut,
Schiess't Herze hinunter!
O Liebe, mir graut!*

*Was tun, was beginnen?
Das schaurige Ding,
Es schnalzet da drinnen,
Es legt sich im Ring.*

*Gift muss ich haben!
Hier schleicht es herum,
Tut wonniglich graben
Und bringt mich noch um!*

A girl's first love song

*What's in the net? Take a look!
But I'm afraid;
Is it a sweet eel?
Is it a snake?*

*Love's a blind
Fisher-girl;
Tell the child
What she's caught.*

*It's rearing up in my hands!
Ah misery, oh joy!
Nestling and wriggling
It slithers to my bosom.*

*Incredible! It bites its way
Boldly through my skin,
Plunges down to my heart!
O Love, I shudder!*

*What can I do?
The ghastly thing's
Snapping in there,
Coiling into a ring.
I must have poison!
It's creeping about,
It burrows deliciously
And will be the death of my yet.*

17 **Lied eines Verliebten**

*In aller Früh, ach, lang vor Tag,
Weckt mich mein Herz, an dich zu denken,
Da doch gesunde Jugend schlafen mag.*

*Hell ist mein Aug um Mitternacht,
Heller als frühe Morgenglocken:
Wann hättest du je am Tage mein gedacht?*

*Wär ich ein Fischer, stünd ich auf,
Trüge mein Netz hinab zum Flusse,
Trüg herzlich froh die Fische zum Verkauf.*

A lover's song

*At first dawn, ah! long before day,
My heart wakes me to think of you,
When healthy lads would love to sleep.*

*My eyes are bright at midnight,
Brighter than early morning bells:
Did you ever think of me by day?*

*If I were a fisherman, I'd get up,
Carry my net down to the river,
Gladly carry the fish to market.*

*In der Mühle, bei Licht, der Müllerknecht
Tummelt sich, alle Gänge klappern;
So rüstig Treiben wär mir eben recht!*

*Weh, aber ich! o armer Tropf!
Muss auf dem Lager mich müssig grämen,
Ein ungebärdig Mutterkind im Kopf.*

*The miller's lad, at first light,
Is hard at work, the machinery clatters;
Such hearty work would suit me well!*

*But I, alas, poor wretch,
Must lie idly grieving on my bed,
Obsessed with that unruly girl!*

18 **Der Feuerreiter**

*Sehet ihr am Fensterlein
Dort die rote Mütze wieder?
Nicht geheuer muss es sein,
Denn er geht schon auf und nieder.*

*Und auf einmal welch Gewühle
Bei der Brücke, nach dem Feld!
Horch! das Feuerglöcklein gellt:
Hinterm Berg,
Hinterm Berg
Brennt es in der Mühle!*

*Schaut! da sprengt er wütend schier
Durch das Tor, der Feuerreiter,
Auf dem rippendürren Tier,
Als auf einer Feuerleiter!
Querfeldein! Durch Qualm und Schwüle
Rennt er schon und ist am Ort!
Drüben schallt es fort und fort:
Hinterm Berg,
Hinterm Berg
Brennt es in der Mühle!*

*Der so oft den roten Hahn
Meilenweit von fern gerochen,
Mit des heiligen Kreuzes Span
Freventlich die Glut besprochen –
Weh! dir grinst vom Dachgestühle
Dort der Feind im Höllenschein.
Gnade Gott der Seele dein!
Hinterm Berg,
Hinterm Berg
Rast er in der Mühle!*

The Fire-rider

*See, at the window
There, his red cap again?
Something must be wrong,
For he's pacing to and fro.
And all of a sudden, what a throng
At the bridge, heading for the fields!
Listen to the fire-bell shrilling:
Behind the hill,
Behind the hill
The mill's on fire!*

*Look, there he gallops frenziedly
Through the gate, the fire-rider,
Straddling his skinny mount
Like a fireman's ladder!
Across the fields! Through thick smoke and heat
He rides and has reached his goal!
The distant bell peals on and on:
Behind the hill,
Behind the hill
The mill's on fire!*

*You who have often smelt a fire
From many miles away,
And blasphemously conjured the blaze
With a fragment of the True Cross –
Look out! there, grinning at you from the rafters,
Is the Devil amid the flames of hell.
God have mercy on your soul!
Behind the hill,
Behind the hill
He's raging in the mill!*

