

A Shropshire Lad
by Arthur Somervell (1863-1937)
Poetry by A.E. Housman (1859-1936)

I. Loveliest of trees the cherry now

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

II. When I was one-and-twenty

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard a wise man say,
"Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies
But keep your fancy free."
But I was one-and-twenty,
No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard him say again,
"The heart out of the bosom
Was never given in vain;
'Tis paid with sighs a plenty
And sold for endless rue."
And I am two-and-twenty,
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.

III. There pass the careless people

There pass the careless people
That call their souls their own:
Here by the road I loiter,
How idle and alone.

*[Ah, past the plunge of plummet,
In seas I cannot sound,
My heart and soul and senses,
World without end, are drowned.]*

His folly has not fellow
Beneath the blue of day
That gives to man or woman
His heart and soul away.

*[There flowers no balm to sain him
From east of earth to west
That's lost for everlasting
The heart out of his breast.*

*Here by the labouring highway
With empty hands I stroll:
Sea-deep, till doomsday morning,
Lie lost my heart and soul.]*

IV. In summertime on Bredon

In summertime on Bredon
The bells they sound so clear;
Round both the shires they ring them
In steeples far and near,
A happy noise to hear.

Here of a Sunday morning
My love and I would lie,
And see the coloured counties,
And hear the larks so high
About us in the sky.

The bells would ring to call her
In valleys miles away;
"Come all to church, good people;
Good people come and pray."
But here my love would stay.

And I would turn and answer
Among the springing thyme,
"Oh, peal upon our wedding,
And we will hear the chime,
And come to church in time."

But when the snows at Christmas
On Bredon top were strown,
My love rose up so early
And stole out unbeknown
And went to church alone.

They tolled the one bell only,
Groom there was none to see,
The mourners followed after,
And so to church went she,
And would not wait for me.

The bells they sound on Bredon,
And still the steeples hum,
"Come all to church, good people." –
O noisy bells, be dumb;
I hear you, I will come.

V. The street sounds to the soldiers' tread

The street sounds to the soldiers' tread,
And out we troop [come] to see:
A single redcoat turns his head,
He turns and looks at me.

My man, from sky to sky's so far,
We never crossed before;
Such leagues apart the world's ends are,
We're like to meet no more.

What thoughts at heart have you and I
We cannot stop to tell;
But dead or living, drunk or dry,
Soldier, I wish you well.

VI. On the idle hill of summer

On the idle hill of summer,
Sleepy with the flow of streams,
Far I hear the steady drummer
Drumming like a noise in dreams.
Far and near and low and louder,
On the roads of earth go by,
Dear to friends and food for powder,
Soldiers marching, all to die.
East and west on fields forgotten
Bleach the bones of comrades slain,
Lovely lads and dead and rotten;
None that go return again.
Far the calling bugles hollo,
High the screaming fife replies,
Gay the files of scarlet follow:
Woman bore me, I will rise.

VII. White in the moon the long road lies

White in the moon the long road lies,
The moon stands blank above;
White in the moon the long road lies
That leads me from my love.

Still hangs the hedge without a gust,
Still, still the shadows stay:
My feet upon the moonlit dust
Pursue the ceaseless way.

The world is round, so travellers tell,
And straight though reach the track,
Trudge on, trudge on, 'twill all be well,
The way will guide one back.

But ere the circle homeward hies
Far, far must it remove:
White in the moon the long road lies
That leads me from my love.

VIII. Think no more, lad; laugh, be jolly

Think no more, lad; laugh, be jolly:
Why should men make haste to die?
Empty heads and tongues a-talking
Make the rough road easy walking,
And the feather pate of folly
Bears the falling sky.

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking
Spins the heavy world around.
If young hearts were not so clever,
Oh, they would be young for ever;
Think no more; 'tis only thinking
Lays lads underground.

IX. Into my heart an air that kills

Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went
And cannot come again.

X. The lads in their hundreds

The lads in their hundreds to Ludlow come in for the
fair,
There's men from the barn and the forge and the mill and
the fold,
The lads for the girls and the lads for the liquor are there,
And there with the rest are the lads that will never be
old.

