

## Rest, my soul!

Lieder by Richard Strauss (GEN 15379)

### Rest, my soul! (Ruhe, meine Seele!)

Not a breeze  
Stirs softly,  
The grove lies  
In gentle slumber,  
Clear sunshine  
Steals in  
Through the leaves'  
Dark shroud.

Rest, rest  
My soul,  
Your storms  
Were wild,  
You raged and  
You shivered  
Like the swelling  
Of the tide.

These times  
Are tremendous,  
Endangering  
Hearts and minds –  
Rest, rest  
My soul,  
And forget  
What threatens you.

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### The Night (Die Nacht)

Night steps out of the forest,  
Creeps quietly out from the trees,  
It looks around the wide expanse –  
Now take care!

All the lights of this world,  
Every flower, every colour –  
Night extinguishes them and steals the sheaves  
From the fields.

It takes everything that is dear;  
Takes the silver of the stream,  
Takes from the cathedral's copper roof  
The gold.

The shrub stands ravaged –  
Draw nearer! Soul to soul;  
Oh, the night, I fear, will also steal  
You from me.

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### **Winter night (Winternacht)**

With the rain and the roar of the storm  
I gladly welcome you, December moon,  
And lead me along the path to the friendly home  
Where my beloved mistress lives!

Never have I greeted the blossoms of May,  
The azure sky or the glittering dew  
As gladly as today I greet your snow,  
Your foggy brew and the grey of your clouds.

For through the drifting snowflakes,  
Lovelier than spring ever smiled,  
The springtime of love secretly shines  
And blooms for me now in the winter night.

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### **Red Roses (Rote Rosen)**

Do you know the rose that you gave me?  
The proud, ardent sister of the timid violet;  
Its scent still carried life from your breast,  
And I attached myself to the scent more and more firmly.

I see you before me, brow and temples burning,  
Your nape defiant, your hands soft and white,

Spring still in your eye, but your figure in full flower,  
As the fields blossom in Midsummer.

Night weaves around me, cool, cloudless,  
Yet day and night have melted into one.  
My mind is dreaming of your red rose  
And of the garden in which I obtained it.

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### The rose-ribbon (Das Rosenband)

In the spring-time shade I found Her,  
There I bound Her with rose-ribbons:  
She felt it not, and slumbered.

I gazed at her: with that look  
My life hung on Her life.  
I felt it, but knew it not.

But I whispered speechlessly to her,  
And rustled the rose-ribbons:  
Then she awakened from her slumber.

She gazed at me: with that look  
Her life hung on my life.  
And around us was Elysium.

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### The autumn crocus (Die Zeitlose)

Upon the freshly-mown pasture  
Stands a lonely autumn crocus,  
Its body that of a lily,  
Its colour that of a rose.

Yet it is poison that gleams so red  
Out of the pure chalice;  
The last flower, the last love,  
Both are beautiful, yet deadly.

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## Nothing (Nichts)

I should name, you say,  
My queen in the realm of song?  
You are fools, for I know her  
Least of you all.

Ask me the colour of her eyes,  
Ask me the sound of her voice,  
Ask how she dances, or her bearing and posture,  
Oh, what do I know of it!

Is not the sun the source  
Of all life, all light?  
And what do we know of it,  
I or you or anyone? – Nothing.

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## Cornflowers (Kornblumen)

Cornflowers I call those figures,  
The mild ones with the blue eyes,  
Who, unassuming in their calm presiding,  
Impart the dew of peace that they draw  
From their own clear souls  
To all to whom they draw near,  
Unconscious of the gems of emotion,  
Which they have received from heaven's hand.  
You feel so content in their presence,  
As though you walked through a field of wheat,  
Through which the breath of evening stirs,  
Full of peace and full of mildness.

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## Poppies (Mohnblumen)

Poppies are the round,  
Red-blooded and healthy,  
Sunbrowned and freckled,  
Ever-cheerful, well-behaved,  
Thoroughly merry souls  
Who never tire of dancing;  
Whose laughter hides their tears

And who seem to be born solely  
To tease the cornflowers,  
Yet who often hide  
The softest, finest hearts  
In the climbing plant of jests;  
God knows! one would have  
To smother them with kisses  
Were one not ever-anxious  
That, if you embrace this lovable urchin  
She would spring apart, enflamed  
Like a loaded fire ship.

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### **Ivy (Epheu)**

But I call those girls 'Ivy'  
Whose words are gentle,  
With bright, simple hair  
Around their softly curved brows,  
With their brown, soulful, doe-like eyes  
Which so often well up with tears  
And when tearful are most irresistible;  
Without strength or sense of self,  
Unadorned, their bloom concealed,  
But with an inexhaustibly deep,  
Faithful inner emotion,  
They can never rise above their roots  
Simply by their own power,  
They are born to be entwined themselves  
Lovingly around another life:  
Their whole life's destiny  
Hangs on the first loving embrace,  
For they count among the rare flowers  
That only blossom once.

