

Texts and Translations

Francesco Paolo Tosti

La Serenata

La Serenata

Vola, o serenata:
La mia diletta è sola,
e, con la bella testa abbandonata
posa tra le lenzuola:
O serenata, vola.
O serenata, vola.

Splende Pura la luna,
l'ale il silenzio stende,
e dietro i veni dell'alcova bruna
la lampada s'accende.
Pure la luna splende.
Pure la luna splende.

Vola, o serenata,
Vola, o serenata, vola.
Ah! là. Ah! là.

Vola, o serenata:
La mia diletta è sola,
ma sorridendo ancor mezzo assonnata,
torna fra le lenzuola:
O serenata, vola.
O serenata, vola.

L'onda sogna su 'l lido,
e 'l vento su la fronda;
e a' baci miei ricusa ancora un nido
la mia signora bionda.
Sogna su 'l lido l'onda.
Sogna su 'l lido l'onda.

Vola, o serenata,
Vola, o serenata, vola.
Ah! là. Ah! là.

The Serenade

Fly, o serenade:
My beloved is alone,
with her beautiful head hid
under the sheets:
O serenade, fly.
O serenade, fly.

The moonlight is pure,
wings of silence stretch out,
and behind the veils of the dark alcove
the lamp burns.
The pure moonbeams shine.
The pure moonbeams shine.

Fly, o serenade,
Fly, o serenade, fly.
Ah! là. Ah! là.

Fly, o serenade:
My beloved is alone,
but still smiling [while] half asleep
she has returned beneath the sheets:
O serenade, fly.
O serenade, fly.

The waves dream on the shore,
and the wind [blows] through the branches;
and my kisses don't result in a nest [being offered],
by my blonde lady.
Dreaming on the shore, [are] the waves. Dreaming on
the shore, [are] the waves.

Fly, o serenade.
Fly, o serenade, fly.
Ah! là. Ah! là.

Translation from: Oxford Lieder

Francesco Paolo Tosti

O del mio amato ben

O del mio amato ben

O del mio amato ben perduto incanto!
Lungi e dagli occhi miei
chi m'era gloria e vanto!
Or per le mute stanze
sempre la cerco e chiamo
con pieno il cor di speranze?
Ma cerco invan, chiamo invan!
E il pianger m'è sì caro,
che di pianto sol nutro il cor.

Mi sembra, senza lei, triste ogni loco.
Notte mi sembra il giorno;
mi sembra gelo il foco.
Se pur talvolta spero
di darmi ad altra cura,
sol mi tormenta un pensiero:
Ma, senza lei, che farò?
Mi par così la vita vana cosa
senza il mio ben.

Translation from: Lieder.net

Oh lost enchantment of my dearly beloved

Oh, lost enchantment of my dearly beloved!
Far from my eyes is he
who was, to me, glory and pride!
Now through the empty rooms
I always seek him and call him
with a heart full of hopes?
But I seek in vain, I call in vain!
And the weeping is so dear to me,
that with weeping alone I nourish my heart.

It seems to me, without him, sad everywhere.
The day seems like night to me;
the fire seems cold to me.
If, however, I sometimes hope
to give myself to another cure,
one thought alone torments me:
But without him, what shall I do?
To me, life seems a vain thing
without my beloved.

Stefano Donaudy

Vaghissima sembianza

Vaghissima sembianza

Vaghissima sembianza d'antica donna amata,
chi, dunque, v'ha ritratta contanta simiglianza
ch'io guardo, e parlo, e credo d'avervi a me
davanti come ai bei dì d'amor?

La cara rimembranza che in cor mi s'è destata
si ardente v'ha già fatta rinascere la speranza,
che un bacio, un voto, un grido d'amore
più non chiedo che a lei che muta è ognor

Translation from: Lieder.net

Very charming image

Very charming image of a woman formerly loved,
who, then, has portrayed you with so much similarity
that I look, and I speak, and I believe to have you
before me as in the beautiful days of love?

