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Two sonnets by *Charles Baudelaire*

Contemplation.

Be wise, my sorrow, and just quieten down.
You begged for evening; it comes: see, it is here:
An atmosphere of darkness cloaks the town,
Bringing to some their peace, to others fear.
While the vile horde of mortals feasts,
Under the lash of pleasure, torturer mercy-free,
Gleaning remorse, servile as beasts,
Come, take my hand, my sorrow; go with me,
Far from them all. Watch: dead years lean
Off heaven's balconies in clothing that has seen
Its time pass; smiling Regret climb from the waters deep;
The dying sun drop sleeping, under an arch.
And hear, my love, the sweet Night creep
Like a long shroud trailed eastward: night is on the march.

Autumn Sonnet.

Your eyes speak to me, clear as crystal, saying:
“For you, strange love, what am I truly worth?”
— Be charming and stay quiet! My heart, aggrieved by all on earth
Except the candor of an ancient being,

Has no desire to show its hellish secret to you,
The lullaby that calls me to long slumber; and, I feel the same
Reluctance to reveal its dark tale written in bright flame.
I hate all passion and thought pains me too!

Let's make love tenderly. Love in his gate house on this day
Shadowy, ambushed, bends his fatal bow.
These are his ancient war-machines I know:
Crime, horror, madness! — Oh! pale daisy, say
Are you, like me, a sun in autumn? Oh!
So white are you, so ice cold, Daisy. No?

Recueillement.

Sois sage, ô ma Douleur, et tiens-toi plus tranquille.
Tu réclamaï le Soir; il descend; le voici:
Une atmosphère obscure enveloppe la ville,
Aux uns portant la paix, aux autres le souci.
Pendant que des mortels la multitude vile,
Sous le fouet du Plaisir, ce bourreau sans merci,
Va cueillir des remords dans la fête servile,
Ma Douleur, donne-moi la main; viens par ici,
Loin d'eux. Vois se pencher les défuntes Années,
Sur les balcons du ciel, en robes surannées;
Surgir du fond des eaux le Regret souriant;
Le soleil moribond s'endormir sous une arche,
Et, comme un long linceul traînant à l'Orient,
Entends, ma chère, entends la douce Nuit qui marche.

Sonnet d'automne.

Ils me disent, tes yeux, clairs comme le cristal:
«Pour toi, bizarre amant, quel est donc mon mérite?»
— Sois charmante et tais-toi! Mon coeur, que tout irrite,
Excepté la candeur de l'antique animal,

Ne veut pas te montrer son secret infernal,
Berceuse dont la main aux longs sommeils m'invite,
Ni sa noire légende avec la flamme écrite.
Je hais la passion et l'esprit me fait mal!

Aimons-nous doucement. L'Amour dans sa guérite,
Ténébreux, embusqué, bande son arc fatal.
Je connais les engins de son vieil arsenal:
Crime, horreur et folie! — Ô pâle marguerite!
Comme moi n'es-tu pas un soleil automnal,
Ô ma si blanche, ô ma si froide Marguerite?

Two poems by Heinrich Heine

You're like a flower

You're like a flower, my dear one
So sweet, so fair, so pure
I look at you and sadness
Creeps into my heart's core.

It feels as if my hands
Should touch your head with care
Praying that God should keep you
So pure, so sweet, so fair.

The night is still the streets keep quiet

The night is still, the lanes are at peace,
This is where my Beloved lived.
She left the town so long ago
Yet the house is still standing, just as it did.

And standing there too, staring up at the sky,
And wringing his hands, from the power of his pain,
Is a person whose face I dread to see –
The moon shows me that our shapes are the same.

Oh double of mine! You pale, pale thing!
Why do you ape my love's dark pain,
The pain that tormented me here in this place
In long ago nights, again and again.

Du bist wie eine Blume

Du bist wie eine Blume
So hold und schön und rein
Ich schau' dich an und Wehmut
Schleicht mir ins Hertz hinein.

Mir ist, als ob ich die Hände
Aufs Haupt dir legend sollt'
Betend, dass Gott dich erhalte
So rein und schön und hold.

Still ist die Nacht, es ruhen die Gassen,

Still ist die Nacht, es ruhen die Gassen,
In diesem Hause wohnte mein Schatz;
Sie hat schon längst die Stadt verlassen,
Doch steht noch das Haus auf demselben Platz.