*Keine Stunde hielt es an,
Bis die Mühle barst in Trümmer;
Doch den kecken Reitersmann
Sah man von der Stunde nimmer.
Volk und Wagen im Gewühle
Kehren heim von all dem Graus;
Auch das Glöcklein klinget aus:
Hinterm Berg,
Hinterm Berg
Brennts! –*

*Nach der Zeit ein Müller fand
Ein Gerippe samt der Mützen
Aufrecht an der Kellerwand
Auf der beinern Mähre sitzen:
Feuerreiter, wie so kühle
Reitest du in deinem Grab!
Husch! da fällt in Asche ab.
Ruhe wohl,
Ruhe wohl
Drunten in der Mühle!*

*In less than an hour
The mill collapsed in rubble;
But from that hour the bold rider
Was never seen again.
Thronging crowds and carriages
Turn back home from all the horror;
And the bell stops ringing too:
Behind the hill,
Behind the hill
A fire! –*

*Some time after a miller found
A skeleton, complete with cap,
Upright against the cellar wall,
Mounted on the fleshless mare:
Fire-rider, how coldly
You ride in your grave!
Hush! now it flakes into ash
Rest in peace,
Rest in peace
Down there in the mill!*

19 **Nixe Binsefuss**

*Des Wassermanns sein Töchterlein
Tanzt auf dem Eis im Vollmondschein,
Sie singt und lachet sonder Scheu
Wohl an des Fischers Haus vorbei.
„Ich bin die Jungfer Binsefuss,
Und meine Fisch wohl hüten muss;
Meine Fisch, die sind im Kasten,
Sie haben kalte Fasten;
Von Böhmerglas mein Kasten ist,
Da zähl ich sie zu jeder Frist.*

The water-sprite Reedfoot

*The water spirit's little daughter
Dances on the ice in the full moon,
Singing and laughing without fear
Past the fisherman's house.
"I am the maiden Reedfoot,
And I must look after my fish;
My fish are in this casket,
Having a cold Lent;
My casket's made of Bohemian glass,
And I count them whenever I can.*

Gelt, Fischer-Matz? gelt, alter Tropf,
Dir will der Winter nicht in Kopf?
Komm mir mit deinen Netzen!
Die will ich schön zerfetzen!
Dein Mägdlein zwar ist fromm und gut,
Ihr Schatz ein braves Jägerblut.
Drum häng ich ihr, zum Hochzeitsstrauss,
Ein schilfen Kränzlein vor das Haus,
Und einen Hecht, von Silber schwer,
Er stammt von König Artus her,
Ein Zwergen-Goldschmieds-Meisterstück,
Wers hat, dem bringt es eitel Glück:
Er lässt sich schuppen Jahr für Jahr,
Da sinds fünfhundert Gröschlein bar.
Ade, mein Kind! Ade für heut!
Der Morgenhahn im Dorfe schreit. “

Not so, Matt? Not so, foolish old fisherman,
You cannot understand it's winter?
If you come near me with your nets,
I'll tear them all to shreds!
But your little girl is good and devout,
And her sweetheart's an honest huntsman.
That's why I'll hang a wedding bouquet,
A wreath of rushes outside her house,
And a pike of solid silver,
From King Arthur's time,
The masterwork of a dwarf goldsmith,
Which brings its owner the best of luck:
Each year it sheds its scales,
Worth five hundred groschen in cash.
Farewell, child! Farewell for today!
The cock in the village cries morning.”

20 **Gesang Weylas**

Du bist Orplid, mein Land!
Das ferne leuchtet;
Vom Meere dampfet dein besonnter Strand
Den Nebel, so der Götter Wange feuchtet.
Uralte Wasser steigen
Verjüngt um deine Hüften, Kind!
Vor deiner Gottheit beugen
Sich Könige, die deine Wärter sind.

Weyla's song

You are Orplid, my land!
That shines afar;
Your sunlit shore sends up sea-
Mists, that moisten the cheeks of the gods.
Ancient waters climb,
Rejuvenated, child, about your waist!
Kings, who attend you,
Bow down before your divinity.

