

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV ROMANCES



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NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV (1844-1908)

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| 1 | The lark's song is ringing louder (<i>Aleksey Tolstoy</i>) ^a | 1'14 |
| 2 | The wave crushes, splashes and sprays (<i>Aleksey Tolstoy</i>) ^b | 1'23 |
| 3 | In moments to delight devoted (<i>Ivan Kozlov after Lord Byron</i>) ^a | 1'07 |
| 4 | Nymph (<i>Apollon Maikov</i>) ^a | 3'33 |
| 5 | The Octave (<i>Apollon Maikov</i>) ^b | 1'52 |
| 6 | The Echo (<i>Sergey Andreevsky after François Coppée</i>) ^b | 2'17 |
| 7 | Summer night's dream (<i>Apollon Maikov</i>) ^a | 5'37 |
| 8 | When the golden cornfield waves (<i>Mikhail Lermontov</i>) ^b | 3'23 |
| 9 | On Georgian hills (<i>Alexander Pushkin</i>) ^b | 1'58 |
| 10 | A flock of passing clouds (<i>Alexander Pushkin</i>) ^a | 3'33 |
| 11 | Your glance is as radiant as the heavens (<i>Mikhail Lermontov</i>) ^b | 2'06 |
| 12 | Of what I dream in the quiet night (<i>Apollon Maikov</i>) ^a | 2'04 |

13	Across the midnight sky (Angel) (<i>Mikhail Lermontov</i>) ^b	3'34
14	The rose enchants the nightingale (<i>Aleksey Koltsov</i>) ^a	3'08
15	Sun of the sleepless (<i>Aleksey Tolstoy after Lord Byron</i>) ^b	1'56
16	The Poet (<i>Alexander Pushkin</i>) ^a	2'36
17	In the dark grove, the nightingale is silent (<i>Ivan Nikitin</i>) ^b	2'49
18	Svitez maiden (<i>Lev Mei after Adam Mickiewicz</i>) ^a	3'26
19	Not a sound from the sea (<i>Aleksey Tolstoy</i>) ^b	2'07
20	Slowly drag my days (<i>Alexander Pushkin</i>) ^b	2'27
21	The Beauty (<i>Alexander Pushkin</i>) ^a	2'37
22	The Upas Tree (<i>Alexander Pushkin</i>) ^b	4'38
23	Not the wind blowing from on high (<i>Aleksey Tolstoy</i>) ^a	2'01
24	The Prophet (<i>Alexander Pushkin</i>) ^b	4'09
		65'36

Anush Hovhannisyan *soprano* ^a
Yuriy Yurchuk *baritone* ^b
Sergey Rybin *piano*

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During the Exposition Universelle of 1889 in Paris, famous among other things for adding the Eiffel Tower to Paris' skyline, on the opposite side of the Seine, at the Palais du Trocadéro, on 22 and 29 June, Paris audiences were treated to two concerts of Russian music organized and financed by prominent arts patron and publisher Mitrofan Belyaev. Under the direction of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov on the conductor's podium, a comprehensive selection of Russian music was presented, including Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmila* and *Kamarinskáia* overtures, the first movement of Tchaikovsky's 1st Piano Concerto, Musorgsky's *Night on a bare Mountain*, Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances* from *Prince Igor* and Rimsky-Korsakov's own Piano Concerto, symphonic poem *Antar* and *Capriccio Espagnol*. The interest towards the Russian composer's school, perhaps nurtured by these events, and its increasing influence in Europe would eventually culminate during the early years of the twentieth century in a huge creative outburst of Russian Art, closely associated with the name of Sergey Dyagilev. Nearly eighteen years later, in May 1907, just a few months before his death, Rimsky-Korsakov returned to Paris to conduct a few of his own compositions as part of five Historic Russian Concerts. Met with admiration, success and recognition befitting one of the most significant composers of the turn of the century, Rimsky-Korsakov was venerated by the public and greeted by Camille Saint-Saëns, Richard Strauss, Rachmaninov, Skryabin and members of Russian aristocracy during this visit.

Rimsky-Korsakov cuts a towering and extremely diverse figure on the Russian musical horizon of the second half of the nineteenth century. His career spans from the mid-1860s, when the Russian composer's school was still in its early youth, to the beginning of the new century, by which time it has become a fully-fledged and unique phenomenon in European art. It is hard to think of another person during that time who was so consistently instrumental in nurturing the national composer's school as Rimsky-Korsakov, both in his own works and as a professor of St Petersburg Conservatoire. Aged 27, in summer 1871, he began a nearly 37-year career as professor of orchestral class, composition and instrumentation, and there is hardly any Russian composer of note in that period of time who did not pass through Rimsky-Korsakov's class – Glazunov, Lyadov, Arensky, Stravinsky, Grechaninov, Taneyev, Prokofiev, Myaskovsky, to name just a handful.

Following the publication of the first ever Russian *Manual of Harmony* created by Tchaikovsky in 1874, Rimsky-Korsakov, on the basis of his own experience of teaching this subject, followed up in 1886 with his "Practical studybook of Harmony". A scholarly, learned

approach to composition technique, diligent attention to all aspects of craft, an urge to tame the musical anarchy and dilettantism, elevating the composer's skill to an art, were undoubtedly the cornerstones of Rimsky-Korsakov's professional credo. "Harmony and counterpoint, providing very many sonorities of great variety and complexity, certainly have their boundaries, trespassing which we find ourselves in the area of disharmony and cacophony...", he wrote. A European in his composing technique, while being firmly rooted in the unmistakably Russian musical tradition, Rimsky-Korsakov actively pushed the confines in the sphere of harmony, in no small part through usage of the whole-tone (consisting of whole tones) and octatone (consisting of alternating tones and semitones) scales – which opens up possibilities for a wider harmonic palette and relations between tonalities. It is widely noted that these harmonic innovations and expansions profoundly influenced the young Ravel, who encountered Russian music as a first year piano student of the Paris Conservatoire during the aforementioned concerts at Exposition Universelle.