Da steht auch ein Mensch und starrt in die Höhe,
Und ringt die Hände, vor Schmerzensgewalt;
Mir graust es, wenn ich sein Antlitz sehe -
Der Mond zeigt mir meine eigne Gestalt.

Du Doppeltgänger! du bleicher Geselle!
Was äffst du nach mein Liebesleid,
Das mich gequält auf dieser Stelle,
So manche Nacht, in alter Zeit.

Two poems by Goethe

Rambler's Nightsong

I

You come from Heaven's vault
Stilling all grief and pain
And for the doubly fraught
You make things fresh again;
O! I am tired of cares!
What's pain and longing mean?
Enter, oh enter my heart.
Sweetness serene.

II

On every mountaintop
Is peace
In every treetop
Scarcely a breath comes through
The small birds are quiet in the woods
Wait a bit, soon
You'll find rest too.

Wandrer's Nachtlied

I

Der du von dem Himmel bist,
Alles Leid und Schmerzen stillest,
Den, der doppelt elend ist,
Doppelt mit Erquickung füllest;
Ach, ich bin des Treibens müde!
Was soll all der Schmerz und Lust?
Süßer Friede,
Komm, ach komm in meine Brust!

II

Über allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh'
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du kein einen Rauch.
Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
Warte nur! Balde
Ruhest du auch.

Horace Odes Book 3.1.

I hate the godless crowd

I hate the godless crowd.
And I avoid them. Quiet your tongue!
The Muses' priest, I chant out loud
A new, unheard, and holy song
For boys and girls to sing along.
In their own flocks, fear's owed to kings,
But among kings, respect is due
To Jove, the famous Giant-killer, who
Can with an eyebrow move all things.

This man plants out the rows superbly wide
Within his vineyard, and another one has vied
With nobler name to walk the streets
To beg for votes; and yet a third competes,
With better manners, a more famous face.
The last one's fans could fill the place.
Necessity's impartial law
Draws lots to settle every score.
Treats high- and low-born all the same:
The urn has space for every name.

The hanging sword threatening the impious head
Of Damocles, makes the Sicilian feast he's fed
Taste stale; neither the birdsong that he's heard
Nor sounding zithers bring him rest.
It's country folk that sleep the best,
Tempe, the gorge by gentle breezes stirred,
Has shady banks on streams for sleep.

The man who's happy with enough
Will never have it really tough:
Tempests won't trouble him, or keep
Him anxious. Nor will Arcturus' savage rage

Nor other threatening heavenly signs,
Nor hailstones menacing his vines,
Nor floods that failing crops presage,
Nor star-sent droughts, nor winters frost.
No, all these leave him quite intact.

The fish can feel their waterways contract
Where boulders in the seas were tossed,
The builder, slave-rich, hurls down packed cement,
Just like the lord who scorns the land.
But Fear and Menace climb to where he stands,
That lord; dark Care is never absent
From the bronze-decked trireme, sits close by
Each knight.

If neither Phrygian stone,
Nor purple, brighter than the stars, nor the best wine,
Nor Persian spices, will bring relief to grief, then why should I
Build a new castle, enviably pillared? Why
Decamp my Sabine vale, a life that's plain,
To vie for riches gleaned with pain?

Odi profanum vulgus

Odi profanum vulgus et arceo;
favete linguis: carmina non prius
audita Musarum sacerdos
virginibus puerisque canto.
regum timendorum in proprios greges,
reges in ipsos imperium est Iovis,
clari Giganteo triumpho,
cuncta supercilio moventis.

est ut viro vir latius ordinet
arbusta sulcis, hic generosior
descendat in Campum petitor,
moribus hic meliorque fama
contendat, illi turba clientium
sit maior: aequa lege Necessitas
sortitur insignis et imos;
omne capax movet urna nomen.

detractus ensis cui super impia
cervice pendet, non Siculae dapes
dulcet elaborabunt saporem,
non avium citharaque cantus
somnum reducent: somnus agrestium
lenis virorum non humilis domos
fastidit umbrosamque ripam
non Zephyris agitata Tempe.