Die Geister am Mummelsee

*Vom Berge was kommt dort um Mitternacht spät
Mit Fackeln so prächtig herunter?*

Ob das wohl zum Tanze, zum Feste noch geht?

Mir klingen die Lieder so munter.

O nein!

So sage, was mag es wohl sein?

Das, was du da siehest, ist Totengeleit,

Und was du da hörst, sind Klagen.

Dem König, dem Zauberer, gilt es zu Leid,

Sie bringen ihn wieder getragen.

O weh!

So sind es die Geister vom See!

Sie schweben herunter ins Mummelseetal –

Sie haben den See schon betreten –

Sie rühren und netzen den Fuss nicht einmal –

Sie schwirren in leisen Gebeten –

O schau,

Am Sarge die glänzende Frau!

Jetzt öffnet der See das grünspiegelnde Tor;

Gib acht, nun tauchen sie nieder!

Es schwankt eine lebende Treppe hervor,

Und – drunten schon summen die Lieder.

Hörst du?

Sie singen ihn unten zur Ruh.

Die Wasser, wie lieblich sie brennen und glühn!

Sie spielen in grünendem Feuer;

Es geisten die Nebel am Ufer dahin,

Zum Meere verzieht sich der Weiher –

Nur still!

Ob dort sich nichts rühren will?

Es zuckt in der Mitten – o Himmel! ach hilf!

Nun kommen sie wieder, sie kommen!

Es orgelt im Rohr und es klirret im Schilf;

Nur hurtig, die Flucht nur genommen!

Davon!

Sie wittern, sie haschen mich schon!

Ghosts on Mummelsee

What's this winding down the mountain at midnight

With torches and such splendour?

Can they be going to a ball or banquet?

Their singing sounds so joyful.

Oh no!

Then tell me what it can be?

What you see is a funeral procession,

And what you hear are laments.

They are mourning the king, the sorcerer,

They are bearing him back down again.

Oh mercy!

They must be the ghosts of the lake!

They're gliding down to the Mummel valley –

Already they've alighted on the lake –

They neither move nor even wet their feet –

They whirr their wings while murmuring prayers –

Oh look,

There by the coffin the glistening woman!

The lake now opens its mirror-green doors;

Look out, already they're diving down!

A living, wavering staircase rises,

And down in the depths they're droning songs.

Can you hear?

They're singing him to rest below.

How sweetly the waters burn and glow!

Their fire flickers green as they dance;

The mists are swirling around the shore,

The lake vanishes into the sea –

Hush now!

Will nothing ever move there again?

A swirl in the middle – O heavens! ah help!

The ghosts – they're coming again!

There's a roar in the reeds and a wind in the rushes;

Quick now, run, take flight!

Away!

They've caught my scent, they're catching me!

Storchenbotschaft

*Des Schäfers sein Haus und das steht auf zwei Rad,
Steht hoch auf der Heiden, so frühe wie spat;
Und wenn nur ein mancher so'n Nachtquartier hätt!
Ein Schäfer tauscht nicht mit dem König sein Bett.*

*Und käm ihm zu Nacht auch was Seltsames vor,
Er betet sein Sprüchel und legt sich aufs Ohr;
Ein Geistlein, ein Hexlein, so lustige Wicht,
Sie klopfen ihm wohl, doch er antwortet nicht.*

*Einmal doch, da ward es ihm wirklich zu bunt:
Es knopert am Laden, es winselt der Hund;
Nun ziehet mein Schäfer den Riegel – ei schau!
Da stehen zwei Störche, der Mann und die Frau.*

*Das Pärchen, es machet ein schön Kompliment,
Es möchte gern reden, ach, wenn es nur könnt!
Was will mir das Zieffer! – ist so was
erhört?*

Doch ist mir wohl fröhliche Botschaft beschert.