There is a curious ironic passage in Ravel's article in *La Revue Musicale* (1912) in which he defends Debussy against accusations of lacking originality. It reveals a certain opinion in Parisian musical circles at the time: "We have already learnt that in the discovery of his harmonic system he [Debussy] was wholly indebted to Eric Satie; for features of his theatre, to Mussorgsky; for his instrumentation, to Rimsky-Korsakov... Despite of his lack of talent, there is nothing remains to him except being the most significant, most deeply musical amongst modern composers." As this extract suggests, during his lifetime Rimsky-Korsakov was already admired and revered for his unique talent for orchestration (his studybook "Foundations of Orchestration" was published shortly after his death). Symphonic works like *Antar*, *Russian Easter Festival Overture*, *Capriccio Espagnol*, *Sheherazade* and, of course the music of his operas, demonstrate, with full flair, his mastery of orchestral colours and textures and had proven to be a great influence on the French school in particular. In his approach to instrumentation (as well as operatic dramaturgy) Rimsky-Korsakov was a self-confessed follower of Michail Glinka, whom he greatly admired: "Working with Glinka's scores was an unexpected education for me. Before these times I knew and adored his operas, but editing his scores for printing, forced me to go through the textures and instrumentation to the last minute little note. There were no boundaries to my fascination and reverence of such a great man. He does everything with such sophistication, but simple and natural at the same time – and with what knowledge of voices and instruments! I avidly

soaked up his methods. I was studying his handling of natural brass instruments, which give his scores untold transparency and lightness, I was learning from his elegant and natural voicing. That was a beneficial schooling for me, leading towards the path of modern music, after the vicissitudes of counterpoint and strict style.”

A rather fecund composer himself – author of 15 operas, 3 symphonies, 79 romances, numerous symphonic poems and suites, compositions for chorus and solo piano – Rimsky-Korsakov was also a proactive researcher, editor and champion of the works of many of his colleagues: preparing new editions of Glinka’s operas; orchestrating Dargomyzhsky’s opera *The Stone Guest*; finishing and partly orchestrating Borodin’s *Prince Igor*; engaging in the monumental work of organising, finishing and publishing the complete works of Musorgsky – to his tireless and continued altruistic efforts, despite common reproaches for heavy editorial interference, we owe the preservation and the beginning of a successful performing life of many fine works.

While Rimsky-Korsakov’s symphonic works remain extremely popular and some of his operas are also very well known outside Russia, his Romances remain, perhaps, largely unknown and unfairly neglected. In a letter to a friend, in 1897, Rimsky-Korsakov defined his approach to the genre this way: “I think that in their requests for melodiousness, singability and expansiveness, singers and the public at large are right... short melodies, fragmentation, music departing from harmonies and demand for dissonances – are things in themselves undesirable... There was a time (I remember it) in the sixties, when the majority of Chopin’s melodies were considered weak and cheap music... But nevertheless, pure melody, deriving from Mozart, through Chopin and Glinka is alive up till now, and has to remain alive, for without it the fate of music is decadence.” By his own admission he viewed Romances, particularly in later life, as an *étude*, a study for finding and perfecting new ideas and methods before implementing them in an operatic context. Comparable in volume and significance to the output of Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov, Rimsky-Korsakov’s chamber vocal compositions fully reflect the range of traits and features we find in his larger works.

One of the most prevalent themes we can trace throughout his music is a particular affinity with the sounds and forces of nature, an inclination towards pantheistic contemplation and a fusion with creation as a whole – comparisons with Wagner and his outlook upon the world have often been drawn on that basis. The mythological context of Rimsky-Korsakov’s works

(for example *Snow-maiden* or *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*), invites a global, all-encompassing view of nature and a human being's place within it, that certainly transport some of his creations from the sphere of pure entertainment closer to Wagnerian musical philosophy. **When the golden cornfield waves**, a setting of a beautiful poem by Michail Lermontov, is no less that a pantheistic hymn of reconciliation with life's troubles and difficulties through peace-giving observation of nature, and merging with its simple and timeless beauty. A similar sentiment dominates **Not a sound from the sea**, in which the piano accompaniment portrays a calm, mirror-like surface of the ocean, inducing a reflective mood in the protagonist. Vivid musical descriptions of the elements are so often found in Rimsky-Korsakov's compositions – which are, perhaps, enhanced by his well documented synesthetic association between colour and particular tonalities. Water and the sea (**The wave crushes, splashes and sprays**) are particularly prevalent – the legacy of his years as a sea cadet in his first career, spending nearly 3 years on board the clipper “Almaz” (he sailed as far as Brazil). However, his music, so often depictive and descriptive, when understood in this wider context, reveals a profound aesthetic and ethical vision. **The Octave** states this view clearly – that Art, poetry and music, is at its best and most graceful when inspired, instigated and in accord with nature herself.

Rimsky-Korsakov is the greatest Russian operatic fabler. Well over half of his operas are set to the stories of Russian fairytales. Never before had the sphere of the fantastical blossomed so richly in Russian music. Anthropomorphic forces of nature and other whimsical beings inhabit his Romances as well. **Svitez maiden**, a glimpse into the romantic and mysterious world of a ballad by Adam Mickiewicz, is reminiscent of musical passages, associated with underwater happenings, from *Sadko* and *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*. The alarming muddled sonority of the introduction eventually brightens to reveal a seductive Rusalka-like creature inviting a late-night wanderer to come and play with her in the rippling waters of the lake Svitez – thus betraying the oath of fidelity, given to his beloved, made of flesh and blood. Another water **Nymph** appears amongst the reeds to sing of her unrequited love and enchant the passing sailors: the undulating arpeggios in the piano part suggest calm waters, while the plasticity and linear expansiveness of the vocal line depict the appealing silhouette of her body and her flowing tresses.

