

E Susanna non vien! ...Dove sono i bei momenti

(Lorenzo Da Ponte)

E Susanna non vien!
Sono ansiosa di saper
Come il Conte accolse la proposta
Al quanto ardito il progetto mi par
E ad uno esoso si vivace
e geloso!
Ma che mal c'è?
Cangiando i miei vestiti
Con quelli di Susanna e suoi con miei
Al favor de la notte
O cielo!
A qual umil stato fatale
Io son ridotta da un consorte crudel
Che dopo avermi
Con un misto inaudito d'infedeltà,
di gelosia, di sdegno!
Prima amata
Indi offesa
E alfin tradita,
Fammi or cerca da una mia serva aita!

Dove sono i bei momenti
Di dolcezza e di piacer?
Dove andaro i giuramenti
Di quel labbro menzogner?
Perchè mai, se in pianti e in pene
Per me tutto si cangiò
La memoria di quel bene
Dal mio sen non trapassò?
Ah! Se almen la mia costanza
Nel languire amando ognor
Mi portasse una speranza
Di cangiar l'ingrato cor!

And Susanna has not come! ...Where are the beautiful moments

And Susanna has not come!
I am anxious to know
How the Count received the proposition
The plan seems a little rash to me
And with such a quick and jealous
husband!
But what harm is there?
Changing my clothes
With Susanna's and hers with mine
Under the cover of night
Oh heavens!
What a humble, ill-fated state
I am reduced to by a cruel husband
Who after giving me
An unheard-of mixture of infidelity,
Jealousy, disdain!
At first loved,
Then offended,
And finally betrayed,
Forcing me to seek help from my servant!

Where are the beautiful moments
Of sweetness and of pleasure?
Where have the promises gone
That came from those lying lips?
Why, if into tears and into pain
Everything has changed for me
The memory of that goodness
Has not vanished from my breast?
Ah! If only my faithfulness
Which still loves amidst suffering
Could bring me one hope
Of changing his ungrateful heart!

(Translation © 1991 M. Gerhart, Hal Leonard)

Notte (Ada Negri)

Sul giardino fantastico
Profumato di rosa
La carezza de l'ombra posa
Pure a un pensiero e un palpito
La quiete suprema
L'aria come pur brivido trema
La luttosa tenebra
Una storia di morte
Raconta alle cardenie smorte
Forse perchè una pioggia
Di soave ruggiade
Entro i socchiusi petali cade
Su l'ascose miserie
E su l'ebbrezze perdute
Su muti sogni e l'ansie mute
Su le fugaci gioie
Che il disinganno infrange
La notte le sue lacrime piange

Nebbie (Ada Negri)

Soffro, lontan, lontano
Le nebbie sonnolente salgono
Dal tacente piano
Alto gracchiando, i corvi,
Fidati all'ali nere
Traversan le brughiere torvi
Dell'aere amorsi crudi
Gli addolorati tronchi
Offron pregando i bronchi nudi
Come ho freddo! Son sola!
Pel grigio ciel so spinto
Un gemito destinto vola
E mi repete "vieni!" È buia la vallata
O triste, o disamata, vieni!

Night

On the fanciful garden
Perfumed with roses
The caress of the shadow rests.
Yet it has a thought and a pulse
Yet the absolute stillness,
The air, as if shivering, trembles.
Perhaps the mournful darkness
Tells a story of death
To the pale gardenias.
Perhaps it is because a shower
Of gentle dew
Falls within the half-closed petals.
Upon the hidden sorrows
And upon lost delights,
Upon mute dreams and silent fears.
Upon the fleeting joys
That the disillusion shatters
The night weeps its tears.

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Fog

I suffer distant, very distant,
The slumbering fog comes up
From the quiet plain.
Loudly screeching, the crows
Trusting their black wings
Traverse the heath menacingly.
Sharply biting into the air
The grieving tree trunks
Offer up their bare branches in prayer.
How cold I am! I am alone!
Driven through the grey sky
A groan of the dead flies.
And it repeats to me, "come!"
The valley is dark, oh sad, unloved one,
come!

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Die Lotosblume (H. Heine)

Die Lotosblume ängstigt
Sich vor der Sonne Pracht
Und mit gesenktem Haupte
Erwartet sie träumend die Nacht.

Der Monde, der ist ihr Buhle
Er weckt sie mit seinem Licht,
Und ihm entschleiert sie freundlich
Ihr holdes Blumengesicht.

Sie blüht und glüht und leuchtet
Und starret stumm in die Höh
Sie duftet
und weinet und zittert
Vor Liebe und Liebesweh.

Vergessen (K.W. Osterwald)

O banger traum, was flatterst du
Mit schwarzen Flügeln um mein Haupt?
Du hast mir du, die ganze Ruh
Aus meinem Herzen wild geraubt.

Ich träum, ich steh an Baches Rand,
Die Trauerweide hängt herein,
Die Quelle schwand, verdorrt im Sand
Sind all die blauen Vergißnichtmein.

Vergessen, ach! Vergessen sein
Vom liebsten Herzen in der Welt,
Das ist allein die schwerste Pein,
Die auf ein Menschenherze fällt.

