

Classic Poetry Series

Georg Trakl
- poems -

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Georg Trakl(3 February 1887 - 3 November 1914)

Georg Trakl was an Austrian poet. He is considered one of the most important Austrian Expressionists.

Life and Work

Trakl was born and lived the first 18 years of his life in Salzburg, Austria. His father, Tobias Trakl (11 June 1837, Ödenburg/Sopron – 1910), was a dealer of hardware from Hungary, while his mother, Maria Catharina Halik (17 May 1852, Wiener Neustadt – 1925), was a housewife of Czech descent with strong interests in art and music.

Trakl attended a Catholic elementary school, although his parents were Protestants. He matriculated in 1897 at the Salzburg Staatsgymnasium, where he studied Latin, Greek, and mathematics. At age 13, Trakl began to write poetry. As a high school student, he began visiting brothels, where he enjoyed giving rambling monologues to the aging prostitutes. At age 15, he began drinking alcohol, and using opium, chloroform, and other drugs. By the time he was forced to quit school in 1905, he was a drug addict. Many critics think that Trakl suffered from undiagnosed schizophrenia.

After quitting high school, Trakl worked for a pharmacist for three years and decided to adopt pharmacy as a career. It was during this time that he experimented with playwriting, but his two short plays, *All Souls' Day* and *Fata Morgana*, were not successful.

In 1908, Trakl moved to Vienna to study pharmacy, and became acquainted with some local artists who helped him publish some of his poems. Trakl's father died in 1910, soon before Trakl received his pharmacy certificate; thereafter, Trakl enlisted in the army for a year-long stint. His return to civilian life in Salzburg was unsuccessful and he re-enlisted, serving as a pharmacist at a hospital in Innsbruck. There he also met the local artistic community. Ludwig von Ficker, the editor of the journal *Der Brenner* (and son of the historian Julius von Ficker), became his patron: he regularly printed Trakl's work and endeavored to find him a publisher to produce a collection of poems. The result of these efforts was *Gedichte* (Poems), published by Kurt Wolff in Leipzig during the summer of 1913. Ficker also brought Trakl to the attention of Ludwig Wittgenstein, who anonymously provided him with a sizable stipend so that he could concentrate on his writing.

In 1912, he was stationed in Innsbruck, Austria, where he became acquainted with a group of avant-garde artists involved with the well-regarded literary journal *Der Brenner*, a journal that began the Kierkegaard revival in the German-speaking countries.

At the beginning of World War I, Trakl was sent as a medical official to attend soldiers in Galicia (comprising portions of modern-day Ukraine and Poland). Trakl suffered frequent bouts of depression. During one such incident in Gródek, Trakl had to steward the recovery of some ninety soldiers wounded in the fierce campaign against the Russians. He tried to shoot himself from the strain, but his comrades prevented him. Hospitalized at a military hospital in Kraków and observed closely, Trakl lapsed into worse depression and wrote to Ficker for advice. Ficker convinced him to communicate with Wittgenstein. Upon receiving Trakl's note, Wittgenstein went to the hospital, but found that Trakl had died of a cocaine overdose. Trakl was buried at Kraków's Rakowicki Cemetery on 6 November 1914, but on 7 October 1925, as a result of the efforts by Ficker, his remains were transferred to Mühlau near Innsbruck (where they now repose next to Ficker's).

A Spring Evening

Come evening, friend, who surrounds my forehead with darkness

Gliding on paths through soft-green sowing.

Also willows beckon solemnly and calmly;

A beloved voice whispers in the branches.

The tranquil wind floats beautiful things here from somewhere,

Scent of daffodils which silverly touches you.

In the hazel bush the blackbird makes music -

A shepherd's song gives answer from the firs.

How long the small house has disappeared

Where now a birch copse gushes;

The pond bears a lonely constellation -

And shadows rounding silently in the goldenness!

And time is so miraculous,

That one looks for angels in human glances

Which delight in innocent play.

Yes! Time is so miraculous.

Georg Trakl

Accord

Very bright tones in the thin winds,
They sing the distant mourning of this day,
That makes us dream after never-felt showers
Completely filled with unimaginable smells.
Like mementos to lost companions
And quiet echo of delights sunken in night,
The foliage falls in the long ago abandoned gardens,
Which sun themselves in the silence of paradise.
In the bright mirror of the clarified floods
We see the dead time strangely animate itself
And our passions in the bleeding
Lift our souls to more distant heavens.
We go through deaths newly transformed
To deeper tortures and deeper delights,
Where the unknown deity governs -
And we are completed by eternally new suns.

Georg Trakl

Age

An animal face in the brown green

Glow shyly to me, the bushes smolder.

Very far away an old fountain sings

With children's voices. I listen there.

The wild jackdaws mock me

And all around the birches veil themselves.

I stand silent before a weed fire

And softly pictures paint themselves on it,

An ancient fairytale of love on golden ground.

The clouds spread their silence on the hill.

From the ghostly pond-mirror

Fruits beckon, shining and heavy.

Georg Trakl

Along Walls

An old path goes along

Near wild gardens and lonesome walls.

Thousand-year-old yews shudder

In the rising falling chant of the wind.

The moths dance as if they would die soon,

My glance drinks weeping the shadows and lights.

Far away women's faces float

Ghostly painted in the blue.

A smile trembles in the sunshine,

Meanwhile I slowly stride on;

Unending love gives escort.

Quietly the hard rock greens.

Georg Trakl

Always Darker

The wind, which moves purple treetops,

Is God's breath that comes and goes.

The black village rises before the forest;

Three shadows are laid over the field.

Meagerly the valley dusks

Below and silent for the humble.

A seriousness greets in garden and hall,

That wants to finish the day,

Piously and darkly an organ-sound.

Marie is enthroned there in blue vestment

And cradles her babe in hand.

The night is starlit and long.

Georg Trakl

An Evening

In the evening the sky was overcast.

And through the grove full of silence and grief

A dark-golden shower went.

Distant evening bells faded away.

The earth has drunk icy water,

At the forest's edge a fire lay glowing,

The wind quietly sang with angel's voices

And shivering I have gone to the knee,

In the heather, in bitter cresses.

Far outside clouds swam in silver puddles,

Desolate guards of love.

The heath was lonesome and unmeasured.

Georg Trakl

At Night

The blueness dies out in my eyes tonight,
the red gold of my heart. O how still the light burns!
Your cloak of sadness encircles the long descent.
Your red lips seal your friend's unhinging.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Nachts

Die Bläue meiner Augen ist erloschen in dieser Nacht,
Das rote Gold meines Herzens. O! wie stille brannte das Licht.
Dein blauer Mantel umfing den Sinkenden;
Dein roter Mund besiegelte des Freundes Umnachtung.

Georg Trakl

At The Cementary

Rotten stone towers sultrily warmed.

Yellow haze of incense hovers.

Bees hum chaotically swarmed

And the flower trellises shake.

Slowly a breath stirs there

By the sun-still walls,

Dwindles glimmering, like a deceit -

Songs for the dead deeply shiver away.

Long it listens after in the green,

Lets the bushes shine brighter;

Brown swarms of mosquitoes spray

Over old tombstones

Georg Trakl

At The Moor

At the Moor

Wanderer in the blackened wind. Dry reeds whisper
in the stillness of the moor. A column of savage birds
ensues in the dawning sky.
Over murky waters they cross.

Uproar. From the crumbling shack
the black wings of rot flutter up.
Crippled birches sigh in the wind.

Evening in the forsaken tavern. The way home is shrouded
by the tender sadness of the grazing herd.
Night becomes manifest: toads emerge from the silver water.

Translated by Eric Plattner & Joseph Suglia

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Am Moor

Wanderer im schwarzen Wind; leise flüstert das dürre Rohr
In der Stille des Moors. Am grauen Himmel
Ein Zug von wilden Vögeln folgt;
Quere über finsternen Wassern.

Aufruhr. In verfallener Hütte
Aufflattert mit schwarzen Flügeln die Fäulnis;
Verkrüppelte Birken seufzen im Wind.

Abend in verlassener Schenke. Den Heimweg umwittert
Die sanfte Schwermut grasender Herden,
Erscheinung der Nacht: Kröten tauchen aus silbernen Wassern.

Georg Trakl

Autumn

In the evening, when the bells ring peace,
I follow the wonderful flights of birds,
That in long rows, like devout processions of pilgrims,
Disappear into the clear autumn vastness.
Wandering through the garden closed for the night
I dream after their brighter destinies
And hardly feel the motion of the hour hands.
Thus I follow their journey over the clouds.
Then a breath of decay makes me tremble.
A bird complains in defoliated branches.
The red wine sways on rusty trellises.
Meanwhile like the death-dances of pale children
Around dark fountain edges that weather,
Shivering blue asters bend in the wind.

Georg Trakl

Autumnal Homecoming

Memory, buried hope

Is preserved by this brown timber,

Dahlias hang over it

Ever more silent homecoming,

The dark reflection of childish years

By the decayed garden,

That tears fall from blue eyelids

Irresistibly;

Gloom's crystalline minutes

Gleam over

To the night.

Georg Trakl

Ballad

A fool wrote three signs in the sand,

A pale maiden stood there before him.

Loudly the sea sang, o it sang.

She held a cup in the hand,

Which gleamed up to the edge,

Like blood so red and heavy .

No word was spoken - the sun faded away,

Then the fool took the cup

Out of her hand and drank it empty.

Then its light extinguished in her hand,

The wind blew away the three signs in the sand -

Loudly the sea sang, o it sang.

Georg Trakl

Ballad (1)

A heart laments: you do not find her,

Her native country is probably far from here,

And her face is strange!

The night weeps by a door!

In the marble hall light upon light burns,

O stuffy, o stuffy! Somebody dies here!

A whisper somewhere: o do you not come?

The night weeps by a door!

A sobbing still: o that he would see the light!

Then it became dark there and here -

A sobbing: brother, o do you not pray?

The night weeps by a door.

Georg Trakl

Ballad (2)

A sultry garden stood the night.

We kept silent ourselves about what grips us horribly.

From this our hearts awoke

And succumbed under the burden of silence.

No star blossomed in that night

And nobody asked for us.

Only a demon has laughed in the darkness.

Be cursed everyone! Then the deed came into being.

Georg Trakl

Before Sunrise

In the dark many bird voices call,

The trees and the springs murmur noisily,

In the clouds a rose-colored glow sounds

Like early love's distress. The night blues away -

With shy hands the twilight softly polishes

The love lair, feverishly stirred up,

And lets the drunkenness of languished kisses end

In dreams, smiling and felt half-awake.

Georg Trakl

Birth

These mountains: blackness, silence, and snow.
The red hunter climbs down from the forest;
Oh the mossy gaze of the wild thing.
The peace of the mother: under black ﬁrs
The sleeping hands open by themselves
When the cold moon seems ready to fall.
The birth of man. Each night
Blue water washes over the rockbase of the cliff;
The fallen angel stares at his reﬂection with sighs,
Something pale wakes up in a suffocating room.
The eyes
Of the stony old woman shine, two moons.
The cry of the woman in labor. The night troubles
The boy's sleep with black wings,
With snow, which falls with ease out of the purple
clouds

Georg Trakl

Blood Guilt

Night threatens at the bed of our kisses.

Somewhere a whisper: who absolves your guilt?

Still trembling from the sweetness of nefarious lust

We pray: forgive us, Mary, in your mercy.

Out of flower vases greedy scents climb,

Wheedling our foreheads pale with guilt.

Exhausting under the waft of sultry air

We dream: forgive us, Mary, in your mercy.

But the well of the sirens rushes louder,

And the sphinx rises darker before our guilt,

So that our hearts sound again more sinfully,

We sob: forgive us, Mary, in your mercy.

Georg Trakl

By A Window

Above the roofs the sky-blue,

And clouds passing by,

Before the window a tree in spring dew,

And a bird shoots up skyward drunk

A lost scent of blossoms -

A heart feels: This is the world!

The stillness increases and the midday glows!

My God, how rich is the world!

I dream and dream and life flees,

Life there outdoors - somewhere

Far-off to me because of a sea of loneliness!

A heart feels it and doesn't become glad!