Through pictures of nature we frequently find a window into the internal sphere of human emotions in Rimsky-Korsakov's Romances. Against the nocturnal backdrop of **Summer**

night's dream we witness the amorous languishing of a young girl, very much resembling Pushkin's (and Tchaikovsky's) Tatiana from *Eugene Onegin*, – whose imagination, spurred on and enflamed by the intoxicating beauty of a summer's night, takes her on quite a journey though to the early hours of the morning. **Sun of the sleepless**, a poem of George Byron in a Russian version by Count Alexey Tolstoy, is a less blissful account of nocturnal musings, a version of a song to the moon – regretful about the fading memories of the past, which are so alike the moon's cold and distant light.

A thorough fascination and attraction to all things Oriental, so endemic in the Russian psyche, manifested itself in Rimsky-Korsakov's music on a grand scale. It would be fair to call him the most prolific orientalist in the history of Russian music, both by the volume and quality of his oeuvre. The symphonic suite *Sheherazade* is the finest and most memorable example of this trait in his music, alongside *Antar*, the opera-ballet *Mlada*, extended passages in *The Golden Cockerel* and *Sadko* and a few Romances. Rimsky-Korsakov's orientalism was nourished to a large extent by the works of the two most significant Russian poets of the nineteenth century – Alexander Pushkin and Michail Lermontov, who both visited the southern regions of Caucasus and Crimea on numerous occasions and produced a wealth of masterpieces of literature reflecting their impressions, forever shrouding that region in a veil of romanticism for the Russians. **A flock of passing clouds**, describing a locality near the Crimean seaside town of Gurzuf, is an elegy to the evening star (Venus), full of bitter-sweet reminiscences of its opulent surroundings and light enamoured melancholy. The smouldering Caucasian ardour of the poem **Your glance is as radiant as the heavens** is magnified by a sustained harmonic ellipsis in the piano part as well as by the introduction of a rhythmical figure associated with Georgian male folk dance in the middle section. **The rose enchants a nightingale**, a wonderfully refined and distilled example of Rimsky-Korsakov's oriental affinity, although being the earliest in our selection (written in 1866), remains one of his most popular Romances. Over the years a performing tradition has emerged for the tune in the piano postlude to be vocalised by the singer – we are following that tradition on our recording.

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1 **Zvonche zhavoronka penie** Op.43, No.1

Aleksey Tolstoy (1883-1945)

Zvonche zhavoronka penie,
Ÿarche veshniie tsvety,
Serditse polno vdokhnoveniia,
Nebo polno krasoty.

Razorvav toski okovy,
Tsepi poshlyiie razbiv,
Nabegaïet zhizni novoi
Torzhestvuiush'ii priliv,

I zvuchit svezho i iuno
Novykh sil moguchii stroï,
Kak nať'anutyiie struny
Mezhdu nebom i zeml'oi.

2 **Drobits'a, i plesh'et, i bryzzhet volna**

Op.46, No.1

Aleksey Tolstoy

Drobits'a, i presh'et, i bryzzhet volna
Mne v ochi sol'onoïu vlagoi;
Nedvizhno na kamne sizhu ia, polna
Dusha bezotchetnoi otvagoi.

Valy za valami, priboi i otboi,
I pena ikh grebni pokryla.
O more, kogo zhe mne vyzvat'na boi,
Izvedat'voskresshiie sily?

Pochuiialo serdtse, chto zhizn'khorosha,
Vy, volny, razmykali gore,
Ot groma i pleska prosnulas'dusha –
Srodni iei shum'ash'eiie more!

The lark's song is ringing louder

*The lark's song is ringing louder,
The spring flowers are growing brighter,
The heart is full of inspiration,
The sky is full of splendour.*

*Destroying the shackles
And the chains of spleen
Rushes in the triumphant tide
Of a new life.*

*Youthfully and freshly sounds
The mighty accord of the new forces,
Like the stretched strings
Between heaven and earth.*

The wave crushes, splashes and sprays

*The wave crushes, splashes and sprays
Into my eyes with salty moisture;
I sit still on the rock,
My soul is full of irrepressible valour.*

*Wave after wave, tide and ebb,
All their crests are covered with foam.
Oh, sea – whom can I challenge to a contest
To try out my resurgent spirit?*

*My heart feels that life is great,
You, waves, dispelled the grief,
My soul has awakened from thunder and splashing –
Akin to the roaring sea!*

3 **V poryve nezhnosti serdechnoi** Op.26, No.1
Ivan Kozlov (1779-1840) after Lord Byron (1788-1824)

V poryve nezhnosti serdechnoi
Ty zhisniu druga nazvala:
Privet bestsennyi, esli b vechno
Zhivaia molodost'svela.

K mogile vs'o letit streloiu,
I ty, men'a laskaia vnov',
Zovi ne zhizniu, a dushoiu,
Bessmertnoi kak moia l'ubov'!

4 **Nimfa** Op.56, No.1
Apollon Maikov (1821-1897)

Ja znaiu, otchego u etikh beregov
Razdumie tainoie obiemlet dukh plovtsov:
Tam nimfa grustnaia s raspush'ennoi kosoii,
Poluzakrytaia pevuchei osokoii,
Poroiu pesn' poiot
Pro sholk svoikh vlasov,
Lazur' zaplakannykh ochei, zhemchug zubov,
I serdtse polnoie l'ubvi nerazdel'onnoi.
Proiedet li chelnok – plovtov obvorozhnyii,
Ieio zaslushavshis', perestaot gresti;
Zamolkniet li ona, no dolgo na puti
Iemu vs'o chud'ats'a napevy
nad vodoiu
I nimfa v kamyshakh,
S raspush'ennoi kosoii.