desiderantem quod satis est neque
tumultuosum sollicitat mare
nec saevus Arcturi cadentis
impetus aut orientis Haedi,
non verberatae, grandine vineae
fundusque mendax, arbore nunc aquas
culpante, nunc torrentia agros
sidera, nunc hiemes iniquas.

contracta pisces aequora sentient
iactis in altum molibus; huc frequens
caementa demittit redemptor
cum famulis dominusque terrae
fastidiosus: sed Timor et Mina
scandunt eodem quo dominus, neque
decedit aerata triremi et
post equitem sedet atra Cura.

quodsi dolentem nec Phrygius lapis
nec purpurarum sidere clarior
delenit usus nec Falerna
vitis Achaemeniumque costum,
cur invidendis postibus et novo
sublime ritu moliar atrium?
cur valle permutem Sabina
divitias operosiores?

Virgil's Eclogues II

The handsome shepherd

Corydon burns with lustful fire
For fair Alexis, (lovely boy,
He is his master's pride and joy)
But cannot have what he desires.
On shady peaks among the beeches
Disconsolately, he beseeches
The boy in crazy, lonely speeches:

“Oh! Cruel Alexis, don't you care
For my sad songs, the pain I bear?
You'll be the death of me, I swear.

Now, even cattle seek the cooling shade,
Even green lizards hide among the brush,
For sun-burned reapers, Thestylis has made,
A pulp of thyme and garlic. But I rush,
As shrill cicadas fill the groves with sound,
To trace your footsteps in the burning sun.
Better by far if I'd been bound
To Amaryllis, been the one
To face her anger and her proud disdain,
Or to Menalcan, dark, though you shine bright.
Oh! Handsome boy, color won't save you pain:
Black berries fill the pail, the fading privet's white.

You look down on me, and you do not care
Who I am. How much livestock fills
My fields. Snow-white my milk abounds. Up there
A thousand lambs of mine wander Sicilian hills.
Summer and winter, milk drenches my pails.
I sing in Amphion of Circe's way,
On Attic Aracynthus, calling his oxen in. What fails
To charm you? Am I so ugly? Just the other day
Down on the beach, in a still moment, when the sails
Were still, the mirroring sea showed me my face. I say

I'd dare to challenge Daphne, though you were the judge,
Unless that image lied.

Oh! How I'd love to stay
With you here in the muddy country. Never budge.
Live simply in our hut. Hunt deer. Bring home the goats each day
Driving them with a fresh-picked mallow stem. Together, we
Could learn to copy Pan's sweet melody. For, joining reed to reed
With wax, Pan showed men how a pipe was made.
He cherishes the shepherd and the sheep. So, there's no need
To fear the pipe will tear your lip. (What price Amyntas paid
To learn this art!) I have a pipe of seven hemlock canes
The gift of Damoetas, as he died. “This now is yours,” he said.
Foolish Amyntas heard him and grew jealous. Look! No stains
Tarnish the pair of fawns I risked my life to find
In a high valley, dappled white, twice daily suckled
By my own ewe: once they were meant for you, so I declined
To let my Thestylis remove them. Now I've buckled,
Since you disdain my gifts, I let her take those two away.

Come to me, handsome boy. The Nymphs will bring
Baskets of lilies to you; and pale Naiads make a spray
Plucking pink violets and poppy heads to string
With daffodils and fennel fresh; twining in cassia, too
And scented herbs and yellow marigold to blend
With blueberries sweet. And I myself will pick for you
Quinces, with coats of down; and chestnuts I will send
Which Amaryllis loved, my Amaryllis. I'll add more:
The wax-skinned prune (this fruit I'll honor, too)
And I'll pluck you, oh laurels, and you myrtles near,
So you can mix your fragrances.

Corydon, you,
You are a yokel. And Alexis doesn't care
For all these gifts. If presents mattered, fool,

They still would not bring Iollas, either. There,
That's the truth: you're drowning in a pool
Of sorrow you yourself have made. You've lost
Your flowers to the winds; driven the boar
Into your springs, all to your own cost.

What are you after, madman? Gods once saw
The woods were fit to dwell in. Paris of Troy,
Once thought so, too. Let Pallas keep
The towers she has founded; we shall take our joy
Here in the woods. Here live and sleep.