*Ihr seid wohl dahinten zu Hause am Rhein?
Ihr habt wohl mein Mädal gebissen ins Bein?
Nun weinet das Kind und die Mutter noch mehr,
Sie wünschet den Herzallerliebsten sich her?*

*Und wünschet daneben die Taufe bestellt:
Ein Lämmlein, ein Würstlein, ein Beutelein Geld?
So sagt nur, ich käm in zwei Tag' oder drei,
Und grüsst mir mein Bübel und rührt ihm den Brei!*

*Doch halt! warum stellt ihr zu zweien euch ein?
Es werden doch, hoff ich, nicht Zwillinge sein? –
Da klappern die Störche im lustigsten Ton,
Sie nicken und knixen und fliegen davon.*

Stork-tidings

*The shepherd's house stands on two wheels,
High on the moor, morning and night,
A lodging most would be glad of!
No shepherd would change his bed with a king.*

*And should by night any strange thing occur,
He prays a brief prayer and lies down to sleep;
A ghost, a witch, some airy creature –
They might come knocking, but he'll not answer.*

*But one night it really became too much:
A tap on the shutters, a whine from the dog;
So my shepherd unbolts – to and behold!
Two storks stand there, a husband and wife.*

*The couple, they make a beautiful bow,
They'd like to speak, if only they could!
What can these feathered friends want of me!*

*Whoever heard the like?
They must have joyful tidings for me.*

*You live over there, down by the Rhine?
I guess you've paid my girl a visit?
The child's now crying, the mother even louder,
She wants her sweetheart by her side?*

*And wants the christening feast arranged:
A lambkin, a sausage, a purse of money?
Well, tell her I'm coming in two days or three.
Say hello to my boy, give his pap a stir!*

*But wait! Why have two of you come?
It can't, I hope, be a case of twins? –
At that the storks clatter most merrily,
They nod and curtsy and fly away.*

23 **Zur Warnung**

*Einmal nach einer lustigen Nacht
War ich am Morgen seltsam aufgewacht:
Durst, Wasserscheu, ungleich Geblüt;
Dabei gerührt und weichlich im Gemüt,
Beinah poetisch, ja, ich bat die Muse um ein Lied.
Sie, mit verstelltem Pathos, spottet' mein,
Gab mir den schnöden Bafel ein:*

*„Es schlägt eine Nachtigall
Am Wasserfall;
Und ein Vogel ebenfalls,
Der schreibt sich Wendehals,
Johann Jakob Wendehals;
Der tut tanzen
Bei den Pflanzen
Obbemeld'ten Wasserfalls –“*

*So ging es fort; mir wurde immer bänger.
Jetzt sprang ich auf: zum Wein! Der war denn auch
mein Retter.
– Merkt's euch, ihr tränenreichen Sänger,
Im Katzenjammer ruft man keine Götter!*

24 **Auftrag**

*In poetischer Epistel
Ruft ein desperater Wicht:
Lieber Vetter! Vetter Christel!
Warum schreibt Er aber nicht?
Weiss Er doch, es lassen Herzen,
Die die Liebe angeweht,
Ganz und gar nicht mit sich scherzen,
Und nun vollends ein Poet!
Denn ich bin von dem Gelichter,
Dem der Kopf beständig voll;
Bin ich auch nur halb ein Dichter,
Bin ich doch zur Hälfte toll.*

By way of warning

*Once, after a convivial night,
I woke in the morning, feeling odd:
Thirst – but not for water – unsteady pulse,
Emotional and sentimental,
Almost poetic, yes, I asked my Muse for a song.
With feigned pathos she mocked me,
Served up this vile doggerel:*

*“Nightingale doth call
By waterfall;
Another bird does the same –
Wryneck is his name,
Johann Jakob Wryneck;
Who doth dance
By the plants
Of said waterfall –”*

*And so it went on; I grew ever uneasier.
Now I leapt up: Wine! That was my
salvation.
– Mark well, you weepy bards,
Call not on the gods, when you're hung-over!*

A commission

*A desperate fellow cries for help
In this poetic letter:
My dear cousin, cousin Christel!
Why do you not urtite?
You know that people
Smitten with love
Cannot be trifled with,
Especially a poet!
For I am one of those creatures
Whose head is always full;
And though I'm only half a poet,
I am half-demented.*

*Amor hat Ihn mir verpflichtet,
Seinen Lohn weiss Er voraus.
Und der Mund, der Ihm berichtet,
Geht dabei auch leer nicht aus.*

*Pass Er denn zur guten Stunde,
Wenn Sein Schatz durchs Lädchen schaut,
Lock ihr jedes Wort vom Munde,
Das mein Schätzchen ihr vertraut.*