In moments to delight devoted

*In an outburst of your heart's passion
You called your friend "My life!":
A precious accolade, if only
Life and youth lasted forever.*

*Life flies towards death like an arrow,
So, caressing me again,
Call me not "life", but "soul",
Immortal, like my love!*

Nymph

*I know the reason why by these shores
A mysterious pensive mood seizes the sailors:
A melancholy nymph with flowing tresses,
Half-hidden by rustling reeds,
Sometimes sings a song there
About the silk of her hair,
The azure of her tearful eyes, the pearls of her teeth,
And a heart full of unrequited love.
Passing by in a boat an enchanted sailor
Listening to her song stops rowing;
And, even when she falls silent,
He still imagines for a while the singing above
the waters,
And the nymph in the reeds
With flowing tresses.*

5 **Oktava** Op.45, No.3

Apollon Maikov

Garmonii stikha bozhestvennyie taïny
Ne dumaï razgadat' po knigam mudretsov:
U brega sonnykh vod odin
brod'a, sluchaïno,
Prislushaï's'a dushoi k
sheptaniu trostnikov,
Dubravy govoru; ikh zvuk neobychainyi
Prochuvstvui i poiimi...V
sozvuchii stikhov
Nevol'no s ust tvoikh razmernyie octavy
Poliuts'a stroinyie kak muzyka dubravy.

6 **Ekho** Op.27, No.2

Sergey Andreevsky (1847-1918) after François Coppée (1842-1908)

Ïa gor'ko setoval v pustyn'e:
"Kto budet blizok mne ontyne,
Kak byli blizki serdzu Vy?"
Mne ekho vtorilo: "Uvy!"
"Kak budu zhit', bol'noi i skuchnyi,
Tomim pechalïu neotluchnoi
I r'adom t'agostnykh godin?"
Mne ekho vtorilo: "Odin!"
"No chto mne delat', mir – mogila,
Mne zhizn' bestsel'naïa postyla.
Gde prezhnii blesk, i shum, i raï?"
Skazalo ekho: "Umiraï!"

The Octave

*Divine mysteries of the verse's harmony
Try not to unravel in the wise books:
Instead, wondering ashore by the
sleepy waves, alone,
Gently listen in with your soul to the
whispering of the reeds,
To the babble of oakwood; their wondrous sounds
Understand and take to heart... Then as
harmonious poetry
Naturally from your lips the rhythmical octaves
Will flow, gracefully, like nature's own music.*

The Echo

*I bitterly lamented amidst the desert:
"Who from now on will be
As close to my heart as You once were?"
The echo responded: "Alas!"
"How will I live on, sick and morose,
Tormented by ever present sorrow
And many onerous years?"
The echo responded: "Alone!"
"But what should I do? The world is a grave,
Meaningless life is abhorrent to me.
Where is former splendour, pleasure and paradise?"
The echo said: "Die!"*

7 **Son v letn'uiiu noch** Op.56, No.2

Apollon Maikov

Dolgo nochiu vchera ia zasnul'ne mogla,
Ya vstavala, okno otvor'ala...
Noch nemaia men'a i tomila, i zhgla,
Aromatom tsvetov opian'ala...

Tol'ko vdrug zashumle kusty pod oknom,
Raspakhnulas', shum'a, zanaveska –
I vletel ko mne iunoshka, svetel litsom,
Tochno ves' byl iz lunnogo bleska.

Rastvorilis'a dveri svetlitsy moieï,
Kolonnady za nimi otkrylis;
V piramidakh iz roz verenitsy ognëi
V alebastrovykh vasakh svetilis'...

Chudnyiï gost' podkholid vs'o k posteli moieï,
Govoril mne on s krotkoï ulybkoï:
"Otchego predo mnoiu v podushki skoreï
Ty nyrnula ispugannoï rybkoï!

Ogl'anis'a – ia Bog, Bog videnii
i gr'oz,
Taïnyiï drug ia zastenchivoï devy...
I blazhenstvo nebes ia
vpervyie prin'os
Dl'a teb'a, dl'a moieï korolevy..."

Govoril i litsom otmyval
Ot podushki tikhon'ko rukami,
I sh'eki moieï kraï gor'achko tseloval,
I iskal moikh ust on ustami...

Summer night's dream

*For a long time I couldn't get to sleep last night,
I got up, opened the window...
The still night caressed and burned me,
Intoxicating me with the aroma of the flowers...*

*Suddenly the bushes rustled under the window,
The curtain blew open –
And a youth flew in, with a bright face,
As if he were made from the moon's sparkle.*

*The doors to my bedroom opened,
Colonnades were revealed behind them;
Garlands of lights adorned with roses
Were shining in alabaster vases...*

*The wondrous guest approached my bed
And said with a mild smile:
"Why at my sight did you dive so quickly
Into your pillows like a frightened little fish!*

*Look back at me – I am the God of illusions
and dreams,
I am a secret friend for a shy maiden...
And the rapture of heavens I have brought for
the first time
For you – my queen..."*

*He was speaking and gently lifting
My face from the pillow with his hands,
And the side of my cheek he was passionately kissing,
And seeking my lips with his own...*

Pod dykhanïem ïego obsessilila ïa...
Na grudi razomknulis'a ryki...
I vuchalo v ushakh: "Ty moïa! Ty moïa!"
Tochno arfy dal'okit'e zvuki...

Protekali chasy... ïa otkryla glaza...
Moï pokoi byl uzh oblit za'oiu...
ïa odna... vs'a drozhu... Raspustilas' kosa...
ïa ne znaïu, chto bylo so mnoïu...