Georg Trakl

Childhood Memory

The sun shines alone in the afternoon,
And quietly the tone of the honey-bees wavers off.
In the garden the sisters' voices whisper -
There the boy listens in the wooden shed,
Still fevering over book and picture.
Weary the linden-trees wilt immersed in the blue.
A heron hangs motionless drowned in the ether,
By the fence fantastic shadow-shapes play.
The sisters go quietly into the house,
And soon their white clothes glimmer
Vaguely from bright rooms,
And confused the bushes' bluster dies down.
The boy strokes the cat's hair,
Bewitched by the mirror of her eyes.
An organ-sound far away on the hill
Lifts wonderfully into heaven.

Georg Trakl

Closing Chord

The last, pale light went from the day,
The early passions have rustled down,
The holy wine of my joys spilled
Now my heart weeps in the night and listens

After the echo of its young celebrations,
Which trails off so placidly in the dark,
So shadowy, like wilted leaves falling
On an abandoned grave in autumn night.

Georg Trakl

Colorful Autumn

The fountain sings, the clouds stand

In clear blueness, white, delicate;

Silent people wander thoughtfully

Down there in the evening-blue garden.

The ancestors' marble has turned grey.

A line of birds streaks into the distance

A faun with dead eyes gazes

On shadows that glide into darkness.

Leaves fall red from the old tree,

Rotate inside through the open window.

The room glows in dark fires,

In its shadows, like ghosts.

Opal smoke weaves over the grass,

A cloud of wilted, bleached scents,

In the fountain the sickle moon shines

Like a green glass in freezing air.

Georg Trakl

Confiteor

The colored pictures which life paints,

I see them gloomily only by twilights,

Like frizzy distorted shadows, cloudy and cold,

Hardly born, already defeated by death.

And since the mask fell from every thing,

I see only fear, desperation, disgrace and plagues,

Mankind's heroless tragedy,

A bad play, staged on graves, corpses.

This terrible dream-view disgusts me.

But a higher authority wants me to stay,

A comedian who speaks his role,

Coerced, full of desperation - boredom!

Georg Trakl

Daydreaming

Soft life grows in the stillness

Step and heart hurries through the green

Loving stays at hedges,

That heavily fill up with scents.

Beech ponders; the moist bells

Fell silent, the fellow sings

Fire embraces darkness

O patience and mute rejoicing.

Beautifully animated, silent night

Still gives glad courage to the end.

Golden wine, offered by

A sister's blue hands.

Georg Trakl

Daydreaming In The Evening

Where one goes in the evening is not the angel's shadow

And beauty! grief and gentler forgetting alternate;

The stranger's hands grope coolness and cypresses

And his soul is taken by an astonished languishing.

The market is emptied of red fruits and garlands.

Harmoniously the church's blackish pageantry attunes

In a garden the tones of soft play sound,

Where tired ones find each other after the meal.

A carriage rushes, a spring very far away through green puddles.

There a childhood appears dreamlike and elapsed,

Angela's stars, enclosed devoutly to a mystical constellation,

And calmly the evening coolness rounds.

White poppy loosens the limbs of the lonely ponderer,

So that he views righteousness and God's deep joy.

From the garden his shadow strays here in white silk

And bends down over mournful waters.

Branches knocked whispering into the abandoned room

And a loving and small evening flowers' tremor.

Corn and golden vines gird the site of man,

A lunar shimmer, however, ponders after the dead.

Georg Trakl

De Profundis

There is a stubble field on which a black rain falls.
There is a tree which, brown, stands lonely here.
There is a hissing wind which haunts deserted huts- -
How sad this evening.

Past the village pond
The gentle orphan still gathers scanty ears of corn.
Golden and round her eyes are gazing in the dusk
And her lap awaits the heavenly bridegroom.

Returning home
Shepherds found the sweet body
Decayed in the bramble bush.

A shade I am remote from sombre hamlets.
The silence of God
I drank from the woodland well.

On my forehead cold metal forms.
Spiders look for my heart.
There is a light that fails in my mouth.

At night I found myself upon a heath,
Thick with garbage and the dust of stars.
In the hazel copse
Crystal angels have sounded once more.

Translated by Michael Hamburger

Georg Trakl

Decay

A wind is blowing! The green lights

Sing extinguished - large and satiated

The moon fulfils the high hall,

Where no more celebrations sound through.

The ancestral portraits quietly smile

And far-off - their last shadow fell,

The room is sultry with putrefaction,

Around which ravens mutely move in circles.

A lost sense of past times

Looks from the stony masks,

Pain distorted and empty of existence

Mourning in abandonments.

Sick smells of sunken gardens

Quietly caress the decay -

Like the echo of sobbing words

Quivering over open crypts.

Georg Trakl

December

At evening jugglers travel through the forest

On quaint wagons, small steeds.

A golden stash seems locked in clouds.

In the white plain villages are painted.

The wind swings shield and billet black and cold.

A raven follows the morose comrades.

From the sky a ray falls on bloody gutters

And placidly a funeral procession pilgrimages to the cemetery.

The shepherd's hut dwindles nearby in the gray,

In the pond a brilliance of old treasures glistens;

The farmers sit down in the tavern for wine.

A boy glides shyly to a woman.

One still sees the sexton in the vestry

And reddish utensils, beautiful and dim.

Georg Trakl

December Sonnet

At evening jugglers travel through the forest

On quaint wagons, small steeds.

A golden stash seems locked in clouds.

In the dark plain villages are painted.

The red wind billows linen black and cold.

A dog rots, a shrub smokes blood-doused.

The reed is flown through by yellow horror

And placidly a funeral procession pilgrimages to the cemetery.

The old man's hut dwindles nearby in the gray,

In the pond a brilliance of old treasures glistens;

The farmers sit down in the tavern for wine.

A boy glides shyly to a woman.

A monk fades in the darkness soft and dark.

A bleak tree is a sleeper's sexton.

Georg Trakl

Delirium

The black snow runs down from the rooftops;
A red finger dips into your brow;
Blue snow flakes sink into the empty room,
They are a lovers' dying mirrors.
Heavy and torn to pieces the mind muses,
Follows the shadow in the mirror of blue snow flakes,
The cold smile of a deceased harlot.
The evening's wind weeps in the scent of carnations.

Georg Trakl

Deliriums

[1 is missing]

2

Dark interpretation of the water: forehead in the mouth of the night,

Sighing in black pillows the rosy shadow of man,

Redness of autumn, the rustle of the maple in the old park,

Chamber concerts which fade on decayed stairs.

3

The black excrement, which runs off the roofs.

A red finger dips into your forehead

Blue snow sinks in the attic,

The deceased mirror of lovers.

Georg Trakl

Descent And Defeat

To Karl Borromaus Heinrich

Over the white ﬁshpond
The wild birds have blown away.
An icy wind drifts from our stars at evening.
Over our graves
The broken forehead of the night is bending.
Under the oaks we veer in a silver skiff.
The white walls of the city are always giving off
sound.
Under arching thorns
O my brother blind minute-hands we are climbing
toward midnight

Georg Trakl

Devotion

Not lost from my young years

Is silent devotion to a sound of bells,

To all churches' dusking altars

And their blue domes heaven-wide.

To an organ's tune at evening,

To wide squares fading in darkness,

And to a fountain that splashes, softly and quietly

And sweetly, like unintelligible children's babbling.

I see myself dreaming silently, folding the hands,

And whispering prayers forgotten for a long time,

And early gloom sombering my glance.

Since a woman's picture gleams

Out of confused shapes, wreathed by sinister grief,

And pours into me the chalice of nefarious shudders.

Georg Trakl

Die Sunflowers

You golden sunflowers,

Tenderly inclined toward death,

You sisters full of humility

In such stillness

Helian's year

Of mountainous coolness ends.

Then his drunken forehead

Pales from kisses

Amid those golden

Flowers of gloom

The spirit is determined

By silent sinisterness.

Georg Trakl

Downfall

Downfall

(To Karl Borromaeus Heinrich)

Over the white pond
the savage birds draw away.
At twilight an icier wind blows about our star.

The split forehead of night bends
across our graves.
Under oaks we shudder on a silver barge.

Forever ring the whitewashed walls of the city.
Under a dome of thorns
O my brother we climb—blind hour hands to midnight.

Translated by Eric Plattner & Joseph Suglia

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Untergang

(An Karl Borromaeus Heinrich)

Über den weißen Weiher
Sind die wilden Vögel fortgezogen.
Am Abend weht von unseren Sternen ein eisiger Wind.

Über unsere Gräber
Beugt sich die zerbrochene Stirne der Nacht.
Unter Eichen schaukeln wir auf einem silbernen Kahn.

Immer klingen die weißen Mauern der Stadt.
Unter Dornenbogen
O mein Bruder klimmen wir blinde Zeiger gen Mitternacht.

Georg Trakl

Dusk

You are rumpled, distorted by every pain
And shake with the discord of all melodies,
You burst harp - a poor heart,
From which gloom's sick flowers bloom.

Who has ordered the enemy, the murderer for you,
That stole the last spark of your soul,
How he makes this scanty world godless
To a whore, ugly, ill, pale with putrefaction!

From shadows a wild dance still swings
To frizzily ruptured, soulless sound,
A round dance around beauty's thorn wreath,

Which witheringly crowns the lost winner,
- A bad trophy for that fought desperation,
And that does not reconcile the bright divinity.

Georg Trakl

Elis

Elis

1.

The absolute stillness of this golden day.
Under ancient oak trees
you appear, Elis, a dormant seed with round eyes.

Their blueness reflects the slumber of lovers,
whose rosy sighs
die on your lips.

At evening the fishermen drew in their heavy nets.
A good shepherd
leads his herd to the edge of the woods.
O, Elis, how just are your days!

Wordlessly, by barren walls,
the blue secrecy of olive trees descends.
An old man's dark song dies away.

One golden boat
rocks back and forth, Elis—your heart to the deserted sky.

2.

A sweet chiming ripples in Elis's breast
at evening
when his head sinks into the black pillow.

The shadow of the hunted
bleeds in peace in the barbed thicket.

A brown tree stands cloistered there,
its blue fruit falling away.

Signs and stars
go under, breathless, in the night-pond.

Behind the hill winter has come.

By night
blue doves drink the glacial sweat
from Elis's crystal brow.

Forever whines by the blackened walls
God's forsaken wind.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Elis

1.
Vollkommen ist die Stille dieses goldenen Tags.
Unter alten Eichen
Erscheinst du, Elis, ein Ruhender mit runden Augen.

Ihre Bläue spiegelt den Schlummer der Liebenden.
An deinem Mund
Verstummen ihre rosigen Seufzer.

Am Abend zog der Fischer die schweren Netze ein.
Ein guter Hirt
Führt seine Herde am Waldsaum hin.
O! wie gerecht sind, Elis, alle deine Tage.

Leise sinkt
An kahlen Mauern des Ölbaums blaue Stille,
Erstirbt eines Greisen dunkler Gesang.

Ein goldener Kahn
Schaukelt, Elis, dein Herz am einsamen Himmel.

2.
Ein sanftes Glockenspiel tönt in Elis' Brust
Am Abend,
Da sein Haupt ins schwarze Kissen sinkt.

Ein blaues Wild
Blutet leise im Dornengestrüpp.

Ein brauner Baum steht abgeschieden da;

Seine blauen Früchte fielen von ihm.

Zeichen und Sterne
Versinken leise im Abendweiher.

Hinter dem Hügel ist es Winter geworden.

Blaue Tauben
Trinken nachts den eisigen Schweiß,
Der von Elis' kristallener Stirne rinnt.

Immer tönt
An schwarzen Mauern Gottes einsamer Wind.

Georg Trakl

Encounter

The stranger on the way - we look at each other

And our tired eyes ask:

What have you done with your life?

Be silent! Be silent! Leave all laments!

Already it becomes cooler around us,

The clouds dissolve in the vastnesses.

I think we shall ask more no longer

And nobody will escort us to the night.

Georg Trakl

En-Route

A scent of myrrh which roams in the twilight.

Plazas red and desolate sink in fume.

Bazaars circle and a golden ray flows

In old shops queerly and confused.

In the dishwater decay glows; and the wind

Evokes dully the agony of burnt gardens.

The possessed pursue golden dreams.

By windows dryads rest slender and dulcet.

The dream-addicted wander pined over by a wish.

Workers surge shimmering through a gate.

Steel towers glow upward at the edge of the sky.

O fairy tale barred gray in factories!

In the sinisterness an old man trips dollish

And a jingling sound of money laughs lasciviously.