The dear remembrance which has been awakened
in my heart so ardently has revived my hopes,
so that a kiss, a vow, a cry of love?
more I do not ask of her who is silent forever.

Vincenzo Bellini

“Or dove fuggo io mai..Ah, per sempre io ti perdei” from *I Puritani*

Or dove fuggo io mai...Ah! Per sempre io ti perdei

Or dove fuggo mai? ... Dove mai celo
Gli orrendi affanni miei? Come quei canti
Mi risuonano all'alma amari pianti!
O Elvira, Elvira, o mio sospir soave,
Per sempre, per sempre, io ti perdei!
Senza speme ed amor, in questa vita
Or che rimane a me?

Ah! Per sempre io ti perdei,
Fior d'amore, o mia speranza;
Ah! La vita che m'avanza
Sarà piena di dolor!
Quando errai per anni ed anni
In poter della ventura,
Io sfidai sciagura e affanni
Nella speme del tuo amor.

Where do I flee...Ah! Forever I lost you

Where do I flee? ... Where ever it cloaks
The horrendous troubles of mine? Like those songs
They resonate to me bitter tears!
O Elvira, Elvira, or my sweet sigh,
Forever, forever, I lost you!
Without spice and love, in this life
What remains to me?

Ah! Forever I lost you,
Fior d'amore, o my hope;
Ah! The life that drives me
will be full of pain!
When I went for years and years
In the power of fortune,
I challenged misfortune and troubles
In the hope of your love.

Translation from: Opera-arias.com

Ludwig van Beethoven

Selections from *An die Ferne Geliebte*

Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähend

Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähend
In das blaue Nebelland,
Nach den fernen Triften sehend,
Wo ich dich, Geliebte, fand.
Weit bin ich von dir geschieden,
Trennend liegen Berg und Tal
Zwischen uns und unserm Frieden,
Unserm Glück und unsrer Qual.
Ach, den Blick kannst du nicht sehen,
Der zu dir so glühend eilt,
Und die Seufzer, sie verwehen
In dem Raume, der uns teilt.
Will denn nichts mehr zu dir dringen,
Nichts der Liebe Bote sein?
Singen will ich, Lieder singen,
Die dir klagen meine Pein!
Denn vor Liebesklang entweicht
Jeder Raum und jede Zeit,
Und ein liebend Herz erreicht
Was ein liebend Herz geweiht!

Wo die Berge so blau

Wo die Berge so blau
Aus dem nebligen Grau
Schauen herein,
Wo die Sonne verglüht,
Wo die Wolke umzieht,
Möchte ich sein!
Dort im ruhigen Tal
Schweigen Schmerzen und Qual.
Wo im Gestein
Still die Primel dort sinnt,
Weht so leise der Wind,
Möchte ich sein!
Hin zum sinnigen Wald
Drängt mich Liebesgewalt,
Innere Pein.
Ach, mich zög's nicht von hier,
Könnt ich, Traute, bei dir
Ewiglich sein!

I sit on the hill, gazing

I sit on the hill, gazing
Into the misty blue countryside,
Towards the distant meadows
Where, my love, I first found you.
Now I'm far away from you,
Mountain and valley intervene
Between us and our peace,
Our happiness and our pain.
Ah, you cannot see the fiery gaze
That wings its way towards you,
And my sighs are lost
In the space that comes between us.
Will nothing ever reach you again?
Will nothing be love's messenger?
I shall sing, sing songs
That speak to you of my distress!
For sounds of singing put to flight
All space and all time;
And a loving heart is reached
By what a loving heart has hallowed!

Where the blue mountains

Where the blue mountains
From the misty grey
Look out towards me,
Where the sun's glow fades,
Where the clouds scud by –
There would I be!
There, in the peaceful valley,
Pain and torment cease.
Where among the rocks
The primrose meditates in silence,
And the wind blows so softly –
There would I be!
I am driven to the musing wood
By the power of love,
Inner pain.
Ah, nothing could tempt me from here,
If I were able, my love,
To be with you eternally!