8 **Kogda volnuïets'a zhelteïush'aïa niva**

Op.40, No.1

Mikhail Lermontov (1814-1841)

Kogda volnuïets'a zhelteïush'aïa niva,
I svezhïi les shumit pri zvuke veterka,
I pr'achets'a v sadu malinovaïa sliva
Pod tenïu sladostnoi zel'onogo listka,

Kogda rosoï obryzgannyi dushistoï,
Rum'anym vecherom il' utra v chas zlatoi,
Iz-pod kusta mne landysh serebristyï
Privetlivo kivaïet golovoï;

Kogda stud'oniy kl'uch igraïet po ovragu
I, pogruzhai'a mysl'v kakoï-to
smutnyï son,

Lepechet mne tainstvennuïu sagu
Pro mirnyï kraï, otkuda mchits'a on;

Togda smir'aïets'a dushi moïei trevoga,
Togda raskhod'ats'a morsh'iny na chele,
I schast'e ïa mogu postignut' na zemle,
I v nebesakh ïa vizhu Boga!

*Under his breath I grew weak...
My hands I unclasped from my chest...
And I heard: "You are mine! You are mine!"
Like the distant sounds of the harp...*

*The hours have passed... I opened my eyes...
My slumber has already been lit by the dawn...
I'm alone... shaking all over... My hair is undone.
I don't know what happened to me.*

When the golden cornfield waves

*When the golden cornfield waves
And the fresh forest rustles in the wind,
When the crimson plum hides in the garden
Under the sweet shade of a green leaf,*

*When, sprinkled with fragrant dew,
In a blushing evening or golden morning time,
A silvery lily of the valley from under the bush
Affably beckons to me with its head;*

*When the cold stream glistens in the ravine
And, submerging my thought into some
obscure slumber,*

*Murmurs a mysterious saga
About a peaceful land from which it flows;*

*Then dissipates my soul's anxiety,
Then the wrinkles dissolve from my forehead,
And I can comprehend happiness upon the Earth,
And in the sky I can see God!*

9 **Na kholmakh Gruzii** Op.3, No.4

Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837)

Na kholmakh Gruzii lezhit nochnaïa mgla;

Shumit Aragva predo mnoïu.

Mne grustno i legko; pechal' moïa svetla;

Pechal' moïa polna toboïu,

Toboï, toboï ondoï...

Unynïa moïego nichto ne muchit, ne trevozhit,

I serdtse vnov' gorit i biotsa ottogo,

Chto ne l'ubit' ono ne mozhet.

On Georgian hills

On Georgian hills lies night's darkness;

Aragvi roars before me.

I feel sorrowful and at ease; my sadness is light;

My sadness is full of you,

You, only you...

My gloom is not disturbed or tortured by anything,

And my heart again burns and beats faster because

It cannot renounce love.

Alexander Pushkin

Redeĭet oblakov letuchaĭa gr'ada;
 Zvezda pechal'naĭa, vechern'ĭia zvezda!
 Tvoĭ luch oserebril uv'adshĭe ravniny
 I dreml'ush'ĭi zaliv, i chornykh
 skal vershiny.
 L'ubl'u tvoĭ slabyĭ svet v nebesnoĭ vyshine;
 On dumy razbudil, usnuvshĭe
 vo mne:
 Āa pomn'u tvoĭ voskhod, znakomoĭe svetilo,
 Nad mirnoĭu stranoĭ, gde vs'o dl'ĭa
 serdtsa milo,
 Gde stroĭny topoli v dolinakh vozneslis',
 Gde dreml'et nezhnĭyĭ mirt, i t'omnyĭ kiparis,
 I sladostno shum'at poludennyĭe volny.
 Tam nekogda v gorakh, serdechnoĭ
 dumy polnyĭ ,
 Nad morem ĭa vlachil
 zadumchivuĭu len',
 Kogda na khizhiniy skhodila
 nochi t'en' –
 I deva ĭunaĭa vo t'me
 teb'a iskala
 I imenem svoim podrugam nazyvala.

*A flock of passing clouds disperses;
 Sorrowful star, star of the evening!
 Your ray silvers the withered plains,
 The slumbering bay, and the peaks of the
 black rocks.*
*I love your faint light in the Heaven's height;
 It awakened thoughts which were dormant
 within me:*
*I remember your rising, darling star,
 Above a peaceful land, where everything is
 dear to my heart,
 Where slender poplars rise up in the valleys,
 Where tender myrtle and dark cypress slumber,
 And the midday waves splash languorously.
 There in the hills, once upon a time, full of
 heartfelt thoughts,
 Above the sea I dragged out my days in
 pensive idleness,
 When upon the villages the nightly shadow
 was descending,
 And a young girl was seeking you out in
 the darkness
 And called you by her own name to her girlfriends.*

11 **Kak nebesa tvoï vzor blistaïet** Op.7, No.4

Mikhail Lermontov

Kak nebesa, tvoï vzor blistaïet
Emaliu goluboï;
Kak potseluï, zvuchit i taïet
Tvoï golos molodoï.

Za zvuk odin volshebnoï rechi,
Za tvoï ïedinyï vz'lad
Ïa brosit' rad krasavtsa sechi –
Gruzinskiï moi bulat...

Kak nebesa, tvoï vzor blistaïet
Emaliu goluboï;
Kak potseluï, zvuchit i taïet
Tvoï golos molodoï.

12 **O chom v tishi nocheï** Op.40, No.3

Apollon Maikov

O chom v tishi nocheï tainstvenno mechtaiu,
O chom pri svete dn'a vsechasno pomysl'aiu, –
To budet taïnoï vsem, i dazhe ty,
moi stikh,
Ty, drug moi vetrennyi, uslada dneï moikh,
Tebe ne peredam dushi moiï mechtan'a,
A to rasskazhesh ty, cheï glas v
nochnom molchanie mne slyshits'a, cheï lik ia
vs'udu nakhozhu,
Chii ochi svet'at mne, chio im'a
ia tverzhu.