A halo falls on that little girl

Who waits before the coffee house, soft and white.

O golden brilliance which she wakes in panes!

Sun-filled noise roars distantly and ecstatically.

A crooked writer smiles as if crazy

To the horizon which is frightened green by an uproar.

State coaches of crystal move on bridges,
Fruit barrows, hearse black and sallow,
The canal swarms with bright steamboats,
Concerts sound. Green domes drizzle.
Public baths flicker in magic of light,
Execrated streets which one tears down.
A center of epidemics chaotically circles in ether,
A light from forests breaks through ruby dust.
Enchanted an opera house shines in the gray.
From alleys masks flood unforeseen,
And somewhere a fire still blazes furiously.
A small moth dances in the wind-roar.
Lodgings threaten full of squalor and stench.
Viola colors and chords move
Along cellar holes before the hungry.
A sweet child sits dead on a bank.

Georg Trakl

Evening Song

Evening Song

At evening, when we walk on dark trails,
our bleached selves appear before us.

Thirsty

we drink from the pond's white water,
the sweetness of our mournful childhood.

Weary, we rest beneath the elderberry
to behold the dawning gulls.

Spring clouds rise above the town's dark thoughts—
mute, the monks' nobler days.

As I took your tiny hands
your round eyes gently broke upon me.
This was long ago.

And yet, when darker songs descend upon the soul,
you appear—a whiteness—in your friend's autumn landscape.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Abendlied

Am Abend, wenn wir auf dunklen Pfaden gehn,
Erscheinen unsere bleichen Gestalten vor uns.

Wenn uns dürstet,
Trinken wir die weißen Wasser des Teichs,
Die Süße unserer traurigen Kindheit.

Erstorbene ruhen wir unterm Hollundergebüsch,
Schaun den grauen Möven zu.

Frühlingsgewölke steigen über die finstere Stadt,

Die der Mönche edlere Zeiten schweigt.

Da ich deine schmalen Hände nahm
Schlugst du leise die runden Augen auf,
Dieses ist lange her.

Doch wenn dunkler Wohllaut die Seele heimsucht,
Erscheinst du Weiße in des Freundes herbstlicher Landschaft.

Georg Trakl

Evening Walk

I go into the evening,
The wind jogs along and sings:
You are bewitched by every light,
O feel, what struggles with you!

A dead woman's voice that I loved
Speaks: poor is the fools' heart!
Forget, forget what clouds the soul!
The becoming shall be your pain!

Georg Trakl

Exhausting

Putrefaction of dream-created paradises

Blows around this mourning-filled, tired heart,

That drank only disgust out of all sweetness,

And bleeds to death in vulgar pain.

Now it beats after the rhythm of faded dances

To the cloudy melodies of despair,

Meanwhile the star-crowns of old hope

Wither on the long ago godless altar.

From the drunkenness of fragrances and wines

An extreme awake feeling of shame remained with you -

Yesterday in distorted reflection -

And everyday's gray grief crushes you.

Georg Trakl

Fairy Tale

Rockets drizzle in the yellow sunshine;

What a mask-like throng in the old park.

Landscapes are mirrored in the gray sky

And sometimes one hears the faun scream dreadfully.

Its golden grin appears garishly in the grove.

In cresses the bumblebees' thick of battle clamors,

A rider trots past on a sallow white horse.

The poplars glow in vague rows.

The little girl who drowned in the pond today

Rests as a saint in the bleak room

And a glimmer of clouds often blinds her.

The old people go into the hothouse dully and ill

And water their flowers which wither.

At the gate voices whisper dream-confused.

Georg Trakl

From The Still Days

So ghostly are these late days

Just like the look of sick people, sent here

In the light. However, the night shades the muted lament

Of their eyes, toward which they already turn.

They probably smile and recall their celebrations,

How one is moved after songs, half forgotten,

And searches words for a sad gesture,

Which already grows pale in silence unmeasured.

So the sun still plays around ill flowers

And lets them shiver in the thin, clear airs

With a death-cool delight.

The red forests whisper and darken,

And more death-nightly the woodpeckers' hammering echoes

Just like a reverberation from airless crypts.

Georg Trakl

Gipsy

The longing flames in their nightly glance
Toward that homeland they never find.
So they drift in an unfortunate fate,
That only melancholy may fathom completely.

The clouds lead their ways,
A migration of birds may sometimes escort them,
Until it loses their track in the evening,
And the wind sometimes carries an Ave of bells

In their camp's star-loneliness,
So that their songs swell more longing
And sob from inherited curse and suffering,
That no stars of hope softly illuminate.

Georg Trakl

Grodek

At evening the autumn woodlands ring
With deadly weapons. Over the golden plains
And lakes of blue, the sun
More darkly rolls. The night surrounds
Warriors dying and the wild lament
Of their fragmented mouths.
Yet silently there gather in the willow combe
Red clouds inhabited by an angry god,
Shed blood, and the chill of the moon.
All roads lead to black decay.
Under golden branching of the night and stars
A sister's shadow sways through the still grove
To greet the heroes' spirits, the bloodied heads.
And softly in the reeds Autumn's dark flutes resound.
O prouder mourning! - You brazen altars,
The spirit's hot flame is fed now by a tremendous pain:
The grandsons, unborn.

Georg Trakl

Helian

In the spirit's solitary hours
It is lovely to walk in the sun
Along the yellow walls of summer.
Quietly whisper the steps in the grass; yet always sleeps
The son of Pan in the grey marble.

At eventide on the terrace we got drunk on brown wine
The red peach glows under the foliage.
Tender sonata, joyous laughter.

Lovely is this silence of the night.
On the dark plains
We gather with shepherds and the white stars.

When autumn rises
The grove is a sight of sober clarity.
Along the red walls we loiter at ease
And the round eyes follow the flight of birds.
In the evening pale water gathers in the dregs of burial urns.

Heaven celebrates, sitting in bare branches.
In hallowed hands the yeoman carries bread and wine
And fruit ripens in the peace of a sunny chamber.

Oh how stern is the face of the beloved who have taken their passage.
Yet the soul is comforted in righteous meditation.

Overwhelming is the desolated garden's secrecy,
As the young novice has wreathed his brow with brown leaves,
His breath inhales icy gold.

The hands touch the antiquity of blueish water
Or in a cold night the sisters' white cheeks.

In quiet and harmony we walk along a suite of hospitable rooms
Into solitude and the rustling of maple trees,
Where, perhaps, the thrush still sings.

Beautiful is man and emerging from the dark

He marvels as he moves his arms and legs,
And his eyes quietly roll in purple cavities.

At suppertime a stranger loses himself in November's black destitution;
Under brittle branches he follows a wall covered under leprosy.
Once the holy brother went here,
Engrossed in the tender music of his madness.

Oh how lonely settles the evening-wind.
Dying away a man's head droops in the dark of the olive tree.

How shattering is the decline of a family.
This is the hour when the seer's eyes are filled
With gold as he beholds the stars.

The evening's descend has muffled the belfry's knell in silence;
Among black walls in the public place,
A dead soldier calls for a prayer.

Like a pale angel
The son enters his ancestor's empty house.

The sisters have traveled far to the pale ancients.
At night, returned from their mournful pilgrimage,
He found them asleep under the columns of the hallway.

Oh hair stained with dung and worms
As his silver feet stepped on it
And on those who died in echoing rooms.

Oh you palms under midnight's burning rain,
When the servants flogged those tender eyes with nettles,
The hollyhock's early fruit
Beheld your empty grave in wonder.

Fading moons sail quietly
Over the sheets of the feverish lad,
Into the silence of winter.

At the bank of Kidron a great mind is lost in musing,
Under a tree, the tender cedar,
Stretched out under the father's blue eyebrows,

Where a shepherd drives his flock to pastures at night.

Or there are screams which escape the sleep;
When an iron angel approaches man in the grove,
The holy man's flesh melts over burning coals.

Purple wine climbs about the mud-cottage,
Sheaves of faded corn sing;
The buzz of bees; the crane's flight.
In the evening the souls of the resurrected gather on rocky paths.

Lepers behold their image in dark water;
Or they lift the hemp of their dung soiled attire,
And weep to the soothing wind, as it drifts down from the rosy hill.

Slender maidens grope their way through the narrow lanes of night;
They hope for the gracious shepherd.
Tenderly, songs ring out from the huts on weekend.

Let the song pay homage to the boy,
To his madness to his white eyebrows and to his passage,
To the decaying corpse, who opened his blue eyes.
Oh how sad is this reunion.

The stairs of madness in black apartments –
The matriarch's shadow emerged under the open door
When Helian's soul beheld his image in a rosy mirror;
And from his brow bled snow and leprosy.

The walls extinguished the stars
And the white effigies of light.

From the carpet rise skeletons, escaping their graves,
Fallen crosses sit silent on the hill,
The night's purple wind is sweet with frankincense.

Oh ye broken eyes over black gaping jaws,
When the grandson in the solitude
Of his tender madness muses over a darker ending,
The blue eyelids of the silent god sink upon him.

Hohenburg

Hohenburg

The house is empty. Fall in the room.
The moon's lone glow
and a birth at the edge of the dawning woods.

Forever your thoughts turn to the ashen face of your people,
removed from the bedlam of time.
Over the dreamer green branches bend eagerly,

cross and evening.
With bruised arms his star envelops the Song of Songs.
Towards the unpeopled window it ascends.

Thus the stranger shudders in blackness,
as his eyelids gently recede over
the far-off one. The silver voice of the wind in the hallway.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Hohenburg

Es ist niemand im Haus. Herbst in Zimmern;
Mondeshelle Sonate
Und das Erwachen am Saum des dämmernden Walds.

Immer denkst du das weiße Antlitz des Menschen
Ferne dem Getümmel der Zeit;
Über ein Träumendes neigt sich gerne grünes Gezweig,

Kreuz und Abend;
Umfängt den Tönenden mit purpurnen Armen sein Stern,
Der zu unbewohnten Fenstern hinaufsteigt.

Also zittert im Dunkel der Fremdling,
Da er leise die Lieder über ein Menschliches aufhebt,
Das ferne ist; die Silberstimme des Windes im Hausflur.

Georg Trakl

Homecoming

When the evening breathes golden rest
Forest and dark meadow before which
Man is a looker,
A shepherd, dwelling in the flocks' dusking stillness,
The patience of the red beeches;
So clearly since it has become autumn. By the hill
The lonely one listens to the flight of birds,
To dark meaning and the shadows of the dead
Have gathered more seriously around him;
Cool mignonette scent fulfills him with shudders,
The huts of the villagers the elder,
Where in former times the child dwelled.
Memory, buried hope
Is preserved by these brown rafters,
Over which dahlias hang
So that the hands strive after them,
In the brown garden the shimmering step
Forbidden loving, dark year,
That from blue eyelids the tears
Of the stranger fell irresistibly.

From brown treetops dew drips,
When that one, a blue deer, awakes on the hill,
Listening to the loud calls of the fishermen
By the evening pond
To the amorphous cry of the bats;
But in golden stillness
The drunken heart dwells
Full of its noble death.

Georg Trakl

Hour Of Grief

Blackish the step follows the gleaming moon

In the autumnal garden,

The immense night sinks by the freezing wall.

O, the thorny hour of grief.

Silverly the candlestick of the lonely one flickers in the dusking room,

Dying away, when that one thinks a darkness

And bends the stony head over the perishable,

Drunk from wine and nightly harmonies.

The ear always follows

The soft lament of the blackbird in the hazel bushes.

Dark rosary hour. Who are you

Lonesome flute,

Forehead, bent over sinister times freezing.

Georg Trakl

I

A paleness, resting in the shadow of decayed staircases -

It rises at night in silver guise

And wanders under the cloister.

In coolness of a tree and without pain

The perfect breathes

And does not need the autumnal stars -

Thorns over which the other falls.

Lovers ponder long after

His sad fall.

Georg Trakl

In Darkness

In Darkness

In blue spring the soul falls silent.
Under dripping branches the evening
lovers bowed their foreheads and shivered.

O the corroding cross. In sunless communion
man and woman awoke to each other.
By the barren wall
the deserted one wanders with his shifting stars.

Over the moonstricken paths in the woods
the wilderness of forgotten hunts
sinks ever deeper. Your grief rises up
over the crumbling rock face in mutiny.