Grimly the she-lion follows the wolf. *He* hunts for the goat;
The lusty goat grazes on clover. My taste's for Alexis.
Drawn by our pleasures, each, what floats our boat.

Look, with the plough raised, there the ox is,
The shadows lengthen as the sun descends.
Corydon, what has made you mad? I ask.
Your vine's unpruned and from the elm-tree bends.
Why can't you do a single necessary task?
Mend an old fence ... willows and reeds have uses.
You'll find a new Alexis, if this one refuses."

Formosum pastor Corydon

Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin,
delicias domini, nec quid speraret habebat.
tantum inter densas, umbrosa cacumina, fagos
adsidue veniebat. ibi haec incondita solus
montibus et silvis studio iactabat inani;

“O crudelis Alexi, nihil mea carmina curas?
nil nostri miserere? mori me denique cogis?”

nunc etiam pecudes umbras et frigora captant,
nunc virides etiam occultant spineta lacertos,
Thestylis et rapido fessis messoribus aestu
alia serpyllumque herbas contundit olentis.
at mecum raucis, tua dum vestigia lustro,
sole sub ardenti resonant arbusta cicadis.
nonne fuit satius tristis Amaryllidos iras
atque superba pati fastidia? nonne Menalcan,
quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses?
o formose puer, nimium ne crede colori;
alba ligustra cadunt, vaccinia nigra leguntur.

Despectus tibi sum nec qui sim quaeris, Alexi,
quam dives pecoris, nivei quam lactis abundans.
mille meae Siculis errant in montibus agnae;
lac mihi non aestate novum, non frigore deficit.
canto quae solitus, si quando armenta vocabat,
Amphion Dircaeus in Actaeo Aracyntho.
nec sum adeo informis; nuper me in litore vidi,
cum placidum ventis staret mare. non ego Daphnin
iudice te metuam, si numquam fallit imago.

O tantum libeat mecum tibi sordida rura
atque humilis habitare casas et figere cervos
haedorumque gregem viridi compellere hibisco!
mecum una in silvis imitabere Pana canendo.
Pan primum calamos cera coniungere pluris
instituit, Pan curat ovis oviumque magistros;

nec te paeniteat calamo trivisse labellum.
haec eadem ut sciret, quid non faciebat Amyntas?
est mihi disparibus septem compacta cicutis
fistula, Damoetas dono mihi quam dedit olim
et dixit moriens: 'te nunc habet ista secundum';
dixit Damoetas, invidit stultus Amyntas.
praeterea duo—nec tuta mihi valle reperti—
capreoli sparsis etiam nunc pellibus albo,
bina die siccant ovis ubera; quos tibi servo.
iam pridem a me illos abducere Thestylis orat;
et faciet, quoniam sordent tibi munera nostra.

Huc ades, o formose puer, tibi lilia plenis
ecce ferunt Nymphae calathis; tibi candida Nais,
pallentis violas et summa papavera carpens,
narcissum et florem iungit bene olentis anethi;
tum casia atque aliis intexens suavibus herbis
mollia luteola pingit vaccinia caltha.
ipse ego cana legam tenera lanugine mala
castaneasque nuces, mea quas Amaryllis amabat;
addam cerea pruna—honus erit huic quoque pomo—
et vos, o lauri, carpam et te, proxime myrte,
sic positae quoniam suavis miscetis odores.

Rusticus es, Corydon; nec munera curat Alexis
nec, si muneribus certes, concedat Iollas.
heu heu, quid volui misero mihi? floribus Austrum
perditus et liquidis inmissi fontibus apros.

Quem fugis, a, demens? habitarunt di quoque silvas
Dardaniusque Paris. Pallas quas condidit arces
ipsa colat; nobis placeant ante omnia silvae.

torva leaena lupum sequitur, lupus ipse capellam,
florentem cytisum sequitur lasciva capella,
te Corydon, o Alexi; trahit sua quemque voluptas.

Aspice, aratra iugo referunt suspensa iuveni
et sol crescentis decedens duplicat umbras.
me tamen urit amor; quis enim modus adsit amor?
a, Corydon, Corydon, quae te dementia cepit!
semiputata tibi frondosa vitis in ulmo.
quin tu aliquid saltem potius, quorum indiget usus,
viminibus mollique paras detexere iunco?
inuenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexin.”