There's chaps from the town and the field and the till and
the cart,
And many to count are the stalwart, and many the brave,
And many the handsome of face and the handsome of
heart,
And few that will carry their looks or their truth to the
grave.

I wish one could know them, I wish there were tokens to
tell
The fortunate fellows that now you can never discern;
And then one could talk with them friendly and wish
them farewell
And watch them depart on the way that they will not
return.

But now you may stare as you like and there's nothing to
scan;
And brushing your elbow unguessed-at and not to be told
They carry back bright to the coiner the mintage of man,
The lads that will die in their glory and never be old.

Mörike Lieder
by Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)
Poetry by Eduard Mörike (1804-1875)

Fußreise (*Foot Journey*)
Translation by Shawn Thuris

On a freshly-whittled walking stick,
When I go out early
Through the woods,
Up and down the hills,

Then, as the bird in a bower
Sings and bestirs itself,
Or as the golden grape
Senses blissful spirits
In the sun's first rays,

So the dear old Adam in me
Feels Spring- and Autumn-fever,
Made stout of heart by God,
Never forfeited –
The bliss of the first ones in Paradise.

Well, you are not so bad, old
Adam, as the rigid teachers say;
Still you always love and praise,
Always sing and glorify –
As if on ever-new Creation days –
Your beloved Maker and Sustainer.

Would that this be given me,
And my whole life
Could pass in the light sweat
Of such a morning journey!

Gesang Weylas (*Weyla's Song*)
Translation by Emily Ezust

You are Orplid, my land!
the distant gleaming;
From the sea, your sunny shore
steams with mist, which moistens the cheeks of gods.

Ancient waters rise
rejuvenated about your hips, child!
To your divinity bow
kings, who are your attendants.

Abschied (*Farewell*)
Translation by Emily Ezust

Without knocking, a gentleman comes visiting me
evening: "I have the honor to be your critic!" [he
says.]

Immediately he takes the light in his hand, gazes long
at my shadow on the wall, stepping close and then
stepping back: "Now, my good young man, kindly see
how your nose looks from the side! You must admit
that it is quite a protuberance."

This? Good gracious – so it is! My word! I never
imagined – my whole life long – that such a world-
sized nose I bore on my face!

The man said various other things about this and that,
and on my honour, I remember no more; perhaps he
thought I should give him a confession. Finally he
stood up and I lit his way out.

As we stood at the top of the stairs, I gave him,
cheerfully, a small kick from behind, on the backside,
and by hail! What a jolting, tumbling, and hobbling!

The equal have I never seen, my whole life long, of a
man going so quickly down the stairs!

Tre sonnetti di Petrarca, S. 270
by Franz Liszt (1811-1886)
Poetry by Francesco Petrarca
(1304-1374)

Translations by Lionel Salter

I. Pace non trovo (*I find no peace*)

I find no peace, but for war am not inclined;
I fear, yet hope; I burn, yet am turned to ice;
I soar in the heavens, but lie upon the ground;
I hold nothing, though I embrace the whole world.

Love has me in a prison which he neither opens nor
shuts fast;
he neither claims me for his own nor loosens my
halter;
he neither slays nor unshackles me;
he would not have me live, yet leaves me with my
torment.

Eyeless I gaze, and tongueless I cry out;
I long to perish, yet plead for succour;
I hate myself, but love another.

I feed on grief, yet weeping, laugh;
death and life alike repel me;
and to this state I am come, my lady, because of you.

II. Benedetto sia 'l giorno (*Blessed be the day*)

Blessed be the day, the month, the year,
the season, the hour, the moment, the lovely scene,
the spot when I was put in thrall
by two lovely eyes which bind me fast.

And blessed be the first sweet pang
I suffered when love overwhelmed me,
the bows and arrows which stung me,
and the wounds which pierce to my heart

Blessed be the many voices which have echoed
when I have called Laura's name,
the sighs and tears, the longing

and blessed be all those writings
in which I have spread her fame, and my thoughts,
which stem from her and centre on her alone.

III. I' vidi in terra angelici costumi (*I beheld on earth angelic grace*)

I beheld on earth angelic grace,
and heavenly beauty unmatched in this world,
such as to rejoice and pain my memory,
which is so clouded with dreams, shadows, mists.