Translated by Eric Plattner

.....

Im Dunkel

Es schweigt die Seele den blauen Frühling.
Unter feuchtem Abendgezweig
Sank in Schauern die Stirne den Liebenden.

O das grünende Kreuz. In dunklem Gespräch
Erkannten sich Mann und Weib.
An kahler Mauer
Wandelt in seinen Gestirnen der Einsame.

Über die mondbeglänzten Wege des Walds
Sank die Wildnis
Vergessener Jagden; Blick der Bläue
Aus verfallenen Felsen bricht.

Georg Trakl

In Hellbrun

Once more following the blue grief of the evening
Down the hill, to the springtime ?shpond—
As if the shadows of those dead for a long time were
hovering above,
The shadows of church dignitaries, of noble ladies—
Their ?owers bloom so soon, the earnest violets
In the earth at evening, and the clear water washes
From the blue spring. The oaks turn green
In such a ghostly way over the forgotten footsteps
of the dead
The golden clouds over the ?shpond.

Georg Trakl

In Red Foliage Full Of Guitars

In Red Foliage Full of Guitars

In red foliage full of guitars
the girls' yellow hair waves
at the fence, where sunflowers persist.
A golden chariot steers through the clouds.

In brown shadows the ancients
grow dumb, and dumbly entwine.
The orphaned ones sing vespers—sweetly.
Flies hum in the yellow haze.

In the stream the women wash.
The hung linen undulates.
The little girl, long dead to me,
returns throughout the dawning night.

From the tender sky sparrows fling themselves
into green holes pregnant with rot.
The hungry are filled
with the ghost of bread and spices.

Translated by Eric Plattner

.....
Im roten Laubwerk voll Gitarren

Im roten Laubwerk voll Gitarren
Der Mädchen gelbe Haare wehen
Am Zaun, wo Sonnenblumen stehen.
Durch Wolken fährt ein goldner Karren.

In brauner Schatten Ruh verstummen
Die Alten, die sich blöd umschlingen.
Die Waisen süß zur Vesper singen.
In gelben Dünsten Fliegen summen.

Am Bache waschen noch die Frauen.

Die aufgehängten Linnen wallen.
Die Kleine, die mir lang gefallen,
Kommt wieder durch das Abendgrauen.

Vom lauen Himmel Spatzen stürzen
In grüne Löcher voll Verwesung.
Dem Hungrigen täuscht vor Genesung
Ein Duft von Brot und herben Würzen.

Georg Trakl

In The East

Like the wild organs of the winter storm
Is the people gloomy rage,
The purple billow of battle
Of stars leaf-stripped.
With broken brows, silvery arms
The night beckons to dying soldiers.
In the autumnal ash-tree's shade
The ghosts of the killed are sighing.

Thorny wilderness surrounds the town.
From steps that bleeds the moon
Drives off dumbfounded women.
Wild wolves have burst through the gate.

Georg Trakl

In The Evening

A blue brook, path and evening along decayed huts.

Behind dark shrubbery children play with blue and red balls;

Some swap the forehead and the hands rot in the brown foliage.

In bony stillness the heart of the lonely one shines,

A small boat rocks on blackish waters.

Through dark woods hair and laughter of brown maids flutters.

The shadows of the old people cross the flight of a small bird;

Mystery of blue flowers on their temples.

Others sway on black benches in the evening wind.

Golden sighs quietly expire in the bleak branches

Of the chestnut; a sound of dark cymbals of summer,

When the strangeress appears on the decayed staircase.

Georg Trakl

In The Moonlight

An army of vermin, mice, rats

Romps in the hallway which shimmers in the moonlight.

The wind cries out as if in dream and whimpers.

At the window the shadows of small leaves quiver.

Occasionally birds twitter in the branches

And spiders creep on the bleak walls.

Through empty ways pale specks shudder.

A quaint silence dwells in the house.

In the courtyard lights seem to float

On putrid wood, decayed junk.

Then a star glistens in a black pool.

Statues still stand there from old times.

One still sees contours from other things

And a writing, faded on rotten signs,

Also perhaps the colors of cheerful pictures:

Angels singing before Mary's throne.

Georg Trakl

In The Spring

In the Spring

Your black footsteps whisper into the snow.
In the shadows of trees
your rosy eyelids flutter out of love.

Forever follow the dark calls of the mariner,
the night and the stars.
And the oars pulse faintly.

Before long the violets bloom
by the crumbling wall.
The temple of the deserted corrodes in their silence.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Im Frühling

Leise sank von dunklen Schritten der Schnee,
Im Schatten des Baums
Heben die rosigen Lider Liebende.

Immer folgt den dunklen Rufen der Schiffer
Stern und Nacht;
Und die Ruder schlagen leise im Takt.

Balde an verfallener Mauer blühen
Die Veilchen,
Ergrünt so stille die Schläfe des Einsamen.

Georg Trakl

In Venice

In Venice

Stillness in the passing night of the room.
Seven silver branches flicker
before the whispered song
of the deserted,
the mystic flock of roses.

A swarm of flies, black as smoke,
swallows up the stony space,
and from the anguish
of golden days the head
of the homeless child gazes back.

The frozen sea fills with night.
The one star and the dark journey
have vanished in the ditch.
Child, your ailing smile
haunts me, wordless, in sleep.

Translated by Eric Plattner

.....

In Venedig

Stille in nächtigem Zimmer
Silbern flackert der Leuchter
Vor dem singenden Odem
Des Einsamen;
Zaubrisches Rosengewölk.

Schwärzlicher Fliegenschwarm
Verdunkelt den steinernen Raum
Und es starrt von der Qual
Des goldenen Tags das Haupt
Des Heimatlosen.

Reglos nachtet das Meer.

Stern und schwärzliche Fahrt
Entschwand am Kanal.
Kind, dein kränkliches Lächeln
Folgte mir leise im Schlaf.

Georg Trakl

In Wine Country

The sun paints courtyard and walls with autumn,

The fruit stacked in heaps all around,

Before them poor children cower.

A gust thins out old linden-trees.

Through the gate a golden shower rains

And the women blessed with child

Tiredly rest on rotten benches.

Drunkards swing glasses and jugs.

A hoodlum lets his fiddle sound

And smocks swell lustfully in the dance.

Roughly brown bodies embrace.

From windows empty eyes gaze.

Stench rises from the fountain's mirror.

And black, decayed, departed

The hills of vines dusk all around.

A migration of birds glides swiftly southwards.

Georg Trakl

Justice

Huts of childhood are in autumn,

Decayed hamlet; dark shapes,

Singing mothers in the evening wind;

At windows Angelus and hands fold.

Still birth; on green ground

Mystery and stillness of blue flowers.

Insanity opens the purple mouth:

Dies irae - grave and stillness.

Groping along green thorns;

In the sleep: blood-vomit, hunger and laughter;

Fire in the village, awakening in the green;

Fear and swaying on gurgling boat.

Or in wooden staircase again

The white shadow of the strange woman leans.-

Poor sinner longing away in the blueness

Left his putrefaction behind for lilies and rats.

Georg Trakl

Kaspar Hauser's Song

He truly loved the purple sun, descending from the hills,
The ways through the woods, the singing blackbird
And the joys of green.

Sombre was his dwelling in the shadows of the tree
And his face undefiled.
God, a tender flame, spoke to his heart:
Oh son of man!

Silently his step turned to the city in the evening;
A mysterious complaint fell from his lips:
"I shall become a horseman."

But bush and beast did follow his ways
To the pale people's house and garden at dusk,
And his murderer sought after him.

Spring and summer and – oh so beautiful – the fall
Of the righteous. His silent steps
Passed by the dark rooms of the dreamers.

At night he and his star dwelled alone.
He saw the snow fall on bare branches
And in the murky doorway the assassin's shadow.
Silvern sank the unborne's head.

Georg Trakl

Klage

Dreamless sleep - the dusky Eagles
nightlong rush about my head,
man's golden image drowned
in timeless icy tides. On jagged reefs
his purpling body. Dark
echoes sound above the seas.

Stormy sadness' sister, see
our lonely skiff sunk down
by starry skies:
the silent face of night.

Translated by Jurek Kirakowski

Anonymous submission.

Georg Trakl

Lament

Sleep and death, the dusky eagles
Around this head swoop all night long;
Eternity's icy wave
Would swallow the golden image
Of man; against horrible reefs
His purple body is shattered.
And the dark voice laments
Over the sea.
Sister of stormy sadness,
Look a timid dinghy goes down
Under stars,
The silent face of the night.

Georg Trakl

Landscape

Landscape

September evening. The somber calls of the herdsmen float
across the dimming village. Molten metal sparks in the blacksmith's.
A massive horse rears darkly back. To the fervor of its blazing nostrils
the hyacinth curls of the servant girl cling.
At the edge of the woods a faint cry stiffens the deer's back,
and the yellow flowers of autumn
bend wordlessly over the pond's blue countenance.
The tree was consumed in red flame. Up flutter the dark faces of bats.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Landschaft

Septemberabend; traurig tönen die dunklen Rufe der Hirten
Durch das dämmernde Dorf; Feuer sprüht in der Schmiede.
Gewaltig bäumt sich ein schwarzes Pferd; die hyazinthenen Locken der Magd
Haschen nach der Inbrunst seiner purpurnen Nüstern.
Leise erstarrt am Saum des Waldes der Schrei der Hirschkuh
Und die gelben Blumen des Herbstes
Neigen sich sprachlos über das blaue Antlitz des Teichs.
In roter Flamme verbrannte ein Baum; aufflattern mit dunklen Gesichtern die
Fledermäuse.

Georg Trakl

Luminous Hour

Far on the hill flute-sounds.

Fauns lurk in the marshes,

Where sluggishly the slender nymphs

Rest hidden in reed and seaweed.

In the pond's mirror-glass

Golden butterflies ecstacize,

Quietly an animal with two backs

Moves in the velvety grass.

Sobbing in the birch grove

Orpheus breathes tender love-babble,

Softly and jokingly the nightingales

Join in his song.

Phoebus a flame glows

Still on Aphrodite's mouth,

And drizzled from ambergris scent -

The hour reddens darkly.

Georg Trakl

Mankind

Mankind

Face to face with the fire-abyss,
thundering hooves, the doomed brows of warriors,
across the blood-fog footsteps echo, the iron death knells,
surrender, black in blue brains:
here Eve's cloud, in pursuit, the passing over and bleeding coins.
Light breaks through the malignancy, his last meal.
A swelling silence dwells in bread and wine,
and the twelve are cleaved.
All night they wail in their dreams beneath the olive branches.
Saint Thomas plunges his hand into the heart of the wound.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Menschheit

Menschheit vor Feuerschlünden aufgestellt,
Ein Trommelwirbel, dunkler Krieger Stirnen,
Schritte durch Blutnebel; schwarzes Eisen schellt,
Verzweiflung, Nacht in traurigen Gehirnen:
Hier Evas Schatten, Jagd und rotes Geld.
Gewölk, das Licht durchbricht, das Abendmahl.
Es wohnt in Brot und Wein ein sanftes Schweigen
Und jene sind versammelt zwölf an Zahl.
Nachts schrein im Schlaf sie unter Ölbaumzweigen;
Sankt Thomas taucht die Hand ins Wundenmal.

Georg Trakl

Melancholy

The blue soul has mutely closed,
In the open window the brown forest sinks,
The stillness of dark animals; in the valley
The mill grinds, by the footbridge clouds rest outpoured,
The golden strangers. A procession of steeds
Gallops red in the village. The garden brown and cold.
The aster freezes, so delicately painted on the fence
The sunflower's gold almost flown away.
The stumpets' voices; dew is poured out
On the hard grass and stars white and cold.
See death painted in the dear shadow,
Every countenance full of tears and closed.

Georg Trakl

Melusine

At my windows the night weeps -
The night is mute, the wind probably weeps,
The wind, like a lost child -
What is it that makes him weep so?
O poor Melusine!

Like fire her hair blows in the storm,
Like fire passing clouds, and laments -
There for you, you poor maiden,
My heart speaks a still night prayer!
O poor Melusine!

Georg Trakl

Metamorphosis

An eternal light glows dark-red,

A heart so red, in sin's pressure!

Hail, o Mary!

Your pale effigy has blossomed

And your mantled body glows,

O woman, Mary!