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### **Waterlily (Wasserrose)**

Do you know the mythical flower,  
Celebrated in legend, the waterlily?  
It rocks its transparent, colourless head  
On a slender, ethereal stem,  
It flowers on reedy pools in forest groves,

Guarded by the lonely swan that circles it,  
It opens only for the moonlight,  
Whose silver shimmer it shares:  
Thus it blossoms, the magical sister of the stars,  
Idolized by the dreamy dark moth  
That longs for it from the edge of the pond  
And never reaches it, however much it yearns.  
Waterlily, by this name I call the slender maiden  
With locks like the night and cheeks of alabaster,  
In her eye the prophetic deep thought,  
As though she were a ghost, imprisoned on Earth.  
When she speaks it is like the silver waves' rustling,  
When she is still, it is the pregnant silence of the moonlit night;  
She seems to exchange glances with the stars,  
With whose language, by their same nature, she is familiar;  
You can never tire of gazing into her eyes,  
Ringed with silken, long lashes,  
And, entranced by blissful dread, you believe  
All that the Romantics ever dreamt of the elves.

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### **Forest bliss (Waldseligkeit)**

The forest begins to rustle,  
Night approaches the trees;  
They touch each other softly  
As though listening in rapture.

And underneath their branches  
There I am all alone.  
There I am utterly myself:  
Utterly yours.

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### **The young witch's song (Junghexenlied)**

As I rode above the mountains by night,  
Rack, schack, schacke my little horse,  
A strange tinkling rode along,  
Kling, ling, klingelalei.  
It was a coaxing, entreating sound,  
It was as beautiful as children's voices.

I felt as if I was stroking soft hair,  
I felt such aching and wondrousness.

Then the tinkle died away suddenly,  
I looked down into the deep valley.

I saw light in my house,  
Rack, schack, schacke my little horse,  
My little boy was looking out for his mother,  
Klingling, klingling, klingling,  
klingling, klingelalei.

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### **Lullaby (Wiegenlied)**

Dream, dream, you my sweet life,  
Of the heavens that bear the flowers.  
Blossoms shimmer there, quivering  
From the song that your mother sings.

Dream, dream, bud of my cares,  
Of the day when the flower opened,  
Of the blossom-bright morning  
When your infant soul revealed itself to the world.

Dream, dream, blossom of my love,  
Of the quiet, of the holy night,  
In which the flower of his love  
Made this world into my heaven.

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### **Set free (Befreit)**

You will not weep. Softly, softly  
You will smile, and as for a journey  
I will return your look and your kiss.  
Our dear four walls! You prepared them,  
I have widened them to a world for you –  
O bliss!

Then you will fervently grasp my hands  
And will leave me your soul,  
Leaving me behind for our children.

You gave me your entire life,  
I wish to give it back to them –  
O bliss!

It will be very soon, we both know it.  
We have set each other free from pain;  
In this way I returned you to the world.  
Then you will only appear to me in dreams  
And will bless me and cry with me –  
O bliss!

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### Quiet songs (Leise Lieder)

Quiet songs I sing for you at night,  
Songs that no mortal ear can hear,  
Nor a star which might peer in on its watch,  
Nor the moon, swimming silently in the ether;

Songs to which no one listens wistfully  
Except the very heart that dreams them,  
And by which no one is intoxicated with sadness  
Except the pain itself which begets them.

Quiet songs I sing for you at night,  
For you, in whose eye my mind has drowned,  
The eye from whose deep, dark shaft  
My soul drank eternal longing.

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### The poet's evening walk (Des Dichters Abendgang)

When you walk in the evening light –  
That is the hour of the poet's joy –,  
Always turn your countenance towards  
The radiance of the setting sun!  
Your spirit soars in solemnity,  
You behold the temple's halls,  
Where all things holy are revealed,  
And heavenly forms gently move.

But when around the holy place  
The dark clouds roll down,



Then it is accomplished, you turn back,  
Exalted by the wondrousness.  
Inexpressibly moved, you will go,  
Carrying in you the song's blessing;  
The luminescence that there you have seen  
Shines softly around you on dark paths.

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### **All Souls' Day (Allerseelen)**

Place on the table the fragrant reseda  
The last red asters bring here,  
And let us speak of love again,  
As once in May.

Give me your hand, that I may secretly hold it,  
And if somebody sees, I do not mind;  
Give me just one of your sweet looks,  
As once in May.

Today every grave bears blossoms and fragrances,  
One day each year is given to the dead,  
Come to my heart, that I may have you back again  
As once in May.

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### **Tomorrow! (Morgen!)**

And tomorrow the sun will shine again,  
And on the path which I shall tread,  
We – happy ones! – will be united once more  
Amid this sun-scented Earth...

And we will descend, slowly and quietly  
To the wide, wave-blue shore.  
Wordlessly we will look into each other's eyes,  
And the hushed silence of happiness will settle upon us...

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*Translations: Nicholas Rimmer & Gertraud Rimmer*