

## Text Translations

### Five Songs by Alma Mahler

#### **The Silent Town (Die Stille Stadt)**

A town lies in the valley,  
a pallid day fades;  
it won't be long now  
before neither moon nor stars,  
but only night, will be seen in the sky.

From all the mountains  
fog presses down upon the town;  
no roof may be discerned, no yard nor  
house,  
no sound penetrates through the smoke,  
barely even a tower or a bridge.

But as the traveler became filled with dread  
a little light shone out;  
and through the smoke and fog  
a quiet song of praise began,  
sung by children.

#### **In my Father's Garden (In meines Vaters Garten)**

In my Father's garden-  
Bloom, my heart, bloom forth! --  
In my father's garden  
Stands a leafy apple tree --  
Sweet dream --  
Stands a leafy apple tree.

Three blonde King's daughters --  
Bloom, my heart, bloom forth -  
Three wondrous maidens  
Slept under the apple tree --  
Sweet dream --  
Slept under the apple tree.

The youngest of the fine ladies --  
Bloom, my heart, bloom forth! --  
The youngest of the fine ladies  
Blinked but did not awake --  
Sweet dream --  
Blinked but did not awake.  
The second moved a hand over her hair --  
Bloom, my heart, bloom forth! --  
The second moved a hand over her hair,  
Saw the morning's hemline of red --  
Sweet dream --  
Saw the morning's hemline of red.

She spoke: Did you not hear the drum?  
Bloom, my heart, bloom forth! --  
She spoke: Did you not hear the drum?  
Clearly through the twilight space --  
Sweet dream --  
Clearly through the twilight space?

My beloved joins me on the battlefield --  
Bloom, my heart, bloom forth --  
My beloved joins me on the battlefield,  
Kisses me as the victor on the hem of my  
uniform --  
Sweet dream --  
Kisses me as the victor on the hem of my  
uniform.

The third spoke -- and spoke so softly --  
Bloom, my heart, bloom forth! --  
The third spoke -- and spoke so softly --  
I kiss the hem of my beloved's uniform.  
Sweet dream --  
I kiss the hem of my beloved's uniform.  
(continued)

In my father's garden --  
Bloom, my heart, bloom forth! --  
In my father's garden  
Stands a leafy apple tree --  
Sweet dream --  
Stands a leafy apple tree.

**Mild Summer Night, in the Sky (Laue  
Sommernacht: am Himmel**

Mild summer night, in the sky  
There are no stars; in the wide woods  
We searched deep in the darkness  
And we found ourselves.

We found ourselves in the wide woods,  
In the night, the starless night;  
We held ourselves in wonder in each  
other's arms  
In the dark night.

Was not our entire life  
Simply groping, simply searching?  
There, into its darkness  
Tumbled your light, Love.

**I Am at Ease with You (Bei dir ist es  
Traut)**

I am at ease with you,  
faint clocks strike  
as from olden days,  
Come, tell your love to me,  
But not too loudly!

Somewhere a gate moves  
Outside in the drifting blossoms,  
Evening listens in at the windowpanes,  
Let us stay quiet,  
So, no one knows of us!

**I Wander among the Flowers (Ich  
wandle unter Blumen)**

I wander among the flowers  
And I myself blossom along with them;  
I wander as if in a dream  
and sway with every step.

Oh, hold me tightly, my beloved!  
Or, drunk with love,  
I will collapse at your feet;  
and the garden is full of people!

**From Seven Early Songs by Alban Berg  
Nacht (Night)**

The clouds darken the night and valley;  
mist floats above, the water rushing  
gently.  
Now all at once they unveil themselves:  
O listen! pay heed!

A broad land of wonder has opened.  
Silver mountains rise up, fantastically  
huge,  
quiet paths lit with silver lead toward the  
valley  
from some hidden place;

and the noble world is so dreamily pure.  
A mute beech tree stands by the path,  
black with shadows; a breeze from a  
distant, lonely grove  
wafts gently by.

And from the deep darkness of the valley  
lights flash in the silent night.  
Drink, my soul! Drink in this solitude!  
O listen! pay heed!

## **In the Room (Im Zimmer)**

Autumn sunlight.  
The lovely evening peers so quietly in.  
A little red fire  
crackles in the stove and flares up.  
And with my head upon your knee,  
I am contented.  
When my eyes rest on yours,  
how gently do the minutes pass!

## **The Nightingale (Die Nachtigall)**

It is because the nightingale  
Sang all night long;  
From her sweet noise,  
In echo and re-echo,  
The roses have sprung up.

She was such a tomboy before,  
Now she goes in deep thought,  
Carries in her hand her summer hat  
And bears silently the sun's glow  
And doesn't know what to do.

It is because the nightingale  
Sang all night long;  
From her sweet noise,  
In echo and re-echo,  
The roses have sprung up.

## **From *The Youth's Magic Horn (Das Knaben Wunderhorn)* by Gustav Mahler Who Thought up this Little Song?**

Up over there in a high-up house,  
a lovely, darling girl looks out of the  
window.  
She does not live there:  
she is the daughter of the innkeeper,  
and she lives in the green meadow.

And he who would have her  
would find a thousand thalers\*,  
but he would have to swear  
never to have wine again  
to have her father's property.

"My heart is sore!  
Come, my treasure, make it well again!  
Your dark brown eyes  
have wounded me.

Your rosy mouth  
makes hearts healthy.  
It makes youth wise,  
It brings the dead to life,  
gives health to the ill."

Who has thought up this pretty little song  
then?  
It was brought over the water by three  
geese -  
two grey and one white -  
and if you cannot sing the little song,  
they will whistle it for you!

\*Thalers are old German currency, used  
until 1873

## **A Little Legend about the Rhine (Rheinlegendchen)**

Now I reap by the Neckar, now I reap by the  
Rhine;  
Now I have a sweetheart, now I am alone!  
What use is my reaping if the sickle doesn't cut?  
What use is a sweetheart if she won't stay?  
(Continued)

So if I am to reap by the Neckar and by the  
Rhine,  
then I'll throw in my golden ring.  
It will flow with the Neckar and the Rhine,  
And float right down into the deep sea.

And as it floats, the little ring, a fish will eat it!  
The fish will eventually come to the King's table!  
The king will ask whose ring it is,  
and my sweetheart will say: "The ring belongs to  
me."

My sweetheart will hurry up hill and down hill,  
and bring me back my ring!  
"You can reap by the Neckar, and reap by the  
Rhine  
if you will always throw your ring in for me!"