Leichte Segler in den Höhen

Leichte Segler in den Höhen,
Und du, Bächlein klein und schmal,
Könnt mein Liebchen ihr erspähen,
Grüßt sie mir viel tausendmal.
Seht ihr, Wolken, sie dann gehen
Sinnend in dem stillen Tal,
Laßt mein Bild vor ihr entstehen
In dem luft'gen Himmelssaal.
Wird sie an den Büschen stehen,
Die nun herbstlich falb und kahl.
Klagt ihr, wie mir ist geschehen,
Klagt ihr, Vöglein, meine Qual.
Stille Weste, bringt im Wehen
Hin zu meiner Herzenswahl
Meine Seufzer, die vergehen
Wie der Sonne letzter Strahl.
Flüstr' ihr zu mein Liebesflehen,
Laß sie, Bächlein klein und schmal,
Treu in deinen Wogen sehen
Meine Tränen ohne Zahl!

Light clouds sailing on high

Light clouds sailing on high,
And you, narrow little brook,
If you catch sight of my love,
Greet her a thousand times.
If, clouds, you see her walking
Thoughtful in the silent valley,
Let my image loom before her
In the airy vaults of heaven.
If she be standing by the bushes
Autumn has turned fallow and bare,
Pour out to her my fate,
Pour out, you birds, my torment.
Soft west winds, waft my sighs
To her my heart has chosen –
Sighs that fade away
Like the sun's last ray.
Whisper to her my entreaties,
Let her, narrow little brook,
Truly see in your ripples
My never-ending tears!

Translations from: Oxford Lider

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Papagena! Papagena! Papagena!

Papagena! Papagena! Papagena!

Papagena! Papagena! Papagena!
Weibchen! Täubchen! meine Schöne!
Vergebens! Ach sie ist verloren!
Ich bin zum Unglück schon geboren.
Ich plauderte, - und das war schlecht,
Darum geschieht es mir schon recht.
Seit ich gekostet diesen Wein -
Seit ich das schöne Weibchen sah -
So brennts im Herzenskammerlein,
So zwickt es hier, so zwickt es da.
Papagena! Herzenstäubchen!
Papagena! liebes Weibchen!
'S ist umsonst! Es ist vergebens'
Müde bin ich meines Lebens!
Sterben macht der Lieb' ein End
Wenns im Herzen noch so brennt
Diesen Baum da will ich zieren,
Mir an ihm den Hals zuschnüren,
Weil das Leben mir missfällt.
Gute Nacht, du schwarze Welt!
Weil du böse an mir handelst,
Mir kein schönes Kind zubandelst,
So ists aus, so sterbe ich:
Schöne Mädchen, denkt an mich.
Will sich eine um mich Armen,
Eh' ich hänge, noch erbarmen,
Wohl, so lass ichs diesmal seyn!
Rufet nur - ja, oder nein! -
Keine hört mich; alles stille!
Also ist es euer Wille?
Papageno, frisch hinauf!
Ende deinen Lebenslauf.
Nun ich warte noch; es sey!
Bis man zählt: Eins, zwey, drey!
Eins!
Zwey!
Drey!
Nun wohlan, es bleibt dabey,
Weil mich nichts zurücke hält!ht,
Gute Nacht, du falsche Welt!

Papagena! Papagena! Papagena!

Papagena, Papagena, Papagena!
Little wife, little dove, my pretty!
No use! Ah, she is lost!
I was born for misfortune.
I have been chattering, and that was wrong,
and so I am getting my deserts.
Ever since I tasted that wine ...
since I saw the pretty little woman,
my little heart has been burning,
with twinges here, twinges there.
Papagena, little wife of my heart!
Papagena, dear little dove!
It's no good, it is useless;
I've had enough of my life!
Death puts an end to love,
however much my heart is on fire.
I will grace that tree there,
tie my neck to it;
because life is not to my liking;
good night, false world.
Because you treat me ill,
sending me no pretty child,
it's all over, I shall die.
Pretty girls, think of me.
If in my misery one of you will
yet take pity on me before I hang,
well and good, this time I'll leave it at that!
Just call yes or no!
No one can hear me, everything's quiet!
So is it your will?
Papageno, up there smartly!
Put an end to your life.
Now I'll just wait, let's say
until we've counted one, two, three.
One! ...
Two! ...
Three! ...
Right then! That's still how it is!
Since there is nothing holding me back,
good night, false world!