Your glance is as radiant as the heavens

*Your glance is as radiant as the heavens
With its azure enamel;
Your youthful voice like a kiss
Vibrates and melts away.*

*Just for the sound of your magical accents,
For your single gaze
I'd gladly give up the hero of the battle –
My Georgian dagger...*

*Your glance is as radiant as the heavens
With its azure enamel;
Your youthful voice like a kiss
Vibrates and melts away.*

Of what I dream in the quiet night

*Of what in the quiet night I secretly dream,
Of what in the light of day I think every hour, –
Will remain a mystery to everyone, and even to
you, my verse,
You, my flighty friend, my daily consolation,
To you I won't convey the yearnings of my soul,
Because you might reveal whose voice in the
night's silence,
I hear, whose face appears to me in everything,
Whose eyes shine for me, whose name I
endlessly repeat.*

13 **Po nebu polunochi (Angel)** Op.40, No.2

Mikhail Lermontov

Po nebu polunochi angel letel,
I tikhuiu pesn'u on pel;
I mes'ats, i zv'ozdy, i tuchi tolpoi
Vnimali toi pesn'e sv'atoï.

On pel o blazhenstve bezgreshnykh dukhov
Pod kush'ami raïskikh sadov,
O Boge velicom on pel,
I khvala iëgo nepritivorna byla.

On dushu mladuïu v obiatiïakh n'os
Dl'a mira pechali i sl'oz;
I zvuk iëgo pesni v dushe molodoï
Ostals'a bez slov, no zhivoï.

I dolgo na svete tomilas' ona,
Zhelaniïem chudnym polna,
I zvukov nebes zamenit' ne mogli
Iëi skuchnyïe pesni zemli.

14 **Plenivshis'rosoï, soloveï** Op.2, No.2

Aleksey Koltsov (1809-1842)

Plenivshis' rosoï, soloveï
I den'i noch poiïot nad neï;
No rosa molcha pesne vnemlet...
Na lire tak pevets inoi
Poiïot dl'a devy molodoï;
A deva milaïa ne znaïet,
Komu poiïot i otchego
Pechal'ny pesni tak ego.

Across the midnight sky (Angel)

*In the midnight sky an angel flew
And he was singing a quiet song.
A crescent moon, stars and crowded clouds
Were listening to that sacred song.*

*He sung about the bliss of Holy souls
Under the branches of Eden's garden,
He sung of great God
With earnest and sincere praise.*

*He carried a young soul in his embrace
For the world of sorrow and tears;
And the sound of his song remained
Within the young soul, without words, but alive.*

*The soul languished in this world for long time,
Full of wondrous yearning,
And the heavenly sounds could not be replaced
By uninspired songs of earth.*

The rose enchants the nightingale

*Enchanted by the rose, a nightingale
Day and night sings above it;
But the rose listens silently...
In that way a poet with his lyre
Sings for a young maiden;
But the dear maiden knows not
To whom he sings and why
His songs are so full of melancholy.*

15 **Nesp'ash'ikh solntse** Op.41, No.1

Aleksey Tolstoy after Lord Byron

Nesp'ash'ikh solntse, grustnaïa zvezda,
Kak sl'ozno luch mertsaiet tvoï vseгда,
Kak temnota pri n'om iesh'o temnei,
Kak on pokhozh na prizrak prezhnykh dneï!
Tak svetit proshloië nam v zhiznennoi nochi,
No uzh ne greiut nas besil'nyie luchi,
Zvezda minuvshogo, ty v gore mne vidna,
Vidna, no daleka, svetla, no kholodna.

16 **Poet** Op.45, No.5

Alexander Pushkin

Poka ne trebuïet poeta
K sv'ash'ennoi zher'tve Apollon,
V zabotakh suïetnogo sveta
On malodushno pogruzhon;
Molchit iëgo sv'ataïa lira;
Dusha vkushaiet khladnyï son,
I mezh detei' nichtozhnykh mira,
Byt' mozhet, vsekh nichtozhnei' on.

No chut' bozhestvennyi' glagol
Do slukha chutkogo kosn'ots'a,
Dusha poeta vstrepen'ots'a,
Kak probudivshis'a or'ol.
Toskuïet on v zabavakh mira,
L'udskoï chuzhdaïets'a molyv,
K nogam narodnogo kumira
Ne klonit gordoi' golovy;
Bezhit on, dikii' i surovyi',
I zvukov, i sm'at'enïa poln,
Na berega pustynnykh voln,
V shirokoshumnyi'e dubrovy'...

Sun of the sleepless

*Sun of the sleepless, sorrowful star,
How tearfully your ray always flickers,
How darkness is gloomier around its light,
How it resembles the ghost of the days long gone!
That way the past radiates for us in the night of life,
But its powerless rays can't warm us any more,
Star of the past, I can see you in my bitter hour,
Visible, but far away, glowing, but cold.*

The Poet

*While the poet is not summoned
For a sacred oblation by Apollo,
In the chores of the mundane world
He is submerged carelessly;
His holy lyre is silent;
His soul partakes cold slumber,
And amongst the feeble creatures of the world
He is, probably, the feeblest.*

*But as soon as Godly accents
Touch the sensitive hearing,
The poet's soul shudders
Like an awakened eagle.
He is bored amidst worldly gaiety,
He flees society's bustle,
Before the people's idol
He does not bow his proud head;
He escapes, wild and rugged,
Full of sounds and turmoil,
To the shores of desolate waves,
To the ever roaring oakwoods...*

17 **V t'omnoï rosh'e zamolk soloveï** Op.4, No.3*Ivan Nikitin (1824-1861)*

V t'omnoï rosh'e zamolk soloveï,
 Prokatilas' po nebu zvezda;
 Mes'ats smotrit skož chash' u vetveï,
 Zazhigaiet rosu na trave.