The Lotus Flower

The lotus flower is afraid
Of the sun's radiance,
And with a bowed head
Dreams of the night.

The moon, who is her lover,
Awakens her with its light
And for him she obligingly unveils
Her lovely flower face.

She blooms and glows and shines
And gazes silently into the sky
She sends forth fragrance
And weeps and trembles
With love and love's pain.

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Forgotten

Oh anxious dream, why do you flutter
With black wings about my head?
You have, you, all peace from me
Savagely stolen from my heart.

I dream that I stand on a brook's edge,
A weeping willow hangs in it,
The spring disappeared, dried up in sand
Are all the blue forget-me-nots.

Forgotten, ah! To be forgotten
By the dearest heart in the world,
That alone is the most severe pain
Which can befall a human heart.

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**C'est l'extase langoureuse
(Verlaine)**

C'est l'extase langoureuse
C'est la fatigue amoureuse
C'est tous les frissons des bois
Parmi l'étreinte des brises,
C'est, vers les ramures grises,
Le chœur des petites voix.

O le frêle et frais murmure!
Cela gazouille et susurre,
Cela ressemble au cri doux
Que l'herbe agitée expire...
Tu dirais, sou l'eau qui vire,
Le roulis sourd des cailloux.

Cette âme qui se lamente
En cette plainte dormante
C'est la nôtre, n'est-ce pas?
La mienne, dis, et la tienne,
Dont s'exhale l'humble antienne
Par ce tiède soir, tout bas?

Le colibri (Leconte de Lisle)

Le vert colibri
Le roi des collines
Voyant la rosée et le soleil clair
Luire dans son nid
Tissé d'herbe fines
Comme un frais rayon
S'échappe dans l'air.

Il se hâte et vole aux sources voisines
Où les bambous font le bruit de la mer,
Où l'açoka rouge, aux odeurs divines
S'ouvre et porte au cœur un humide
éclair.

It is the languorous ecstasy

It is the languorous ecstasy,
It is the amorous fatigue,
It is all the tremors of the forest
In the breezes' embrace,
It is around the grey branches,
The choir of little voices.

Oh the frail and fresh murmuring!
That twittering and whispering
That resembles the soft cry
Exhaled by the ruffled grass...
You might say, under the swirling water
The muffled rolling sound of the pebbles.

The soul which mourns
In this subdued lament
It is ours, is it not?
Mine, say, and yours.
From which the humble anthem exhales
On this warm evening, very softly?

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The hummingbird

The green hummingbird
The king of the hills
Seeing the dew and the bright sunlight
Shining on his nest
Woven from fine grasses
Like a fresh ray of light
Escapes into the air.

He hurries and flies to the nearby springs
Where bamboos make a sound of the sea
Where a divinely perfumed red hibiscus
Unfolds the dewy brilliance of its heart.

Vers le fleur doree
Il descend, se pose,
Et boit tant d'amour
Dans la coupe rose
Qu'il meurt, ne sachant
S'il l'a pu tarir.

Sur ta lèvre pure
Ô ma bien-aimée
Telle aussi mon âme
Eut voulu mourir
Du premier baiser
Qui l'a parfumée!

**A Working Woman (Martha Jane
Canary, a.k.a. Calamity Jane)**

Your mother works for a living.
One day I have chickens,
And the next day feathers.

These days I'm driving a stagecoach.
For a while, I worked in Russell's saloon,
But when I worked there,
All the virtuous women
Planned to run me out of town.
So these days I'm driving a stagecoach.

I'll be leaving soon to join Bill Cody's Wild
West Show.
I'll ride a horse bare-back, standing up,
Shooting my stetson hat twice, throwing it
into the air and landing on my head.

These are hectic days, like hell let out for
noon. I mind my own business,
But remember, the one thing the world
hates is a woman who minds her own
business.

To the gilded flower
he descends, he hovers
And drinks so much love
from the red cup
That he dies
Not knowing if he has drained it.

On your pure lips,
O my beloved,
My soul would also
Have wished to die
Of the first kiss
Which perfumed it!

*(Translation © 2001, Boyd, Kimball, Walters, Hal Leonard
Corporation)*

All the virtuous women have bastards and
shotgun weddings. I have nursed them
through childbirth,
And my only pay is a kick in the pants
when my back is turned!

These other women are pot-bellied,
hairy-legged, and they look like
something the cat dragged in!
I wish I had the power to damn their souls
to hell! Your mother works for a living.

**All I Have (Martha Jane Cannary, a.k.a.
Calamity Jane)**

I am going blind!
All hope of seeing you again is dead, Janey.
What have I ever done, except one
blunder after another?
All I have left are these pictures of you,
you and your father.
Don't pity me, Janey. Forgive my faults
and all the wrong I did you. Goodnight,
little girl, and may God keep you from
harm.

Give Me Jesus (Traditional Spiritual)

In the mornin' when I rise,
Give me Jesus,
You may have all this world
Give me Jesus.
Dark midnight was my cry,
Give me Jesus,
You may have all of this world.
Give me Jesus.
Oh, when I comes to die,
Give me Jesus, nobody but Jesus,
You may have all of this world,
Give me Jesus.