Maurice Ravel

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée

Chanson Romanesque

Si vous me disiez que la terre
À tant tourner vous offensa,
Je lui dépêcherais Pança:
Vous la verriez fixe et se taire.

Si vous me disiez que l'ennui
Vous vient du ciel trop fleuri d'astres,
Déchirant les divins cadastres,
Je faucherais d'un coup la nuit.

Si vous me disiez que l'espace
Ainsi vidé ne vous plaît point,
Chevalier dieu, la lance au poing.
J'étoilerais le vent qui passe.

Mais si vous disiez que mon sang
Est plus à moi qu'à vous, ma Dame,
Je blémirais dessous le blâme
Et je mourrais, vous bénissant.

Ô Dulcinée.

Chanson Épique

Bon Saint Michel qui me donnez loisir
De voir ma Dame et de l'entendre,
Bon Saint Michel qui me daignez choisir
Pour lui complaire et la défendre,
Bon Saint Michel veuillez descendre
Avec Saint Georges sur l'autel
De la Madone au bleu mantel.

D'un rayon du ciel bénissez ma lame
Et son égale en pureté
Et son égale en piété
Comme en pudeur et chasteté:
Ma Dame.

(Ô grands Saint Georges et Saint Michel)
L'ange qui veille sur ma veille,
Ma douce Dame si pareille
À Vous, Madone au bleu mantel!
Amen

Romantic Song

Were you to tell that the earth
Offended you with so much turning,
I'd dispatch Panza to deal with it:
You'd see it still and silenced.

Were you to tell me that you are wearied
By a sky too studded with stars -
Tearing the divine order asunder,
I'd scythe the night with a single blow.

Were you to tell me that space itself,
Thus denuded was not to your taste -
As a god-like knight, with lance in hand,
I'd sow the fleeting wind with stars.

But were you to tell me that my blood
Is more mine, my Lady, than your own,
I'd pale at the admonishment
And, blessing you, would die.

O Dulcinea.

Epic Song

Good Saint Michael who gives me leave
To behold and hear my Lady,
Good Saint Michael who deigns to elect me
To please her and defend her,
Good Saint Michael, descend, I pray,
With Saint George onto the altar
Of the Madonna robed in blue.

With a heavenly beam bless my blade
And its equal in purity
And its equal in piety
As in modesty and chastity:
My Lady.

(O great Saint George and great Saint Michael)
Bless the angel watching over my vigil,
My sweet Lady, so like unto Thee,
O Madonna robed in blue!
Amen.

Chanson à boire

Foin du bâtard, illustre Dame,
Qui pour me perdre à vos doux yeux
Dit que l'amour et le vin vieux
Mettent en deuil mon coeur, mon âme!

Je bois
À la joie!
La joie est le seul but
Où je vais droit... lorsque j'ai bu!

Foin du jaloux, brune maîtresse,
Qui geint, qui pleure et fait serment
D'être toujours ce pâle amant
Qui met de l'eau dans son ivresse!

Je bois
À la joie!
La joie est le seul but
Où je vais droit...
lorsque j'ai bu!

Translations from: Oxford Lieder

Drinking Song

A pox on the bastard, illustrious Lady,
Who to discredit me in your sweet eyes,
Says that love and old wine
Are saddening my heart and soul!

I drink
To joy!
Joy is the only goal
To which I go straight... when I'm... drunk!