Kak pri mes'atse krotok i tikh
 U teb'a milyï ocherk litsa!
 Etu noch, polnyï gr'oz zolotykh
 Āa b prodilil bez kontsa, bez kontsa!

18 **Svitez'anka** Op.7, No.3*Lev Mei (1822-1862) after Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855)*

Paren' prigozhñi moi,
 Paren' krasivyï, kto ty?
 Zachem nad Svitezïu burlyvoi
 Brodish nenastnoi poroiu?
 Bross'a k nam v volny
 I budem kruzhit's'a vmeste po zybi
 Khrustal'noi so mnoiu.
 Khochesh, moi milyï,
 I lastochkoï shibkoï
 Budesh nad ozerom mchat's'a,
 Ili krasivoï ves'oloiu rybkoï
 Tselyï den' budesh ty v struiakakh pleskat's'a?
 Nochïu na lozhe volny serebristoï
 Landysheï my nabrosaïem,
 Sladko zadremlem pod seniïu struistoï,
 Divnyïe gr'ozy uznaïem!

In the dark grove, the nightingale is silent

*In the dark grove, the nightingale is silent,
 A star rolled across the sky;
 A crescent moon is peering through the branches
 And sparkles the dew upon the grass.*

*In the moonlight, how angelic and soft
 The silhouette of your dear face!
 Full of golden dreams, I wish this night
 To last forever, forever!*

Svitez maiden

*Youth, handsome and comely,
 Who are you?
 Why above the roaring Svitez-lake
 Are you wandering in poor weather?
 Plunge yourself into the waves
 And let us swirl
 Together in the crystal ripple.
 If you would like, my dear,
 As a swift swallow
 You could fly over the lake,
 Or as a beautiful jolly fish
 The entire day you could splash in the streams?
 At night, the bed of the silvery wave
 We'll cover with lilies of the valley,
 In languorous slumber under the streaming cover
 We'll have wondrous dreams!*

19 **Ne penits'a more** Op.46, No.2

Aleksey Tolstoy

Ne penits'a more, ne plesh'et volna,
Derev'ia listami ne dvinit;
Na gladi prozrachnoi tsarit tishina,
Kak v zerkale mir oprokinut.

Sizhu ia na kanme, vis'at oblaka
Nedvizhnyie v sinem prostore;
Dusha bezm'atezhna, dusha gluboka,
Srodni iei spokoinoie more.

20 **Medlitel'no vlekuts'a dni moi** Op.51, No.1

Alexander Pushkin

Medlitel'no vlekuts'a dni moi,
I kazhdyi mig v uv'adshem serdse mnozhit
Vse goresti neschastlivoi l'ubvi
I t'azhkoie bezumie trevozhit.
No ia molchu; ne slyshen ropot moi;
Ia sl'ozy liu; mne sl'ozy uteshenie.
Moia dusha, obiataia toskoï,
V nikh gor'koie nakhodit naslazhdenie.
Oh, zhizni son! Leti, ne zhal'teb'a,
Ischezni v t'me, pustoiie prividenie;
Mne dorogo l'ubvi moiei muchenie,
Puskai umru, no pust'umru l'ub'a!
No pust'umru l'ub'a!

Not a sound from the sea

*The sea doesn't spume, the wave doesn't splash,
The leaves don't move on the trees,
Upon the translucent surface reigns silence,
The world is turned upside down as if in a mirror.*

*I sit on a stone, the clouds
Hang motionless in the blue vastness;
My soul is serene and profound
Akin to the tranquil sea.*

Slowly drag my days

*Slowly drag my days,
Every moment amplifies in my withered heart
All woes of unrequited love
And agonizing madness troubles me.
But I am silent; my grumble is not heard;
I shed tears; tears are my consolation.
My soul, consumed by grief,
Finds bitter pleasure in tears.
Oh, illusion of life! Fly by, I don't value you,
Vanish in darkness, meaningless ghost;
I treasure the torment of my love,
Let me die, but let me die being in love!
Let me die being in love!*

21 **Krasavitsa** Op.51, No.4*Alexander Pushkin*

Vs' o v nei garmoniia, vs' o divo,
 Vs' o vyshe mira i strastei,
 Ona pokoits'a stydливо
 V krase torzhestvennoi svoiei;
 Ona krugom seb'a vziraïet:
 Iëi net sopernits, net pordrug;
 Inykh krasavits blednyi krug
 V iëio siianiï ischezaïet.

Kuda by ty ne pospeshal,
 Khot' na l'ubovnoie svidanie,
 Kakoïe b v serdtse ni pital
 Ty sokrovennoie mechtanie,
 No, vtret'as's nei, smush'onnyi, ty
 Vdrug ostanovish's a nevol'no,
 Blagogov'ëia bogomol'no
 Pered sv'atynëi krasoty.

The Beauty

*Everything in her is harmony, a marvel,
 Everything is above the world and passions,
 She rests modestly
 Within her solemn beauty;
 She looks around:
 There are no rivals or equals to her,
 The usual pale circle of beauties
 Disappears in her brilliance.*

*Wherever you are hurrying,
 Even to a love assignation,
 Harboursing within your heart
 A secret yearning –
 Meeting her, you feel perplexed
 And stop involuntarily,
 Piously revering
 The sanctity of beauty.*

22 **Anchar** Op.49, No.1*Alexander Pushkin*

V pustyne chakhloï i skupoi,
 Na pochve, znoïem raskalenniï,
 Anchar, kak groznyï chasovoi,
 Stoit odin vo vseï vselenniï.

Priroda zhazhdush'ikh stepei
 Ègo v den' gneva porodila
 I zelen' mertvuïu vetvei,
 I korni ïadom napoila.

Ïad kaplet skvoz' ègo koru,
 K poludn'u rastop'as' ot znoïu,
 I zastyvaïet vvecheru
 Gustoi, prozrachnoiï smoloïu.