And I beheld tears spring from those two bright eyes,
which many a time have put the sun to shame,
and heard words unered with such sighs
as to move the mountains and stay the rivers.

Love, wisdom, excellence, pity and grief
made in that plaint a sweeter concert
than any other to be heard on earth.

And heaven on that harmony was so intent
that not a leaf upon the bough was seen to stir,
such sweetness had filled the air and winds.

Recuerdo by John Musto (b. 1954)

I. Echo Poetry by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Come to me in the silence of the night;
Come in the speaking silence of a dream;
Come with soft rounded cheeks and eyes as bright
As sunlight on a stream;
Come back in tears,
O memory, hope and love of finished years.

O dream how sweet, too sweet, too bitter-sweet,
Whose wakening should have been in Paradise,
Where souls brim-full of love abide and meet;
Where thirsting longing eyes
Watch the slow door
That opening, letting in, lets out no more.

Yet come to me in dreams, that I may live
My very life again though cold in death;
Come back to me in dreams, that I may give
Pulse for pulse, breath for breath:
Speak low, lean low,
As long ago, my love, how long ago.

II. Recuerdo Poetry by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950)

We were very tired, we were very merry—
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.
It was bare and bright, and smelled like a stable—
But we looked into a fire, we leaned across a table,
We lay on a hill-top underneath the moon;
And the whistles kept blowing, and the dawn came soon.

We were very tired, we were very merry—
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry;
And you ate an apple, and I ate a pear,
From a dozen of each we had bought somewhere;
And the sky went wan, and the wind came cold,
And the sun rose dripping, a bucketful of gold.

We were very tired, we were very merry,
We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.
We hailed "Good morrow, mother!" to a shawl-
covered head,
And bought a morning paper, which neither of us
read;
And she wept, "God bless you!" for the apples and
pears,
And we gave her all our money but our subway fares.

III. Last Song

Poetry by Louise Bogan (1897-1970)

* Excerpt from *After the Persian*

Goodbye, goodbye!
There was so much to love, I could not love it all;
I could not love it enough.

Some things I overlooked, and some I could not find.
Let the crystal clasp them
When you drink your wine, in autumn.

**Vain regret!... Doute de la lumière
from *Hamlet***

Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896)

Libretto by Michel Carré (1821-1872)

Hamlet:

Vain regrets! Fleeting kindness! My father falls under
the blows of blind and jealous destiny. Two months
have scarcely flown by, and my mother is in the arms
of a new spouse. Here are my eternal tears. Let me
not think on it. Frailty, thy name is woman!

Ophelia:

My Lordship!

H: Ophelia!

O: Alas! The eternal suffering that troubles your soul
dooms our happiness! The king has told me you have
said your farewells; that you are fleeing far from the
court! that you are leaving!

H: Ophelia!

O: Why do you look away? What dark despair drives
you from here? Can it be that your heart has forgotten
me?

H: No! As God is my witness, I am not one of those
who easily forgets the promises of love. I do not have
the heart of a woman!

O: What cruelty! Does Ophelia deserve such an
insult?

H: Forgive me, my precious, I was not accusing you!
The purity of your soul is reflected in your beauty!

Doubt the light, if you will, or the sun, or the day,
doubt the heavens and the earth, but never doubt my
love!

O: Ah, Hamlet! And can this love not keep you here?
How could you flee if you loved me as much as I love
you?

H: No! I am fleeing, not from you, but from human
fickleness. The image of your serenity would have
been company in my solitude! But your presence
consoles me! Tears are less bitter when dried by love.
A single word is enough to keep me here at your feet!

O: O sun, source of the daylight that beams down
upon us, O spirits of heaven and earth, bear witness to
his love!

H: Ophelia! Dearest Ophelia!

O: My soul trusts in you!

H: Fate has joined us forever! My soul, my life
belongs to you!

O: Forever!

H: Doubt the light, if you will,

O: O sun!

H: or the sun, or the day,

O: Source of the daylight

H: doubt the heavens and the earth, but never doubt
my love!

etc...