In sweet tortures your lap burns,

Then your eye smiles painfully and largely,

O mother, Mary!

Georg Trakl

Mourning

The dark eagles, sleep and death,
Rustle all night around my head:
The golden statue of man
Is swallowed by the icy comber
Of eternity. On the frightening reef
The purple remains go to pieces,
And the dark voice mourns
Over the sea.
Sister in my wild despair
Look, a precarious skiff is sinking
Under the stars,
The face of night whose voice is fading.

Georg Trakl

My Heart At Evening

Toward evening you hear the cry of the bats.

Two black horses bound in the pasture,

The red maple rustles,

The walker along the road sees ahead the small
tavern.

Nuts and young wine taste delicious,

Delicious: to stagger drunk into the darkening woods.

Village bells, painful to hear, echo through the black
fir branches,

Dew forms on the face.

Georg Trakl

Nature Theater

Now I step through the slender gate!
Promiscuous step in the avenues
Drifts away and quiet waft of words
From people, passersby.

I stand before a green stage!
Begin, begin again, you play
Of lost days, without crime and punishment,
Ghostly only, strange and cool!

To the melody of the early days
I see myself going up there again,
A child whose quiet, forgotten lament
I see weeping, strange to my understanding.

You wondering face turned to the evening,
Was I once this, that now makes me weep,
Like your still unfinished gestures
That point to the night mutely and shuddering.

Georg Trakl

Night Song

Over nocturnal dark floods
I sing my sad songs,
Songs which bleed like wounds.
However, no heart carries them to me again
Through the darkness.

Only the nocturnal dark floods
Rush, sob my songs,
Songs which bleed from wounds,
They carry them to my heart again
Through the darkness.

Georg Trakl

Nocturnal Lament

The night has risen over the rumpled forehead

With beautiful stars

By the hill, where you lay petrified by pain,

A wild animal in the garden rankled your heart.

A fiery angel,

You lie with broken breast on stony field,

Or in the forest a nocturnal bird's

Unending lament

Always repeating in thorny night branches.

Georg Trakl

On The Death Of An Old Woman

Often I listen full of horror at the door

And when I arrive it seems to me that someone fled,

And her eyes see past me

Dreamily, as if they would see me elsewhere.

Thus she sits completely stooped in herself and listens

And seems far-off from the things around her,

However, she trembles when noise rushes at the window,

And then cries still, just like an anxious child.

And caresses her white hair with tired hand

And asks with paled glance: Must I go already?

And has a crazy fever: The little light in the altar

Went out! Where do you go? What has happened?

Georg Trakl

On The Eastern Front

The ominous anger of masses of men
Is like the wild organ of the winter storm,
The purple surge of battle,
Leaﬂess stars.
With broken eyebrows and silver arms
The night waves to dying soldiers.
In the shade of the ash tree of autumn
The souls of the slain are sighing.
A thorny desert surrounds the city.
The moon chases the shocked women
From the bleeding stairways.
Wild wolves have broken through the door

Georg Trakl

On The Edge Of An Old Water

Dark interpretation of the water: stars in the mouth of the night,

Sighing in black pillows the rosy shadow of man,

Redness of autumn, the rustling of the maple in the old park,

Chamber concerts which fade on decayed stairs.

Georg Trakl

On The Edge Of An Old Well

Dark interpretation of the water: broken forehead in the mouth of the night,

The boy's bluish shadow sighing in black pillows,

The rustling of the maple, steps in the old park,

Chamber concerts which fade on a spiral staircase,

Perhaps a moon which quietly climbs the steps.

The gentle voices of the nuns in the decayed church,

A blue tabernacle which slowly opens,

Stars which fall on your bony hands,

Perhaps a walk through abandoned rooms,

The blue tone of the flute in the hazel bushes - very quietly.

Georg Trakl

On The Marshy Pastures

A man who walks in the black wind; the dry reeds
rustle quietly
Through the silence of the marshy pastures. In
the grey skies
A migration of wild birds move in ranks
Catty-corner over dark waters.
Insurgence. In the collapsing houses
Decay is uttering out with black wings;
Crippled-up birches breathe heavily in the wind.
Evening in empty roadhouses. The longing for home
settles about
The delicate despair of the grazing flocks,
Vision of the night: toads plunge from silver waters.

Georg Trakl

Perfection

My brother, let us go more silent!

The streets darken placidly.

In the distance flags probably gleam and wave,

However, brother, let us be alone -

And rest looking at heaven,

Softly and wholly prepared in the heart,

And oblivious to past deed.

My brother, see, the world is wide!

Outdoors the wind plays with clouds,

They come like us, from somewhere.

Let us be like the flowers are,

So poor, my brother, so beautiful and glad!

Georg Trakl

Please

Send your flames to the spirit, when it endures,

Imprisoned sighs in black midnight,

Near the spring hill, when the gentle lamb

Offers itself, the deepest pain endures;

O love that rises in the heart

Like a round light and endures a soft shape,

So that this earthen vessel breaks.

Georg Trakl

Poem

A pious song came to me here:

You simple heart, you holy blood,

O take from me such an evil fervor!

There it was heard and laments no more!

My heart is heavy of every sin

And is exhausted in evil fervor,

And does not plead to the holy blood,

And is so mute and empty of tears.

Georg Trakl

Psalm

It is a light, that the wind has extinguished.
It is a pub on the heath, that a drunk departs in the afternoon.
It is a vineyard, charred and black with holes full of spiders.
It is a space, that they have white-limed with milk.
The madman has died. It is a South Sea island,
Receiving the Sun-God. One makes the drums roar.
The men perform warlike dances.
The women sway their hips in creeping vines and fire-flowers,
Whenever the ocean sings. O our lost Paradise.

The nymphs have departed the golden woods.
One buries the stranger. Then arises a flicker-rain.
The son of Pan appears in the form of an earth-laborer,
Who sleeps away the meridian at the edge of the glowing asphalt.
It is little girls in a courtyard, in little dresses full of heart-rending poverty!
It is rooms, filled with Accords and Sonatas.
It is shadows, which embrace each other before a blinded mirror.
At the windows of the hospital, the healing warm themselves.
A white steamer carries bloody contagia up the canal.

The strange sister appears again in someone's evil dreams.
Resting in the hazelbush, she plays with his stars.
The student, perhaps a doppelganger, stares long after her from the window.
Behind him stands his dead brother, or he comes down the old spiral stairs.
In the darkness of brown chestnuts, the figure of the young novice.
The garden is in evening. The bats flit around inside the walls of the monastery.
The children of the caretaker cease their playing and seek the gold of the heavens.
Closing accords of a quartett. The little blind girl runs trembling through the tree-lined street.
And later touches her shadow along cold walls, surrounded by fairy tales and holy legends.

It is an empty boat, that drives at evening down the black canal.
In the bleakness of the old asylum, human ruins come apart.
The dead orphans lie at the garden wall.
From gray rooms tread angels with shit-spattered wings.
Worms drip from their yellowed eyelids.
The square before the church is obscure and silent, as in the days of childhood.

Earlier lives glide past upon silvery soles
And the shadows of the damned climb down to the sighing waters.
In his grave, the white-magician plays with his snakes.

Silent above the place of the skull, open God's golden eyes.

Georg Trakl

Psalm

Stillness; as if blind people sank down by autumnal wall,

Listening with rotten temples to the flight of the ravens;

Golden stillness of autumn, the countenance of the father in the flickering sun

At evening the old village decays in the peace of brown oaks,

The red hammering of the smithy, a pounding heart.

Stillness; in slow hands the maid hides the hyacinthine forehead

Under fluttering sunflowers. Fear and silence

Of extinguishing eyes fulfills the dusking room, the halting steps

Of old women, the escape of the purple mouth which slowly expires in the darkness.

Taciturn evening in vine. From the low rafters

A nocturnal moth fell, nymph buried into bluish sleep.

In the courtyard the farm boy slaughters a lamb, the sweet smell of the blood

Clouds our foreheads, the dark coolness of the fountain.

The gloom of dying asters regrets, golden voices in the wind.

When it becomes night you look at me from moldered eyes,

In blue stillness your cheeks decayed to dust.

So quietly a weed's fire expires, the black hamlet in the ground falls silent

As if the cross climbed down the blue hill of Calvary,

The silent earth ejected its dead.

Quaint Spring

Probably around the deep midday,

I lay on an old stone,

Before me in quaint dress

Three angels stood in the sunshine.

O ominous spring year!

In the acre the last snow melted,

And the birch's hair hung quivering

In the cold, clear lake.

From the sky a blue ribbon blew,

And beautifully a cloud flowed within,

Facing it, I lay dreaming -

The angels kneeled in sunshine.

Loudly a bird sang marvelous stories,

And at once I could understand it:

Still before your first desire is satisfied,

You must go die, must go die!

Georg Trakl

Remnant

O spiritual reunion

In old autumn.

Yellow roses

Defoliated by the garden fence,

A great pain melted

To a dark tear,

O sister!

So still the golden day ends.

Georg Trakl

Rondeau

Gone and passed is the gold of day,
And the evening's brown and blue:
Silenced the shepherd's tender flute
And the evening's brown and blue
Gone and passed as is the gold of day.

Georg Trakl

Rondel

Rondel

The day's gold is consumed,
The evening's brown and blue:
The herders' flutes swell then die
The evening's blue and brown
The day's gold is consumed.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Rondel

Verflossen ist das Gold der Tage,
Des Abends braun und blaue Farben:
Des Hirten sanfte Flöten starben
Des Abends blau und braune Farben
Verflossen ist das Gold der Tage.

Georg Trakl

Sabbath

A whiff of feverish poisonous plants
Makes me dream in moony dusks,
And quietly I feel entwined, embraced,
And see like a sabbath of insane witches

Blood-colored blossoms in the mirrors' brightness
Pressing flaming prurience from my heart,
And their lips experienced in all arts
Swell furiously near my drunken throat.

Pestilence colored flowers of tropical beaches,
Offer her chalices to my lips,
Cloudy drool-fountains of nauseating tortures.

And one gobbles - o raving Maenad -
My flesh, drooped from the sultry vapors,
And ecstaticized in pain by terrible prurience.

Georg Trakl

Season

Ruby-veins crept into the foliage.

Then the pond was calm and wide.

By the forest's edge brightly scattered

Bluish speckles and brown dust lay.

A fisherman drew in his nets.

Then dusk came over the field.

But, a yard shined still palely illuminated

And maids brought fruit and wine.

Distantly a shepherd's song died after.

Then huts stood bleak and strange.

The forest in gray shroud

Evoked sad memory.

And overnight time became quiet

And an army of ravens flew

As if in black holes in the forest and moved

Toward the town's very distant ringing.

Georg Trakl

Seven-Song Of Death

Seven-Song of Death

So dawns the blue face of spring. Beneath the suckling trees
a darkness strays into evening and demise.
The blackbird's feeble complaint is caught.
The stifled night appears, a wild bleeding,
dirge burrowing deeper into the hillside.

Flowering apple-branches sway in the damp air.
Tangles unhinge their silver,
death rattles over the night's fluttering eyes, clatter of stars,
the whispered song from the cradle.

Down to the blackened woods the sleeper, arisen, descended,
and the blue spring, it wheezed its way through the valley,
that those bleached eyelids receded
wordlessly over his snow-covered face.

And the moon hunted the red beast
from its cave.
And sighing, it died—the bitter lament of women.

The white stranger, luminous, raised his hands
to the one star.
In silence the dead abandon their ruined tenement.

O the blasted stature of man—forged out of loveless metals,
night and horror in the sunken woods
and the crematory wilderness of beasts,
the windless eye of the soul.

On the blackish barge he embarked down the shimmering currents,
plenary of purple stars, and the branches, budding green,
sank upon him,
poppy born from a silver cloud.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Siebengesang des Todes

Bläulich dämmert der Frühling; unter saugenden Bäumen
Wandert ein Dunkles in Abend und Untergang,
Lauschend der sanften Klage der Amsel.
Schweigend erscheint die Nacht, ein blutendes Wild,
Das langsam hinsinkt am Hügel.

In feuchter Luft schwankt blühendes Apfelgezweig,
Löst silbern sich Verschlungenes,
Hinsterbend aus nächtigen Augen; fallende Sterne;
Sanfter Gesang der Kindheit.