K nemu i pitsa ne letit,
 I zver' neïd'ot: lish vikhor' chornyi
 Na drevo smerti nabezhit –
 I mchits'a proch uzhe tletvornyi.

I ïesli tucha orosit,
 Bluzhdaïa, list ègo dremuchiï,
 S ègo vetvei uzhl'adovït
 Stekaïet dozhd' v pesok gor' uchii.

No cheloveka chelovek
 Poslal k ancharu vlastnym vzgl'adom;
 I on poslushno v put' pot'ok,
 I k utru vozvratils'a s ïadom.

The Upas Tree

*Amid a desert, arid and bare,
 In soil, flaming with heat,
 The Upas tree, like a fearsome guard,
 Stands alone in the entire universe.*

*The nature of the barren steppes
 Created it in the day of wrath
 And soaked with deadly poison
 Its green branches and its roots.*

*The poison percolates through its bark
 Melting from the midday heat,
 And congeals by evening
 Into a dense translucent resin.*

*Birds nor beasts roam not near it:
 Only a black whirlwind
 Occasionally would fly nearby –
 And rush away, but already deadly.*

*And if a wondering cloud would sprinkle
 Upon its dense foliage,
 From its branches, the toxic rain
 Flows down into the sizzling sand.*

*But a human sent another human
 To the Upas tree with a commanding glance;
 And he obediently set off on a journey,
 Returning by the morning with the poison.*

Prin'os on smertnuïu smolu
Da vetv' s uv'adshimi listami,
I pot po blednomu chelu
Struils'a khladnymi ruchiami;

Prin'os i oslabel, i l'og
Pod svodom shalasha na lyki,
I umer bednyĭ rab u nog
Nepobedimogo vладыki.

A tsar'tem ĭadom napital
Svoi poslushlivyĭe strely
I s nimi gibel' razoslal
Sosed'am v chuzhdyĭe predely.

23 **Ne veter, veĭa s vysoty** Op.43, No.2

Aleksey Tolstoy

Ne veter, veĭa s vysoty,
Listov kosnuls'a nochĭu lunnoĭ –
Moĭei dushi kosnulas'ŷ:
Ona trevozhna, kak listy,
Ona, kak gusli, mnogostrunna!
Zhiteiskii vikh'r' ĭeio terzal,
I sokrushitel'nyĭ nabegom,
Svist'a i voĭa struny rval
I zanosil kholodnym snegom;
Tvoĭa zhe rech laskaĭet slukh,
Tvoĭo legko prikosnovenie,
Kak ot tsvetov let'ash'ii pukh,
Kak maĭskoĭ nochĭ dunovenie.

*He brought back the deadly resin
And a branch with withered leaves;
The sweat across his pale face
Was flowing in cold streams.*

*He weakened and laid down
Under a tent upon a trestle-bed,
And the poor slave died
By the feet of an unconquerable sovereign.*

*Meanwhile the Tsar drenched with that poison
His obedient arrows
And sent around death
To neighbours in foreign lands.*

Not the wind blowing from on high

*Not the wind blowing from on high
Has touched the leaves in the moonlit night –
My soul has been touched by you:
It is aflutter, like the leaves,
It is as sensitive as the lyre's strings.
The blizzard of life was tearing it apart,
And with the crushing attack,
Whistling and howling, tore the strings,
And covered my soul with icy snow;
But your voice caresses my hearing,
Your touch is as light
As the down flying from the flowers,
Like a breeze of the May night.*

Alexander Pushkin

Dukhovnoï zhazhdoïu tomim
 V pustyne mrachnoï ia vlichils'a,
 I shestikrylyï serafim
 Na pereputie mne ïavils'a;
 Perstami l'ogkimi, kak son,
 Moikh zenits kosnuls'a on:
 Otverzlis' vesh'ïie zenitsy,
 Kak u ispugannoï orlitsy.
 Moikh usheï kosnuls'a on,
 I ikh napolnil shum i zvon:
 I vn'al ia neba sodroganië,
 I gornii angelov pol'ot,
 I gad morskikh podvodnyï khod,
 I dol'ney lozy proz'abanie.
 I on k ustam moim prinik
 I vyrval greshnyï moi ïazyk,
 I prazdnoslovyï, i lukavyï,
 I zhalo mydryïa zmei
 V usta zamerzshïie moi
 Vlozhil desnitseïu krovavoï.
 I on mne grud' rass'ok mechom,
 I serdtsë trepetnoïe vynul,
 I ugl', pylaiush'ïi ogn'om,
 Vo grud' otverstuïu vodvinul.
 Kak trup, v pustyne ia lezhal.
 I Boga glas ko mne vozzval:
 "Vosstan', prorok, i vizhd', i vnemli,
 Iсполnis' voleïu moïei
 I, obkhod'a mor'a i zemli,
 Glagolom zhgi serdtsa l'udeï."

The Prophet

*Tormented by spiritual anguish
 I dragged myself through a grim desert,
 And a six-winged seraphim
 Appeared to me at a crossroads;
 With his fingers, light as a dream,
 He touched my eyes:
 They burst open wide, all-seeing,
 Like those of a startled eagle.
 He touched my ears
 And they were filled with clamour and ringing:
 I heard the rumbling of the heavens,
 The high flight of the angels,
 The crawling of the underwater reptilians
 And the germinating of the grapevine in the valleys.
 He pressed against my lips
 And tore out my tongue,
 Both exuberant and sly,
 And into my frozen lips
 The sting of a wise snake
 He pushed with his bloody hand.
 He cleaved my chest with a sword
 And took out my trembling heart,
 And thrust into my opened breast
 A flaming piece of coal.
 I lay in the desert like a corpse.
 And God's voice called to me:
 "Arise, my prophet, behold and hark,
 Submit to my will,
 And, traveling across the seas and lands,
 Spark people's hearts with verse."*

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