*Schreib Er mir dann von dem Mädchen
Ein halb Dutzend Bogen voll
Und daneben ein Traktätchen,
Wie ich mich verhalten soll!*

25 **Bei einer Trauung**

*Vor lauter hochadligen Zeugen
Kopuliert man ihrer zwei;
Die Orgel hängt voll Geigen,
Der Himmel nicht, mein Treu!*

*Seht doch! sie weint ja greulich,
Er macht ein Gesicht abscheulich!
Denn leider freilich, freilich,
Keine Lieb ist nicht dabei.*

26 **Selbstgeständnis**

*Ich bin meiner Mutter einzig Kind,
Und weil die andern ausblieben sind
– Was weiss ich wieviel, die sechs oder sieben, –
Ist eben alles an mir hängen geblieben;
Ich hab müssen die Liebe, die Treue, die Güte
Für ein ganz halb Dutzend allein aufessen,
Ich wills mein Lebtag nicht vergessen.
Es hätte mir aber noch wohl mögen frommen,
Hätt ich nur auch Schläg für Sechse bekommen!*

*Cupid has pledged you to me,
You know what your reward will be.
And the mouth that tells you all
Shall not go away empty.*

*So wait for the right moment
When your love looks from her window,
Go and find out every word
My sweetheart's said to her.*

*Write me a letter six pages long
All about the girl,
And enclose a treatise of advice
On how I should respond!*

At a wedding

*Before exclusively highborn witnesses,
Two exclusive people are being wed;
The organ pours forth joyful music,
But there'll be no joy in heaven, I vow!*

*Just look, she's crying her eyes out,
He's making a dreadful face!
For I'm very very sorry to say,
That love is wholly absent.*

Self-confession

*I am my mother's only child,
And since the others failed to appear
– Who knows how many, six or seven, –
Everything had to centre on me;
I've had to devour all by myself
The love, loyalty and kindness for a full half-dozen,
I'll never forget it, as long as I live.
I dare say it would have done me no harm,
If I'd been whipped for six as well!*

Abschied

*Unangeklopft ein Herr tritt abends bei mir
ein:*

*„Ich habe die Ehr, Ihr Rezensent zu sein.“
Sofort nimmt er das Licht in die Hand,
Beseht lang meinen Schatten an der Wand,
Rückt nah und fern: „Nun, lieber junger Mann,
Sehn Sie doch gefälligst mal Ihre Nas so von der
Seite an!*

Sie geben zu, dass das ein Auswuchs is. –

– Das? Alle Wetter – gewiss!

Ei Hasen! ich dachte nicht,

All mein Lebtag nicht,

Dass ich so eine Weltnase führt im Gesicht!!

Der Mann sprach noch Verschiednes hin und her,

Ich weiss, auf meine Ehre, nicht mehr;

Meinte vielleicht, ich sollt ihm beichten.

Zuletzt stand er auf, ich tat ihm leuchten.

Wie wir nun an der Treppe sind,

Da geb ich ihm, ganz froh gesinnt,

Einen kleinen Tritt

Nur so von hinten aufs Gesässe mit –

Alle Hagel! ward das ein Gerumpel,

Ein Gepurzel, ein Gehumpel!

Dergleichen hab ich nie gesehn,

All mein Lebtag nicht gesehn,

Einen Menschen so rasch die Trepp hinabgehn!

Goodbye

*Without knocking a man one evening enters
my room:*

“I have the honour, sir, to be your critic.”

He instantly takes my lamp in his hand,

Inspects at length my shadow on the wall,

Moves back and forth: “Now, young man,

Be so good as to view your nose from the

side!

You'll admit that it's a monstrosity.” –

– What? Good god – you're right!

Bless my soul! I never thought,

In all my life,

I had a nose of such cosmic size!!

The man said various other things,

What – I truly no longer recall;

Maybe he thought I should confess to him.

At last he got up; I lit his way.

As we stood at the top of the stairs,

I give him, in the best of spirits,

A wee little kick

On his derrière –

Goodness me! What a rumbling,

A tumbling, a stumbling!

I've never before seen the like,

Never in all my born days have I seen

A man go downstairs so fast!

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