Erscheinender stieg der Schläfer den schwarzen Wald hinab,
Und es rauschte ein blauer Quell im Grund,
Daß jener leise die bleichen Lider aufhob
Über sein schneeiges Antlitz;

Und es jagte der Mond ein rotes Tier
Aus seiner Höhle;
Und es starb in Seufzern die dunkle Klage der Frauen.

Strahlender hob die Hände zu seinem Stern
Der weiße Fremdling;
Schweigend verläßt ein Totes das verfallene Haus.

O des Menschen verweste Gestalt: gefügt aus kalten Metallen,
Nacht und Schrecken versunkener Wälder
Und der sengenden Wildnis des Tiers;
Wendesstille der Seele.

Auf schwärzlichem Kahn fuhr jener schimmernde Ströme hinab,
Purpurner Sterne voll, und es sank
Friedlich das ergrünte Gezweig auf ihn,
Mohn aus silberner Wolke.

Georg Trakl

Silence

Over the forests the moon

Gleams pale, makes us dream,

The willow by the dark pond

Weeps soundlessly in the night.

A heart extinguishes - and placidly

The fogs flood and rise -

Silence, silence!

Georg Trakl

Sister's Garden

It's already cool, it's already late,

It's already autumn

In sister's garden, silent and still;

Her step has turned white.

A blackbird call lost and late,

It's already autumn

In sister's garden, silent and still;

An angel became.

Georg Trakl

Sleep

Not your dark poisons again,
White sleep!
This fantastically strange garden
Of trees in deepening twilight
Fills up with serpents, nightmoths,
Spiders, bats.
Approaching stranger!
Yo u r a b a n d o n e d s h a d o w
In the red of evening
Is a dark pirate ship
Of the salty oceans of confusion.
White birds from the outskirts of the night
Flutter out over the shuddering cities
Of stee

Georg Trakl

Song In The Night

I

Born from the shadow of a breath
We wander in abandonment
And are lost in the eternal,
Like victims ignorant wherefore they are consecrated.

Like beggars nothing is our own,
We fools at the locked gate.
As blind people we listen in the silence,
In which our whisper is lost.

We are the wanderers without destinations,
The clouds which the wind blows away,
The flowers shaking in death's coolness,
Which wait, until one mows them down.

II

So that the last torment becomes complete with me,
I do not defend you, you hostile dark powers.
You are the road to great stillness,
Upon which we stride in the coolest nights.

Your breath makes me burn louder,
Patience! The star dies down, the dreams glide
In those realms not named to us,
And which we may only walk along dreamlessly.

III

You dark night, you dark heart,
Who mirrors your holiest ground,
And your malice's last abysses?
The mask stares before our pain -

Before our pain, before our lust
The empty mask's stony laughter,
On it the earthen things broke,
And ourselves not deliberately.

And a strange enemy stands before us,
Who jeers, about which we struggle dying,
So that our songs sound cloudier
And what weeps in us remains dark.

IV

You are the wine that makes drunk,
Now I bleed in sweet dances
And must wreath my suffering with flowers!
So your deepest mind wills, o night!

I am the harp in your womb,
Now your dark song struggles
For the last pains in my heart
And makes me eternal, unreal.

V

Deep rest - o deep rest!
No devout bell rings,
You sweet mother of pain -
Your death-widened peace.

Close all wounds
With your cool, good hands -
So that inward they bleed to death -
Sweet mother of pain - you!

VI

O let my silence be your song!
What should the poor's whisper be to you,
Who is separated from life's gardens?
Let you be nameless in me -

Who is dreamlessly built up in me ,
Like a bell without tone,
Like my pain's sweet bride
And the drunken poppy of my sleepings.

VII

I heard flowers die in the ground
And the wells' drunken lament
And a song from the bell's mouth,

Night, and a whispered question;
And a heart - o death-wound,
Beyond its poor days.

VIII

The darkness extinguished me in silence,
I became a dead shadow in the day -
Then I stepped from the house of joy
Outside in the night.

Now a silence dwells in my heart,
That does not feel the dreary day -
And smiles up to you like thorns,
Night - forever and ever!

IX

O night, you mute gate before my suffering,
See this dark stigmata bleeding to death
And completely inclined the staggering chalice of agony!
O night, I am ready!

O night, you garden of oblivion
Around my poverty's closed-to-the-world shine,
The wine leaves wilt, the wreath of thorns wilts.
O come, you grand time!

X

My demon once laughed,
When I was a light in gleaming gardens,
And play and dance were my companions
And the wine of love, which makes drunk.

My demon once wept,
When I was a light in painful gardens
And humility was my companion,
Whose radiance shines on poverty's house.

However, now my demon neither weeps nor laughs,
I am a shadow of lost gardens
And my death-dark companion is
The silence of the empty midnight.

XI

My poor smile which struggled for you,
My sobbing song faded away in darkness.
Now my path comes to an end.

Let me tread in your cathedral
Like once, a fool, simple minded, devoutly,
And stand adoring mutely before you.
XII

You are in deep midnight
A dead shore at the silent sea,
A dead shore: Never more!
You are in deep midnight.

You are in deep midnight
The heaven in which you glowed as a star,
A heaven from which no more God blossoms.
You are in deep midnight.

You are in deep midnight
An unbegotten in sweet womb,
And never existing, unreal!
You are in deep midnight.

Georg Trakl

Song Of The Western Countries

Oh the nighttime beating of the soul's wings:
Herders of sheep once, we walked along the forests
that were growing dark,
And the red deer, the green ﬂower and the speaking
river followed us
In humility. Oh the old old note of the cricket,
Blood blooming on the altarstone,
And the cry of the lonely bird over the green silence
of the pool.
And you Crusades, and glowing punishment
Of the ﬂesh, purple fruits that fell to earth
In the garden at dusk, where young and holy men
walked,
Enlisted men of war now, waking up out of wounds
and dreams about stars.
Oh the soft cornﬂowers of the night.
And you long ages of tranquillity and golden
harvests,
When as peaceful monks we pressed out the purple
grapes;
And around us the hill and forest shone strangely.
The hunts for wild beasts, the castles, and at night,
the rest,
When man in his room sat thinking justice,
And in noiseless prayer fought for the living head
of God.
And this bitter hour of defeat,
When we behold a stony face in the black waters.
But radiating light, the lovers lift their silver eyelids:
They are one body. Incense streams from rosecolored pillows
And the sweet song of those risen from the dead

Georg Trakl

Springtime Of The Soul

Flowers scattered blue and white

Aspire cheerfully upon the ground.

Silverly the evening hour weaves,

Tepid wasteland, loneliness.

Life blooms dangerously now,

Sweet rest around cross and grave.

A bell rings its length of time,

Everything seems marvelous.

A willow softly hovers in the ether,

Here and there a flickering light.

Spring whispers and promises

And the damp ivy trembles.

Lushly bread and wine are green,

The organ sounds full of the power of wonder.

And around cross and passion

A ghostly light gleams.

O! How beautiful are these days.

Children go through the dusk;

Already the wind blows bluer.

Far away thrushes mock.

Georg Trakl

Summer

Summer

At evening in the woods
the cuckoos withhold their misery.
The cornstalks slant deeper into themselves,
the red poppies.

The blackening sky cracks open
over the hills.
The ancient song of the cricket
dies in the harbor.

It never stirs,
the crown of the chestnut.
Up the winding stairs
your dress rustles.

The candle's glowing silence
darkens the room.
Your silver hand
quenches it.

Tonight, no wind, no stars.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Sommer

Am Abend schweigt die Klage
Des Kuckucks im Wald.
Tiefer neigt sich das Korn,
Der rote Mohn.

Schwarzes Gewitter droht
Über dem Hügel.
Das alte Lied der Grille
Erstirbt im Feld.

Nimmer regt sich das Laub
Der Kastanie.
Auf der Wendeltreppe
Rauscht dein Kleid.

Stille leuchtet die Kerze
Im dunklen Zimmer;
Eine silberne Hand
Löschte sie aus;

Windstille, sternlose Nacht.

Georg Trakl

Summer Dawn

In the green ether suddenly a star flickers

And in the hospital they smell the morning.

The thrush trills crazily hidden in the bush

And cloister bells go dreamlike and far.

A statue towers in the square, lonely and slender

And in the courtyard red flowerbeds dawn.

The air around wooden balconies shakes with sultriness

And flies quietly reel around the stench.

The silver curtain there before the window hides

Entwined limbs, lips, tender breasts.

A hard hammering echoes from the tower scaffold

And the moon decays white in the firmament.

A ghostly dream-chord hovers away

And monks plunge from the church gates

And stride lost in the infinite.

In the sky a bright summit lifts.

Georg Trakl

Summer Sonata

Rotten fruits smell stunning.

Bushes and trees sound sunnily,

Swarms of black flies sing

On the brown forest glade.

In the pool's deep blueness

The light of weed-fires blazes.

Hear sudden love cries whirring

From yellow flower walls.

Butterflies chase themselves for a long time;

Drunkenly my shadow dances

On sultry meadows of thyme.

Brightly ecstacized blackbirds trill.

Clouds show stiff breasts,

And wreathed by foliage and berries

Under dark pines you see

A skeleton play the violin grinning.

Georg Trakl

Sunny Afternoon

A branch rocks me in the deep blue.

In the frolicking, autumnal leaf-tangle

Moths flicker, intoxicated and crazy.

Ax blows resound in the floodplain.

My mouth bites into red berries

And light and shadows sway in the foliage.

For hours golden dust falls

Crackling in the brown ground.

The thrush laughs from the bushes

And frolicking and loudly the autumnal leaf-tangle

Strikes together above me -

Fruits detach bright and heavy.

Georg Trakl

The Church

Painted angels guard the altars;
And rest and shadows; beam from blue eyes.
In incense-fumes dirty lyes swim.
Figures stagger woebegone in the emptiness.
In the black kneeler a smallish whore
With faded cheeks resembles the Madonna.
In golden beams wax figures hang;
Moon and sun circle the white-bearded God.
A shine of soft columns and skeletons.
The sweet voices of boys died at the chancel.
Very quietly rapt colors move,
A flowing red from Magdalene's lips.
A pregnant woman goes astray in grave dreams
Through this twilight full of masks, flags.
Her shadow crosses the saints' still ways,
The angel's rest in lime-washed rooms.

Georg Trakl

The Dark Valley

n pines a migration of crows flutters away

And green evening fogs rise

And like in dream a sound of violins

And maids run to the dance in the inn.

One hears laughter and shouts of drunkards,

A shower goes through old yews.

In deathly pale window panes

The shadows of the dancers scurry past.

It smells of wine and thyme

And lonely calling resounds through the forest.

The beggars listen on the steps

And begin to pray senselessly.

A deer bleeds to death in the hazel bushes.

Dully gigantic tree arcades sway,

Overloaded by icy clouds.

Lovers rest embraced by the pond.

Georg Trakl

The Dead Church

On dark benches they sit packed
And lift extinguished looks
To the cross. The lights gleam as if covered,
And cloudy and as if covered the head of wounds.
The incense rises from a golden vessel
To the height, dying songs
Exhale, and as if afflicted the room dusks
Uncertainly and sweet. The priest strides
Before the altar; but, he practices the pious rites
With tired spirit - a miserable player
Before bad prayers with numb hearts,
In soulless play with bread and wine.
The bell sounds! The lights flicker more cloudily -
And paler, as if covered the head of wounds!
The organ hisses! In dead hearts memory
shudders on! A bleeding countenance of pain
Wraps itself in darkness and the despair
Stares after him in the emptiness from many eyes.
And one who sounded like all voices,
Sobs - meanwhile the horror grew in the room,

The death-horror grew: Have mercy on us -

Lord!

Georg Trakl

The Deep Song

From deep night I was released.

My soul is astonished in immortality,

My soul listens over space and time

To the melody of eternity!

Not day and lust, not night and suffering

Is the melody of eternity,

And since I listened to eternity,

I feel no more lust and suffering!

Georg Trakl

The Dream Of An Afternoon

Be silent! the ancestor arrives;

And his step dusks away again.

Shadows float up and down -

Birches hanging in the window.

And on the old vine-hill

The round dance of fauns romps anew,

And the slender nymphs rise

Quietly from the fountain-mirror.

Hear! A far thunderstorm threatens.

Incense steams from dark cresses,

Moths celebrate silent masses

Before decayed flower trellises.