A pox on the jealous wretch, O dusky mistress,
Who whines and weeps and vows
Always to be this lily-livered lover
Who dilutes his drunkenness!

I drink
To joy!
Joy is the only goal
To which I go straight...
when I'm... drunk!

Roger Quilter

Three Shakespeare Songs

Come away, death

Come away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid.
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O, prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strown.
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown.
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O, where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there!

O mistress mine

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O stay and hear; your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low;
Trip no further, pretty sweetening;
Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty;
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Blow, blow thou winter wind

Blow, blow thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen
Although thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh ho! sing heigh ho!
Unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning,
Most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not.

Heigh ho! sing heigh ho!
unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning,
most loving mere folly
Then, heigh ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

William Stanley Gwynn Williams

My Little Welsh Home

I am dreaming of the mountains of my home
Of the mountains where in childhood I would roam
I have dwelt 'neath southern skies
Where the summer never dies
But my heart is in the mountains of my home
I can see the little homestead on the hill
I can hear the magic music of the Rhyl
There is nothing to compare
With the love that once was there
In the lonely little homestead on the hill
I can see the quiet churchyard down below
Where the mountain breezes wander to and fro
And when God my soul will keep
It is there I want to sleep
With those dear old folks that loved me long ago

Yuan Ren Zhao

Teach me how not to miss her

There are some clouds in the sky,
There is a little breeze on the ground.
Ah! The breeze stirred my hair,
Teach me how not to miss her?
Moonlight is in love with the ocean,
The ocean is in love with the moonlight.
Ah! It's a silver night like honey.
Teach me how not to miss her?
The water flowed slowly,
Fish swim slowly under the water.
Ah! Swallow, what do you say?
Teach me how not to miss her?
The dead trees are shaking in the cold wind,
The wildfire was burning in the dusk.
Ah! In the west, there are still some afterglow,
Teach me how not to miss her.

Translation by Ji Miao

Qing Liu

Song of the Yue Boatman

What a night it is tonight, roaming in the river.
What day is it today? Boat with the prince.
I'm deeply wrongly loved. I'm not ashamed of my rudeness.
I'm in a lot of confusion. I can get to know the prince.
There are trees on the mountain. The trees have branches.
I like you in my heart, but you don't know about it.

Translation by Ji Miao

Wen Ye Jiang

Feng Yang Flower Drum

Left hand Gong and right hand drum
Singing with gongs and drums in hand
I can't sing any other songs
Only can sing a Fengyang song
Feng Feng Yang drum ah hey hey
Let's go with the wind
Let's go with the wind
Go with the wind, go with the wind,
go with the wind, go with the wind
I have a bad life
I can't get a good wife all my life
Other wives are like flowers and jade
My wife has big feet
It's more than a foot. Ouch
Let's go with the wind
Let's go with the wind
Go with the wind, go with the wind,
go with the wind, go with the wind
I have a bad life
Never marry a good husband
Other husband is an official and a government official
My husband only play flower drum Playing flower drum
It's going with the wind. It's going with the wind
Go with the wind, go with the wind,
go with the wind, go with the wind

Translation by Ji Miao

Ying Feng Pan

Hand in Hand

Ah, beautiful girls have seen so many
You're the only one I love
You are as fresh as the sun in the morning
Your face is brighter than that flower
You sing that song as sweet as honey
You dance like a fairy
If you work hard, one person is worth a thousand
Your name and story spread under Tianshan Mountain
The gold and silver medals are hanging on your chest
Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle my eyes
Ah, there is a lamp on the high mountain
It was the flame of youth that burned my heart
I walked down the high hill
Salute you like sunflower
You sing that song as sweet as honey
You dance like a fairy
If you work hard, one person is worth a thousand
Your name and story spread under Tianshan Mountain
I fight hand in hand
A happy life will come true
Oh, sing to your heart's content, beautiful girl
I play the Dongbula to accompany you
La la la la la la la
La la la la la la la
La la la la la la
We sing happy new life
We sing happy tomorrow

Translation by Ji Miao