Georg Trakl

The Elegy

The girlfriend juggling with green flowers

Plays in moony gardens -

O! what glows behind yew hedges!

Golden mouth which stirs my lips,

And they ring out like the stars

Over the brook Kidron.

But the star-nebulas sink over the plain,

Dance wildly and unspeakably.

O! my girlfriend your lips

Pomegranate lips

Ripen on my crystalline mouth of shells.

Heavily the golden silence

Of the plain rests on us.

The blood of the children

Murdered by Herod

Stems to heaven.

Georg Trakl

The Evening

With the ghostly shapes of dead heroes
Moon, you ?ll
The growing silence of the forest,
Sickle-moon—
With the gentle embraces
Of lovers,
And with ghosts of famous ages
All around the crumbling rocks;
The moon shines with such blue light
Upon the city,
Where a decaying generation
Lives, cold and evil—
A dark future prepared
For the pale grandchild.
Yo u s h a d o w s s w a l l o w e d by the moon
Sighing upward in the empty goblet
Of the mountain lake

Georg Trakl

The Fall Of The Deserted

The Fall of the Deserted

The dark fall swells with fruit and abundance,
the yellowed glare of garish summer days.
A pure blueness steps from the ruined husk.
Shadows flap from the ancient myth.
The wine is pressed, benign silence
fraught with the whispered reply to murkier questions.

And here and there a cross on a barren hill.
In the red woods a flock loses itself.
The cloud wanders into the pond's mirror.
A peasant's stormless gesture is put to rest.
Below one's breath the evening wings of grief stir
the dry reeds of our rooftop, the black earth.

Before long the stars will nestle in his weary brow.
In the chilled room a mute humility turns back
and angels tread softly from the blue
eyes of lovers, that more gentle ache.
Reeds hiss. A bone-ridden horror dawns.
Black dew drips from the shaven fields.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Der Herbst des Einsamen

Der dunkle Herbst kehrt ein voll Frucht und Fülle,
Vergilbter Glanz von schönen Sommertagen.
Ein reines Blau tritt aus verfallener Hülle;
Der Flug der Vögel tönt von alten Sagen.
Gekeltert ist der Wein, die milde Stille
Erfüllt von leiser Antwort dunkler Fragen.

Und hier und dort ein Kreuz auf ödem Hügel;
Im roten Wald verliert sich eine Herde.
Die Wolke wandert übern Weiherspiegel;
Es ruht des Landmanns ruhige Geberde.

Sehr leise rührt des Abends blauer Flügel
Ein Dach von dürrem Stroh, die schwarze Erde.

Bald nisten Sterne in des Müden Brauen;
In kühle Stuben kehrt ein still Bescheiden
Und Engel treten leise aus den blauen
Augen der Liebenden, die sanfter leiden.
Es rauscht das Rohr; anfällt ein knöchern Grauen,
Wenn schwarz der Tau tropft von den kahlen Weiden.

Georg Trakl

The Heart

The wild heart grew white in the forest;
Dark anxiety
Of death, as when the gold
Died in the grey cloud.
An evening in November.
A crowd of needy women stood at the bare gate
Of the slaughterhouse;
Rotten meat and guts fell
Into every basket;
Horrible food.
The blue dove of the evening
Brought no forgiveness.
The dark cry of trumpets
Tr a v e l l e d i n t h e golden branches
Of the soaked elms,
A frayed ﬂag
Smoking with blood,
T o w h i c h a m a n l i s t e n s
In wild despair.
All your days of nobility, buried
In that red evening!
Out of the dark entrance hall
The golden shape
Of the young girl steps
Surrounded by the pale moon,
The prince's court of autumn,
Black ﬁr trees broken
In the night's storm,
The steep fortress.
O heart
Glittering above in the snowy cold

Georg Trakl

The Horror

I saw myself go through abandoned rooms.

- The stars danced crazily on blue ground,

And on the fields the dogs howled loud,

And in the treetops the foehn rummaged wildly.

But suddenly: stillness! Stuffy fever glow

Lets poisonous flowers bloom from my mouth,

From the branches like from a wound

Pale gleaming dew falls, and falls, and falls like blood.

From a mirror's deceitful emptiness

A countenance slowly lifts in the vagueness

Out of horror and darkness: Cain!

Very quietly the velvet curtains rustle,

Through the window the moon looks as if into emptiness,

There I am alone with my murderer.

Georg Trakl

The Mood Of Depression

You dark mouth inside me,
You are strong , shape
Composed of autumn cloud,
And golden evening stillness;
In the shadows thrown
By the broken pine trees
A mountain stream turns dark in the green light;
A little town
That piously dies away into brown pictures.
Now the black horses rear
In the foggy pasture.
I think of soldiers!
Down the hill, where the dying sun lumbers,
The laughing blood plunges,
Speechless
Under the oak trees! Oh the hopeless depression
Of an army; a blazing steel helmet
Fell with a clatter from purpled foreheads.
The autumn night comes down so coolly.
With her white habit glittering like the stars
Over the broken human bodies
The convent nurse is silent

Georg Trakl

The Rats

The Rats

The hunter's moon cuts straight through the farmyard.
From the roof's edge a shadow descends.
The window empties itself without a word.
Up the stairs, below one's breath, the rats cavort.

And the scuttling whistles here and there
and the grizzly whiff of your human stink
gives you away,
the ghost in the moonlight trembles through and through

and their bottomless greed tugs at you
and the houses and barns comply,
pregnant with corn and fruit.
In the dark out there the icy wind thrashes and weeps.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Die Ratten

In Hof scheint weiß der herbstliche Mond.
Vom Dachrand fallen phantastische Schatten.
Ein Schweigen in leeren Fenstern wohnt;
Da tauchen leise herauf die Ratten

Und huschen pfeifend hier und dort
Und ein gräulicher Dunsthauch wittert
Ihnen nach aus dem Abort,
Den geisterhaft der Mondschein durchzittert

Und sie keifen vor Gier wie toll
Und erfüllen Haus und Scheunen,
Die von Korn und Früchten voll.
Eisige Winde im Dunkel greinen.

The Ravens

The Ravens

Over the black crevice
at noon the ravens rush with rusty cries.
Their shadows touch the deer's back
and at times they loom in gnarled rest.

O how they derange the brown stillness,
in the one acre itself entranced,
like a woman married to grave premonitions,
and at times you can hear them bicker

about a corpse they sniffed-out somewhere,
and sharply they bend their flight towards north
and dwindle away like a funeral
march in the air, shivering with bliss.

Translated by Eric Plattner & Joseph Suglia

.....

Die Raben

Über den schwarzen Winkel hasten
Am Mittag die Raben mit hartem Schrei.
Ihr Schatten streift an der Hirschkuh vorbei
Und manchmal sieht man sie mürrisch rasten.

O wie sie die braune Stille stören,
In der ein Acker sich verzückt,
Wie ein Weib, das schwere Ahnung berückt,
Und manchmal kann man sie keifen hören

Um ein Aas, das sie irgendwo wittern,
Und plötzlich richten nach Nord sie den Flug
Und schwinden wie ein Leichenzug
In Lüften, die von Wollust zittern.

The Saint

When in the hell of self-created sufferings

Cruelly indecent pictures plague him -

No heart was ever so enchanted by lascivious prurience

Like his, and no heart so tormented

By God - he lifts gaunt hands,

Unredeemed, praying to heaven.

But, only agonizingly insatiable lust forms

His rutting, feverish prayer, its fervor

Surges there through mystical infinities.

And not so drunkenly the Evox

Of Dionysus sounds, as if his shout

Of torment forces fulfillment in deadly,

Furiously slobbering ecstasy: Exaudi me, o Mary!

Georg Trakl

The Shadow

Since I sat in the garden this morning -

The trees stood abloom in blue,

Full of thrush calls and trills -

I saw my shadow in the grass,

Immensely distorted, a fantastical animal,

That lay before me like a bad dream.

And I left and trembled very much,

Meanwhile a fountain sang in the blueness

And a bud leapt purple

And the animal went alongside.

Georg Trakl

The Sun

The Sun

Each day the yellow sun rises over the hill.
The woods glow, the dark beast,
Man: hunter or shepherd.

Blood-fish surface in the teeming pond.
Under the dome of heaven
the fisherman drifts in his blue boat.

The grapes ripen slowly, the corn.
When day slumps to a close,
Good and Evil are poised.

Night falls.
The wanderer lifts his heavy eyelids.
The sun breaks from the dark ditch.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Die Sonne

Täglich kommt die gelbe Sonne über den Hügel.
Schön ist der Wald, das dunkle Tier,
Der Mensch; Jäger oder Hirt.

Rötlich steigt im grünen Weiher der Fisch.
Unter dem runden Himmel
Fährt der Fischer leise im blauen Kahn.

Langsam reift die Traube, das Korn.
Wenn sich stille der Tag neigt,
Ist ein Gutes und Böses bereitet.

Wenn es Nacht wird,
Hebt der Wanderer leise die schweren Lider;
Sonne aus finsterner Schlucht bricht.

Georg Trakl

The Three Ponds In Hellbrunn

The First

Around the flowers the blowflies reel,
Around the pale flowers on dull flood,
Go away! Go away! The air burns!
In the depth the fervor of putrefaction glows!
The pasture weeps, the silence stares,
A sultry vapor brews on the waters.
Go away! Go away! It is the place
For black toads' disgusting rut.

The Second

Images of clouds, flowers, and people
Sing, sing, joyful world!
Smiling innocence reflects you -
Everything it likes becomes heavenly!
It amicably transforms darkness into light,
Distant things become near! O joyful you!
Sun, clouds, flowers and people
Breathe the peace of God in you.

The Third

The waters shimmer greenish-blue
And calmly the cypresses breathe,
The evening sounds bell-deep -
Then the depth grows immeasurably.
The moon rises, the night turns blue,
Blossoms in the reflection of the floods -
An enigmatic Sphinx face,
On which my heart wants to bleed to death.

Georg Trakl

Three Dreams

I

I think, I dreamed of falling leaves,

Of wide forests and dark lakes,

Of sad words' echo -

However, I could not understand their meaning.

I think, I dreamed of falling stars,

Of the weeping entreaty of pale eyes,

Of a smile's echo -

However, I could not understand its meaning.

Like falling leaves, like falling stars,

So I saw myself eternally coming and going,

A dream's immortal echo -

However, I could not understand its meaning.

II

In my soul's dark mirror

Are pictures of never-seen seas,

Of abandoned, tragic imaginary lands,

Dissolving into the blue, the thereabouts.

My soul bore blood-purple skies

Shone through by gigantic, crackling suns,

And strangely animated, shimmering gardens,

That steamed with muggy, deadly delights.

And my soul's dark fountain

Created pictures of immense nights,

Moved by nameless cantos

And breaths of eternal powers.

My soul shudders memory-dark,

As if it found itself in everything -

In unfathomable seas and nights,

And deep cantos, without beginning and end.

III

I saw many towns as if robbed by flame

And the times accumulated atrocity after atrocity,

And saw a lot of people putrefy to dust,

And everything float into oblivion.

I saw the gods fall to the night,

The holiest harps powerlessly smashed,

And kindled anew from putrefaction,
A new life swelling to the day.
Swelling to the day and again passing,
The eternally identical tragedy,
That thus we play without understanding,
And its insanity's nightly torture
Wreathes the soft glory of beauty
Like a smiling universe of thorns.

Georg Trakl

To A Woman Passer-By

I have once seen passing-by

A face rich with pain,

That seemed akin to me deeply and clandestinely,

So god-sent -

And passed and disappeared.

I have once seen passing-by

A face rich with pain,

That impressed me,

As if I had recognized one,

Who dreaming I once called beloved

In an existence that long ago disappeared.

Georg Trakl

To Angela

1

A lonely destiny in abandoned rooms

A soft insanity gropes on wallpapers.

Beds of geraniums flow by windows,

Daffodils also and more chaste in wasting away

As alabaster which gleams in the garden.

In blue veils India's mornings smile.

Their sweet incense scares away the stranger's worries,

Sleepless night by the pond because of Angela.

His pain rests hidden in an empty mask,

Thoughts which steal away blackly in the darkness.

The thrushes laugh all around from soft throats.

2

The fruits which round red in branches,-

Angela's lips which show her sweetness,

Like nymphs who bend over springs

In restful viewing for long hours,
The green-gold, long hours of the afternoon.

However, sometimes the spirit returns to fight and game.

In golden clouds a battle melee surges

And a hyacinth-like thing floats from mazy cresses.

A demon ponders thunderstorms in the sultriness,

In the grave's shadow of sad cypresses.

Then the first lightning falls from black flues.

3

The June willows' whisper in the evening;

A rain resounds long in flute sounds.

How motionless the birds hang in the gray!

And here Angela's rest in the dim branches;

The poet is this beauty's priest.

His mouth is flowed around by dark coolness.

In the valley fog softy rests poured out.

By the edge of the forest and gloom's shadow

A golden thing floats flowing from his mouth

By the edge of the forest and gloom's shadow.

Night embraces his drunken languishing.

Georg Trakl

To Angela (2nd Version)

1

A lonely destiny in abandoned rooms.

A soft insanity gropes on wallpapers,

On windows, reddish beds of geraniums,

Daffodils also and more chaste in wasting away

As alabaster which gleams in the garden.

In blue veils India 's mornings smile.

Their sweet incense scares away the stranger's worries,

Sleepless night by the pond because of Angela.

His pain rests hidden in an empty mask,

Thoughts which steal away blackly in the darkness.

The thrushes laugh all around from soft throats.

2

In the crossway surrounded by spiky grass

The mowers crouch tiredly and drunk with poppy,

The sky has sunk very heavy on them,

The milk and desolation of long midday bells.

And sometimes crows flutter up in the rye.
With fruit and horrors the hot earth grows.
In golden brilliance, o childish gesture
Of lust and its hyacinthine silence,
When bread and wine nurtured by the flesh of the earth
Show Sebastian in dream their spirituality.
Angela's spirit belongs to gentle clouds.

3

The fruits which round red in branches,
The angel's lips which show her sweetness,
Like nymphs who bend over springs
In restful viewing for long hours,
The green-gold, long hours of the afternoon.
However, sometimes the spirit returns to fight and game.
In golden clouds a battle melee of flies
Surges over putrefaction and abscesses.
A demon ponders thunderstorms in the sultriness,
In the grave's shadow of sad cypresses.
Then the first lightning falls from black flues.

4

The willow-copses' whisper in the evening;

A rain resounds in flute sounds.

Motionless birds hang in the evening!

And here Angela's rest in the dim branches;

The poet is this beauty's priest.

Painful pondering in the dark coolness.

Balmy puddles scent with poppy and incense

By the edge of the forest and gloom's shadow

Angela's joy and the games of the stars

The night embraces the languishing of lovers.

The edge of the forest and gloom's shadow.

Georg Trakl

To Johnanna

Often I hear your steps

Ring through the alley.

In the small brown garden

The blueness of your shadow.

In the dawning bower

I sat in silence with the wine.

A dropp of blood

Sank from your temple

Into the singing glass

Hour of unending gloom.

From stars a snowy wind

Blows through the foliage.

Any death, the night

The pale man suffers.

Your purple mouth

Dwells a wound in me.

As if I came from the green

Fir hills and legends

Of our homeland,

Which we long forgot -

Who are we? Blue lament

Of a mossy forest spring,

Where the violets

Secretly scent in spring.

A peaceful village in summer

Once sheltered the childhood

Of our race,

Dying off now at the evening-

Hill the white grandchildren

We dream the terror

Of our nightly blood

Shadows in stony city.

Georg Trakl

To Lucifer

Lend your flame to the spirit, glowing gloom;

Sighing the head rises into midnight,

At the greening spring hill; where before

A gentle lamb bled, endured the deepest

Pain; but the dark one follows the shadow

Of evil, or he lifts the moist wings

To the golden disk of the sun and a sound of bells

Convulses his pain-torn breast,

Wild hope; the sinisterness of flaming fall.

Georg Trakl

To The Silenced

Oh, the great city's madness when at nightfall
The crippled trees gape by the blackened wall,
The spirit of evil peers from a silver mask;
Lights with magnetic scourge drive off the stony night.
Oh, the sunken pealing of evening bells.

Whore who in her icy shivers sheds a still-born child.
With raving whips God's fury punishes brows possessed.
Purple pestilence, hunger that breaks green eyes.
Oh, the horrible laughter of gold.

But silent in dark caves a stiller humanity bleeds,
Out of hard metals moulds the redeeming head.

Georg Trakl

Towards Evening, My Heart

Towards Evening, My Heart

The screeching of bats at evening.
Two horses lope in the meadow.
The red maple shivers.
To the wanderer, a small tavern appears in the distance.
It is good to taste young wine and nuts.
It is good: to lurch, drunken, into the dawning woods.
Tolling, through the black tangle, the dolorous bells.
Dew drops on the face.

Translated by Eric Plattner

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Zu Abend mein Herz

Am Abend hört man den Schrei der Fledermäuse.
Zwei Rappen springen auf der Wiese.
Der rote Ahorn rauscht.
Dem Wanderer erscheint die kleine Schenke am Weg.
Herrlich schmecken junger Wein und Nüsse.
Herrlich: betrunken zu taumeln in dämmernden Wald.
Durch schwarzes Geäst tönen schmerzliche Glocken.
Auf das Gesicht tropft Tau.

Georg Trakl

Trumpets

Under the trimmed willows, where brown children
are playing
And leaves tumbling, the trumpets blow. A quaking
of cemeteries.
Banners of scarlet rattle through a sadness of maple
trees,
Riders along rye-#64257;elds, empty mills.
Or shepherds sing during the night, and stags step
delicately
Into the circle of their #64257;re, the grove's sorrow
immensely old,
Dancing, they loom up from one black wall;
Banners of scarlet, laughter, insanity, trumpets

Georg Trakl

Untitled

A carpet, into which the suffering landscape pales

Perhaps the Sea of Galilee, a boat in the gale

Golden things fall out of storm clouds

Insanity, that seizes the gentle human.

The old waters gurgle a blue laughter.

And sometimes a dark pit opens.

The possessed are reflected in cold metals

Drops of blood fall on glowing plates

And a countenance decays in black night.

Flags, which babble in sinister vaults.

Other things remind on the birds' flight

Over the gallows the crows' mystical signs

Coppery snakes sink in spiky grasses

In pillows of incense a smile whore-like and clever.

Good Friday's children stand blindly at fences

In the mirror of dark gutters full of rottenness

The sighing recovery of the dying

And angels who go through white eyes

From lids dimming golden redemption.

Untitled :Rosy Mirror

Rosy mirror: an ugly image

That appears in the black background,

Blood weeps from broken eyes

Blaspheming plays with dead snakes.

Snow runs through the staring shirt

Purple over the black face,

That breaks in heavy pieces

From planets, deceased and strange.

A spider appears in the black background

Lust, your countenance deceased and strange.

Blood runs through the staring shirt

Snow weeps from broken eyes.

Georg Trakl

Untitled: Figure Which Has Long Dwelt In The Coolness Of Sinister Stone

Figure which has long dwelt in the coolness of sinister stone

Opens the pale mouth sounding

Round owl's eyes - sounding gold.

Those found the cave of the forest decayed and empty

The shadow of a doe in the rotten branches

At the border of the spring the darkness of his childhood.

Long at the forest border a bird sings your decline

The anxious showers of your brown coat;

The shadow of the owl appears in the rotten branches.

Long at the forest border a bird sings your decline

The anxious showers of your blue coat

The shadow of the mother appears in the spiky grass.

Long at the forest border a bird sings your decline

The anxious showers of your black coat

The shadow of the black horse appears in the mirror of the spring.

Georg Trakl

Untitled: O The Dwelling

O the dwelling in the stillness of the dusking garden,

When the eyes of the sister round and dark opened in the brother,

The purple of their broken mouths

Melted in the coolness of the evening.

Heart-breaking hour.

September ripened the golden pear. Sweetness of incense

And the dahlia burns at the old fence

Say! where were we, when we passed by on small black boat

In the evening,

The crane passed over. The freezing arms

Held black embraced, and inside blood ran.

And around our temples moist blue. Poor little child.

Deeply a dark race ponders out of knowing eyes.

Georg Trakl

Untitled: The Blue Night

The blue night has softly risen on our foreheads.

Quietly our putrid hands touch

Sweet bride!

Our countenance became pale, moony pearls

Melted in green pond-ground.

Petrified ones, we contemplate our stars.

O painful! Culprits wander in the garden

The shadows in wild embrace,

So that tree and animal sank about them in immense anger.

Soft harmonies, when we ride

through the still night in crystalline waves

A rosy angel steps from the graves of the lovers.

Georg Trakl

Untitled: The Song Of The Spring Rain

The song of the spring rain is dark in the night,

Under the clouds the showers of rosy pear blossoms

Trickery of the heart, chant and insanity of the night.

Fiery angels who step from deceased eyes.

Georg Trakl

Untitled: The Stillness Of The Deceased Loves The Old Garden,

The stillness of the deceased loves the old garden,

The madwoman who dwelled in blue rooms,

In the evening the still shape appears in the window

She, however, closes the yellowed curtain -

The trickling of the glass beads reminded of our childhood,

At night we found a black moon in the forest

The soft sonata sounds in a mirror's blueness

Long embraces

Her smile glides over the dying one's mouth.

Georg Trakl

Untitled: With Rosy Stages

With rosy stages the stone sinks in the moor

Song of gliding and black laughter

Figures go in and out of rooms

And death grins bony in black boat.

Pirate on the canal in the red wine

Whose mast and sail often broke in the storm.

Drowned ones bump purple against the rock

Of the bridges. Steely the call of the guards clangs.

But sometimes, the glance listens in the candlelight

And follows the shadows on decayed walls

And dancers are with sleep-devoured hands.

The night, that breaks blackly on your head

And dead people who turn over in beds

Grasp the marble with broken hands.

Georg Trakl

Western Dusk

A faun-cry romps through sparks,
In the parks cascades of light foam,
Metallic vapors around steel arcades
Of the city which rolls around the sun.
A god races shimmering in a harness of tigers
Past women and bright bazaars,
Filled with flowing gold and wares.
And slave people howl now and then.
In the canal a drunken ship rotates
Sluggishly in green solar sheaves.
A cheerful concert of colors
Quietly rises before the hospital.
A Quirinal exhibits sinister splendor.
In mirrors colorful crowds circulate
On bridge arches and tracks.
Before benches a demon wakes palely.
A dreamer sees pregnant women
Glide past in slimy brilliance,
A dying man hears bells ringing -
A golden stash glows quietly in the horror.

Georg Trakl

Whispered Into Afternoon

Sun of autumn, thin and shy
And fruit drops off the trees,
Blue silence fills the peace
Of a tardy afternoon's sky.

Death knells forged of metal,
And a white beast hits the mire.
Brown lasses uncouth choir
Dies in leaves' drifting prattle.

Brow of God dreams of hues,
Senses madness' gentle wings.
Round the hill wield in rings
Black decay and shaded views.

Rest and wine in sunset's gleam,
Sad guitars drizzle into night,
And to the mellow lamp inside
You turn in as in a dream.

Georg Trakl

Winter Evening

When snow falls against the window,
Long sounds the evening bell...
For so many has the table
Been prepared, the house set in order.

From their wandering, many
Come on dark paths to this gateway.
The tree of grace is flowering in gold
Out of the cool sap of the earth.

In stillness, wanderer, step in:
Grief has worn the threshold into stone.
But see: in pure light, glowing
There on the table: bread and wine.

Georg Trakl

Winter Walk In A-Minor

Red spheres often emerge from branches,

Snowed under softly and black by a long snowfall.

The priest escorts the dead person.

The nights are fulfilled by celebrations of masks.

Then tousled crows glide over the village;

In books fairy tales are written miraculously.

At the window an old man's hair flutters.

Demons go through the ill soul.

The well freezes in the courtyard. Decayed stairs fall

In the darkness and a wind blows

Through old shafts which are buried.

The palate tastes the frost's strong spices.

Georg Trakl

With The Young Wine

Sun sets purple,

Swallow has already flown far off.

Under arches in the evening

New wine goes round;

Snow falls behind the mountain.

Summer's last green drifts away,

Hunter comes from the forest.

Under arches in the evening

New wine goes round;

Snow falls behind the mountain.

Bat blows around the forehead,

A stranger comes silently.

Under arches in the evening

New wine goes round;

Snow falls behind the mountain.

Georg Trakl